United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
October 2005

Conservation Security Program:
Self-Assessment Workbook

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a voluntary conservation program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Helping People Help the Land

Contents

Introduction 1

- About the Conservation Security Program 1
- About this Self-Assessment Workbook 1
- Records and Record Keeping 1
- About the Application Process 2 - 3

Map of the 2006 CSP Watersheds 4

STEP 1: Land and Producer Eligibility 5

- Land and Producer Eligibility Questions 6 - 7
- Answers: Land and Producer Eligibility 8
- Delineating Your Agricultural Operation 9

STEP 2: Minimum Treatment for Land Use Types 10

- Land Use Designations 10 -11
- CROPLAND Questions 12 - 15
- Answers: Cropland Minimum Treatment Requirements 16
- PASTURE AND RANGELAND Questions 17 - 19
- Answers: Pasture and Rangeland Minimum Treatment Requirements 20

STEP 3: Benchmark Inventory 21 - 24

Application Process Next Steps 25 - 26

- Application Checklist 27
- Appendices 28 - 36

Introduction

About the Conservation Security Program
The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a unique program that goes beyond the past approach of repairing on-farm conservation problems. Instead, CSP offers rewards to those who have been good stewards of the soil and water resources on their working agricultural land. It also offers incentives for those who wish to exceed the minimum levels of resource protection and enhance the natural resources on the land they manage. By rewarding land stewardship, CSP will ensure that our Nation's private and Tribal agricultural lands remain viable working enterprises.

The program is available in designated watersheds of all 50 states, the Caribbean area and the Pacific Basin area. The number of watersheds selected for participation in any year depends on funds allocated by Congress. To be eligible for CSP, a majority of your agricultural operation must be within one of the selected watersheds. For more information about the watersheds selected, contact your local NRCS office, or go to the NRCS Web page: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/.

The program provides equitable access to benefits to all producers regardless of the size of the operation, crops produced, or geographic location. NRCS will establish and publicly announce application sign-up periods each year.

About this Self-Assessment Workbook
This self-assessment is required for all CSP applications and must be completed by the applicant prior to the published application evaluation period cut-off date for the application to be considered for funding. This workbook is also available on-line at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/. The interactive site allows you to log on and off at your convenience to complete the workbook at your own pace.

As you go through this workbook and answer questions about your operation, you will get a good idea about whether you are eligible for CSP at this time. You will answer "yes," "no," or "not applicable (NA)" if the question covers a topic or management technique that is not relevant to your operation. In the benchmark inventory section, you will be asked to record the conservation practices and activities that are ongoing on your operation. This benchmark inventory will serve as the basis for your stewardship plan.

Records and Record Keeping
Records for two out of the last three years are required for eligibility in CSP. Applicants will be required to certify in writing that their records preceding the sign-up period and documentation are available upon request by NRCS during the sign-up and throughout the life of the CSP contract.

