

Nebraska landowners and operators still have time to sign up for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) at their local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office.

CSP is a voluntary program that encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones on their operations.

CSP applications are accepted on a continuous basis. However, only applications received by the national cutoff date will be considered for funding in fiscal year 2010. An announcement of the cutoff date is expected in the next few weeks, according to Steve Chick, NRCS state conservationist in Nebraska.

He encourages Nebraska farmers and ranchers not to miss out on this opportunity.

“The Conservation Stewardship Program is unique in how NRCS provides conservation program payments. CSP participants will receive an annual land use payment for the environmental benefits they produce on their operation.

Under CSP, participants are paid for conservation performance –the higher the operational performance, the higher their payment,” Chick said.

The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes CSP, which is available statewide to individual landowners, legal entities, and Indian tribes.

Eligible land includes cropland, grassland, prairie, improved pastureland, non-industrial private forestland, and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe.

For more information about CSP, including eligibility requirements, producers can visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html or visit their local NRCS field office.