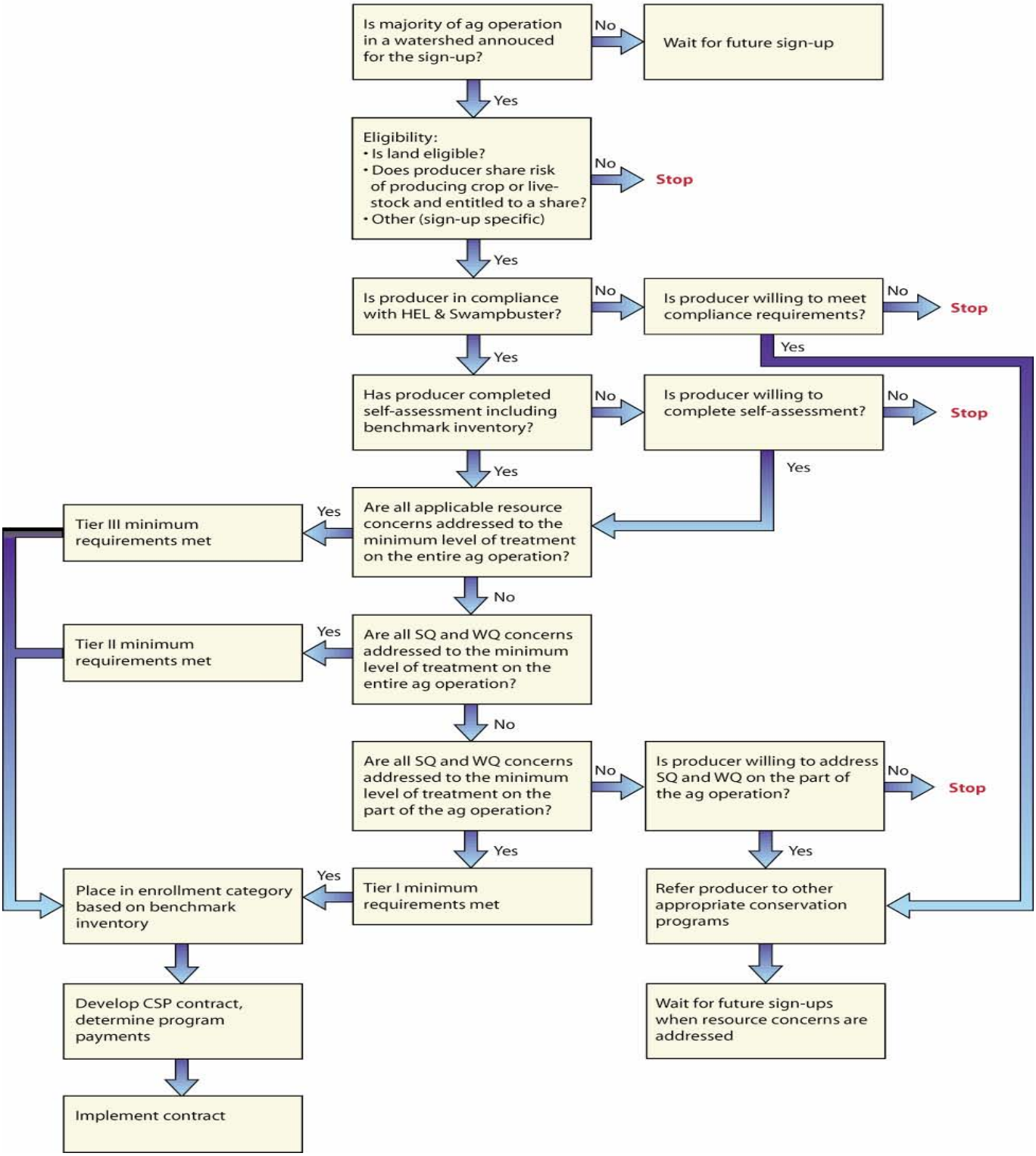
About the Application Process

After you complete this Self-Assessment Workbook you will have a good indication of whether CSP is the right program for you at this time. If you believe your operation is eligible for CSP, the next step will be for you to schedule an interview with your local NRCS office. During the interview, the NRCS staff will review your Self-Assessment Workbook, documents and records to verify the information and clarify any questions.

If NRCS determines that your application meets the basic eligibility requirements and sign-up criteria, your application will be placed in a tier as described in the “Application Process Next Steps” section of this workbook. Your tier placement will establish the length of your contract, final stewardship payment rate and contract payment limits.

Your application will then be placed into an enrollment category for funding consideration based on the criteria specified in this sign-up notice. You may choose to be placed into the highest enrollment category for which your application qualifies. It is likely that you will have several tier and enrollment category options from which to choose. NRCS cannot make this decision for you, nor predict if funding will be available for any specific category. The NRCS staff will explain the requirements and payments of the different options available to you so that you can make the right decision for your operation.

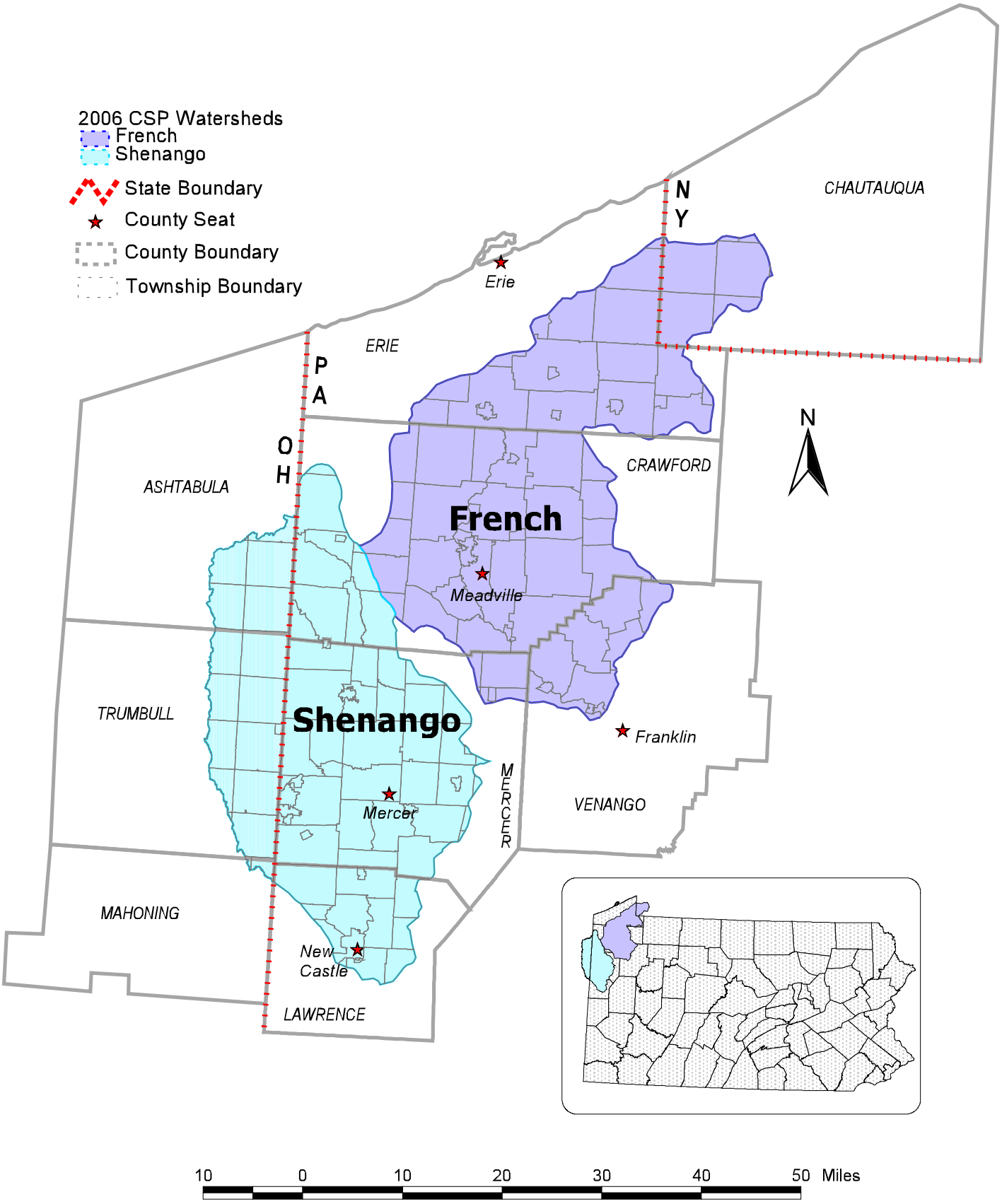
CSP Application Process



U. S. Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

2006 Conservation Security Program



STEP 1: Land and Producer Eligibility

YOUR NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

List the location of the land, or portion of land, you wish to enroll in CSP.

NAME of LAND: _____
(Example – Smith Farm)

ZIP CODE: _____

WATERSHED: _____

LOCATION:
(township, range, section,
parish, etc.) _____

_____

Signature **Date**

Land and Producer Eligibility Questions

1.	Do you share in the risk of producing crops or livestock on this operation? Note: Landlords who receive only cash payments for renting the land are not currently eligible to apply for CSP on that acreage.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
2.	Are you entitled to share in the crop or livestock available for marketing from the agricultural operation?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
3.	Do you have control of the land you intend to enroll in CSP for the life of the proposed 5- to 10-year contract period? Note: A lease is not required, but tenants must be able to provide written evidence or assurance of control from the landowner(s). You may use the "Control of Land Certification" form in *Appendix A* to provide this evidence.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
4.	Is your average adjusted gross income less than or equal to $2.5 million, or if greater than $2.5 million, did 75% come from farming, ranching, or forestry? Note: To participate in CSP, your average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) for the 3 tax years immediately preceding the year the contract is approved cannot exceed $2.5 million, unless at least 75 percent of the income was derived from agriculture. You must complete the AGI determination form "CCC-526, Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification" in *Appendix B*, prior to application.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

5. Are you in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill as amended? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

Note:

The Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, requires that persons who produce agriculture commodities protect all cropland classified as being highly erodible from excessive erosion and all wetlands from conversion. The provisions have been amended in the 1990, 1996, and 2002 Farm Bills.

If you have not participated in a USDA program, you must complete a "Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification" form AD-1026 in *Appendix C* and submit it to your local USDA Service Center.

6. Is the land you wish to enroll in CSP currently in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) or Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

Note:

Land enrolled in CRP, CREP, WRP, WREP or GRP cannot be a part of the CSP contract but should be included in your agricultural delineation. In addition, land accepted in a recent CRP sign-up for contract development is not eligible.

For example: You would like to enroll a 40-acre parcel that has a 2-acre CRP buffer. You will include all 40 acres in your delineation. However, only the 38 acres that are not enrolled in CRP will be eligible for payment in a CSP contract.

7. Is the land you wish to enroll private agricultural land or Tribal land? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

Note:

Public land (owned by federal, state or local government) is not eligible for CSP payments but should be included in your delineation if the land is under your control.

Answers

Land and Producer Eligibility

1.	YES	You must share in the risk of producing the agricultural product to be eligible.
2.	YES	You must be entitled to share in the crop or livestock available for marketing. If no product was produced or available for market, you must demonstrate that you would have shared had the crop or livestock been produced or available.
3.	YES	You must be able to certify that you have control of the land.
4.	YES	You must be in compliance with the AGI provision of the 2002 Farm Bill.
	or NA	Recognized Indian Tribes and program participants who are reservists, military personnel called to active duty as the result of Operation Iraqi Freedom and other similar military operations are EXEMPT from the AGI provision and may answer NA, not applicable. If you answer NA, you will need to verify that you qualify for this exemption.
5.	YES	You have completed a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification form and are in compliance (Appendix C). Note: If you answered NO, you are still eligible to apply for CSP but you MUST complete a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification form (Appendix C) for your application to be considered.
6.	NO	The land you wish to enroll in CSP is not currently in CRP, CREP, WRP, WREP or GRP.
	or NA	You do not have any land in CRP, CREP, WRP, WREP or GRP.
7.	YES	If you are unsure, refer to the definition of agricultural land.

IF YOUR ANSWERS DIFFER, you may not be eligible for CSP at this time. Please review your responses and answer only for the land, or portion of land, that you wish to enroll in CSP.

You may want to identify a smaller portion of your operation, by taking out the lands that are not eligible, and answer the questions again.

Delineating your Agricultural Operation

The applicant will delineate the agricultural operation as the initial step in the application process.

When you delineate your agricultural operation, you should include all agricultural land under your control and other land, such as farmsteads, feedlots, headquarters and incidental forest lands. The operation should constitute a cohesive management unit that is operated with equipment, labor, an accounting system, and management that is substantially separate from any other land. The land within the operation may be contiguous or noncontiguous. The minimum size of an agricultural operation is a field.

In delineating your operation, you may elect to use the Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm boundaries or you may use whatever term (or number) you choose to describe the land.
If you decide to use FSA farm boundaries in your application, the entire farm area must be included within the delineation. You may offer one farm or aggregate farms into one agricultural operation.

Your delineation should include all land under your control, including land that is ineligible for CSP payments, such as:

- Land in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) or Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
- Public land
- Forest land

Although the lands mentioned above are not eligible to receive payments, the conservation work on this land may be used to determine your eligibility for the program.

What to include in your delineation:

√ Agricultural land

√ Incidental parcels – including, but not limited to, pivot corners, field borders, linear areas, turn rows, intermingled wet or riparian areas

√ Other lands – such as farmsteads, ranch sites, barnyards, feed lots, equipment storage areas, materials handling areas, greenhouses and other such developed areas. The amount of “other lands” cannot exceed 10% of the total acreage enrolled.

√ Land in CRP, CREP, WRP, WREP and GRP

√ Public land under your control

√ Forest land

STEP 2: Minimum Treatment for Land Use Types

Land Use Designations

In order to be eligible for CSP, your land must be considered private agricultural land. Agricultural land means cropland, rangeland, pastureland, hayland, and other land on which food, fiber, and other agricultural products are produced. This "other land" includes land of varying cover types, such as cropped woodland and cropped marshes, managed primarily for the production of food, fiber or other agricultural products, through a low input system. Areas used for strip-cropping or alley-cropping and silvopasture practices will be included as agricultural land. The land use designations for CSP are listed below. Check all of the land types you wish to enroll in CSP. You will be asked to answer minimum treatment questions for the land uses you wish to enroll.

☐ **CROPLAND**

A land cover/use category, either irrigated or non-irrigated, that includes areas used for the production of adapted crops for harvest, including but not limited to land in row crops or close-grown crops, forage crops that are in a short or long term rotation with row or close-grown crops, permanent hayland, horticultural cropland, orchards, vineyards and field grown ornamentals.

Hayland: land managed for the production of forage crops that are machine harvested. The crop may be grasses, legumes, or a combination of both.

Cropped Woodland and Marshes: where at least 50% of the area is actively managed to produce an agricultural product. The crop may be grown symbiotically within the system, such as ginseng and wild rice, or harvested directly from the trees, such as maple syrup. For maple syrup production, the number of tapped trees will be used to determine the production area. Once established, the agricultural product is harvested annually. Plants are selectively removed as needed to control disease and insect pests or to prevent overcrowding of the desired species. If utilized, nutrient applications follow University recommendations for the desired crop.

Note: To be eligible for payment, the land must have been planted, considered to be planted, or devoted to crop production, as determined by NRCS, for at least 4 out of the 6 years from May 13, 1996 to May 13, 2002.

☐ **PASTURELAND**

A land cover/use category of land managed primarily for the production of introduced forage plants for grazing animals and includes improved pasture and silvopasture. Pastureland cover may consist of a single species in a pure stand, a grass mixture, or grass-legume mixture. Management usually consists of cultural treatments: fertilization, weed control, reseeding or renovation, and control of grazing.

☐ **RANGELAND**

A land cover/use category on which the climax or potential plant cover is composed principally of native grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs suitable for grazing and browsing, and introduced forage species that are managed like rangeland. The term would include areas where introduced, hardy and persistent grasses are planted and practices such as deferred grazing, burning, chaining, and rotational grazing are used, with little or no chemicals or fertilizer being applied.

Minimum Treatment for Land Use Types

The following questions will help determine if the land you wish to enroll in CSP meets the minimum program requirements. Each question pertains **only** to the land you intend to enroll in CSP. If a question is not applicable to your operation, mark “NA.”

Please answer all of the questions for each land use type you wish to enroll. The answers are provided at the end of each land use section. If your answers differ, you may identify a smaller portion of your operation, by taking out the lands that are not eligible, and answer the questions again.

Nutrients and Pesticides

In the following questions, the term **nutrient** includes organic and inorganic forms from all sources, such as commercial, animal waste, sludge, compost or agricultural by-products. **Pesticide** refers to insecticides, fungicides, miticides, rodenticides and herbicides. **Pest** refers to insects, plant diseases, rodents and weeds.

1.	Have you taken soil samples and tested soils to determine the level of plant available nutrients in the soil?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
2.	If you apply fertilizers, do you use a schedule or a Nutrient Management Plan to apply fertilizers, animal manure, or agricultural by-products? Note: A Nutrient Management Plan provides recommendations on the amount, form, placement and timing of plant nutrients to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution. The plan should address all sources of nutrients utilized.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
3.	If you apply pesticides, do you use a schedule or a Pest Management Plan to conduct pest control activities on your cropland? Note: A Pest Management Plan provides recommendations on the chemical (pesticides), biological (beneficial insects, controlled grazing), or cultural (brush management, burning), control of pests (insects, weeds, plant diseases or rodents). It outlines the use, amount, form, timing and application of the control method to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
4.	Do you have two years of written records or documentation of your nutrient and pest management activities? Note: Records should include crop type, projected yields, soil analysis, dates and application rates of all nutrients used. Records should also include the target pest, crop type and type of pesticide used, dates and application rates or the cultural or biological control method used and dates implemented, including spot treatments.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

5.	Have you taken adequate steps to safeguard ground water from contamination by properly protecting active or abandoned wells? Examples of measures to protect wells: • Install sanitary well caps, tightly secured with a screened vent • Use pitless adaptors (a special pipe fitting that connects a water line to a well casing and provides a sanitary and frost-proof seal) • Prevent surface runoff from reaching the area immediately surrounding the well	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
6.	Have you taken adequate steps to safeguard ground and surface water from contamination by properly protecting fertilizer or pesticide mixing and loading sites? The following are examples of measures that may be taken: • Ensure the mixing/loading site is located a safe distance from wells and surface water areas such as streams, rivers, ponds, lakes canals and drainage ditches. • Use secondary containment on highly permeable or sandy soil • Properly dispose of rinse water from cleaning fertilizer/pesticide application equipment • Properly dispose of used pesticide/fertilizer containers	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
7.	If the cropland is periodically grazed, are you managing livestock to adequately protect surface and ground water from contamination by implementing the following steps: • Manage livestock access to rivers, streams, and other water courses • Prevent livestock direct access to sinkholes and other direct paths to ground water • Identify periods of grazing, rest and other treatments	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

Sediment

8. Have you protected surface waters from additions of sediment caused by direct runoff from your cropland? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

   Note:

   Soil erosion includes sheet and rill, ephemeral and classic gullies and is the leading way nutrients and pesticides attach to soil particles and move from cropland. The following structural, vegetative and management practices are used to control erosion:

   - Terrace, diversion and waterway conservation systems
   - Reduced tillage and contour farming practices
   - Buffers, filter strips, field borders, vegetative barriers and critical area plantings

Drift

9. Do you take measures to control the drift of agri-chemicals by managing the timing or method of applications or by installing windbreaks or buffers? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

Volatilization

10. Do you manage the timing and method of nutrient and pesticide applications, incorporate when feasible, or use urease inhibited or urea based fertilizer compositions? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

Salinity

11. Do you monitor salinity levels and use techniques to manage salinity? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NA

    The following are techniques to manage salinity:

    - Irrigation and drainage water management
    - Deep tillage
    - Reduce time land is left fallow
    - Use soil amendments, such as gypsum
    - Plant salt-tolerant crops
    - Well and/or surface water testing

CROPLAND Questions

Soil Quality

12.	Do you grow high-residue crops, such as corn, small grains, canola, or mint at least 1 in 3 years in rotation?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
13.	Do you maintain a ground cover between the rows of your vineyard, orchard or field grown ornamentals?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
14.	Do you include any of the following in your crop rotation? • No-till, strip-till, direct seeding, or mulch-till • Perennial sod or hay in rotation • Add organic soil amendments such as manure or compost • Grow cover and green manure crops If none of the above, do your soil tests indicate an increase in organic matter?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
15.	Do you take measures to control soil compaction by avoiding tillage when soils are wet, utilizing permanent access roads, reducing tillage operations or growing deep rooted cover crops?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

Irrigation

16.	Do you adjust your irrigation rates for nutrient and pesticide applications?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
17.	Do you control irrigation-induced erosion by using a cover crop, perennial cover, polyacrylamide (PAM), residue management, or irrigation water management?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
18.	Do you apply irrigation water at rates that avoid water loss due to surface runoff or deep percolation?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

Answers

Minimum Treatment Requirements for CROPLAND

1.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** to questions 1-4, if you DO NOT apply nutrients or pesticides on the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP. Remember, the term nutrient includes organic and inorganic forms from all sources such as commercial, animal waste, sludge, compost or agricultural by-products. The term pest includes insects, weeds, plant diseases and rodents.
2.	YES	
3.	YES	
4.	YES	
5.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have any active or abandoned wells on the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP.
6.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have any fertilizer or pesticide mixing and loading sites on the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP.
7.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT periodically graze the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP.
8.	YES	
9.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT use agri-chemicals on the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP.
10.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT use nutrients or pesticides on the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP.
11.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have saline soils.
12.	YES	
13.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have a vineyard, orchard or field grown ornamentals.
14.	YES	
15.	YES	
16.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** to questions 16-18, if you DO NOT irrigate the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP.
17.	YES	
18.	YES	

IF YOUR ANSWERS DIFFER, you may not be eligible for CSP at this time. Please review your responses and answer only for the land, or portion of land, that you wish to enroll in the CSP.

You may want to identify a smaller portion of your operation, by taking out the lands that are not eligible, and answer the questions again.

PASTURE and RANGELAND Questions

1.	Do you follow a Grazing Management Plan that includes a grazing schedule and rest periods for all acres grazed? Note: A Grazing Management Plan provides the kind, class and number of animals that are supported based on the available forage supply. The grazing plan includes deferment, timing and duration of grazing.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
2.	Do you have an adequate grazing and roughage supply to meet your livestock needs on a monthly basis?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
3.	Do you have a grazing management contingency plan to adjust livestock numbers for changes in forage production due to drought, flooding, wildfire, and other natural events?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
4.	Are you using watering facilities, salting locations, fences or herding techniques to improve grazing distributions within pastures?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
5.	Do you have two years of written documentation or records of your grazing activities? Note: Records should include: Total grazing acres, forage production per pasture, number of livestock, grazing schedules, existing fences and watering facilities.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
6.	Are you managing livestock access to rivers, streams and other water courses?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
7.	Are livestock prevented access to sinkholes and other direct paths to groundwater to protect water quality?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
8.	Do you manage access roads, stock trails and other critical areas to limit surface water runoff and to prevent erosion?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
9.	Have you taken adequate steps to safeguard ground water from contamination by properly protecting active or abandoned wells? Examples of measures to protect wells: • Install sanitary well caps, tightly secured with a screened vent • Use pitless adaptors (a special pipe fitting that connects a water line to a well casing and provides a sanitary and frost-proof seal) • Prevent surface runoff from reaching the area immediately surrounding the well	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

Nutrients and Pesticides

In the following questions, the term **nutrient** includes organic and inorganic forms from all sources, such as commercial, animal waste, sludge, compost or agricultural by-products. **Pesticide** refers to insecticides, fungicides, miticides, rodenticides and herbicides. **Pest** refers to insects, plant diseases, rodents and weeds.

10.	Have you taken soil samples and tested soils to determine the level of plant available nutrients in the soil?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
11.	If you apply fertilizer, do you use a schedule or a Nutrient Management Plan to apply fertilizers, animal manure, or agricultural by-products? Note: A Nutrient Management Plan provides recommendations on the amount, form, placement and timing of plant nutrients to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution. The plan should address all sources of nutrients utilized.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
12.	If you apply pesticides, do you use a schedule or a Pest Management Plan to conduct pest control activities on your pasture and rangeland? Note: A Pest Management Plan provides recommendations on the chemical (pesticides), biological (beneficial insects, controlled grazing), or cultural (brush management, burning), control of pests (insects, weeds, plant diseases or rodents). It outlines the use, amount, form, timing and application of the control method to obtain optimum yields and forage quality while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
13.	Do you have two years of written records or documentation of your nutrient and pest management activities? Note: Records should include forage type, projected yields, soil analysis, dates and application rates of all nutrients used. Records should include the target pest, forage type and type of pesticide used, dates and application rates or the cultural or biological control method used and dates implemented including spot treatments.	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

Irrigation

14.	Do you adjust your irrigation rates for nutrient and pesticide applications?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
15.	Do you apply irrigation water at rates that avoid water loss due to surface runoff or deep percolation?	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA
16.	Do you monitor salinity levels and use techniques to manage salinity? The following techniques can be used: • Irrigation and drainage water management • Use soil amendments, such as gypsum • Plant salt-tolerant forages	☐ YES	☐ NO	☐ NA

Answers

Minimum Treatment Requirements for PASTURE and RANGELAND

1.	YES	
2.	YES	
3.	YES	
4.	YES	
5.	YES	
6.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have any rivers, streams or other water courses on the pasture or rangeland you wish to enroll in CSP.
7.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have sinkholes or other direct paths to groundwater on the pasture or rangeland you wish to enroll in CSP.
8.	YES	
9.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have any active or abandoned wells on the pasture or rangeland you wish to enroll in CSP.
10.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** to questions 10-13, if you DO NOT apply nutrients or pesticides on the pasture or rangeland you wish to enroll in CSP. Remember, the term nutrient includes organic and inorganic forms from all sources such as commercial, animal waste, sludge, compost or agricultural by-products and the term pest includes insects, weeds, plant diseases and rodents.
11.	YES	
12.	YES	
13.	YES	
14.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** to questions 14-15, if you DO NOT irrigate the pasture land you wish to enroll in CSP.
15.	YES	
16.	YES	You may answer **"NA"** if you DO NOT have saline or sodic soils.

IF YOUR ANSWERS DIFFER, you may not be eligible for CSP at this time. Please review your responses and be sure to answer only for the land, or portion of land, that you wish to enroll in the CSP.

You may want to identify a smaller portion of your operation, by taking out the lands that are not eligible, and answer the questions again.

STEP 3: Benchmark Inventory

The Benchmark Inventory will be the foundation of your CSP stewardship plan. It is important that you provide as much information about your operation as possible. You will be asked to describe your management system, such as your crop rotation and associated tillage, or your pasture rotation and associated grazing management activities. You will also be asked to describe any conservation work or practices you have already completed and identify any resource concerns you may have.

Remember to only include the land you wish to enroll in CSP

examples

Name of Agricultural Operation: Benchmark Farms		Name of Applicant: Joanne Smith
Land Use: crop	Field Name or #: 2	Acres: 33
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
Corn/soybean/winter rye rotation;	nutrient management, pest	would like to improve habitat for quail
no-till corn into rye stubble. Disk corn	management, scouting, split application	
residue once prior to planting	of nitrogen on corn, grass field border	
soybeans into corn stubble		

Name of Agricultural Operation: Benchmark Ranch		Name of Applicant: John Smith
Land Use: range	Field Name or #: north end	Acres: 245
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
2 pasture switchback	watering sites, spring burn, fencing,	Invasive weeds from neighboring sites
	salt placement, brush management	starting to come into property

BENCHMARK INVENTORY for the Conservation Security Program		
Name of Agricultural Operation:		Name of Applicant:
Land Use:	Field Name or #:	Acres:
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
Land Use:	Field Name or #:	Acres:
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address

BENCHMARK INVENTORY for the Conservation Security Program		
Name of Agricultural Operation:		Name of Applicant:
Land Use:	Field Name or #:	Acres:
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
Land Use:	Field Name or #:	Acres:
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address

BENCHMARK INVENTORY for the Conservation Security Program		
Name of Agricultural Operation:		Name of Applicant:
Land Use:	Field Name or #:	Acres:
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
Land Use:	Field Name or #:	Acres:
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address

Application Process Next Steps

Completing the self-assessment should have provided you with a good indicator of whether CSP is the right program for you at this time. CSP is one of several conservation programs and services available to help you meet your objectives. The first step towards achieving your conservation goals is to develop a Conservation Plan on your farm or ranch if you do not already have one. Contact your local NRCS office for technical assistance, program information and help in developing or implementing your conservation plan.

If you believe your operation is eligible for CSP, the next step is to schedule an interview with your local NRCS office. During the interview, the NRCS staff will review your Self-Assessment Workbook, documents and records to verify the information and clarify any questions.

If NRCS determines that your application meets the basic eligibility requirements and sign-up criteria, your application will be placed in a tier. Your tier placement will establish the length of your contract, final stewardship payment rate and contract payment limits. CSP is offered at three tiers of participation. Some payments are adjusted based on the tier, and some payments are tier-neutral. The following are the minimum tier eligibility and contract requirements:

CSP Tier I - documenting the kind of land (land use) and the existing condition and the conservation work done so far (the benchmark condition inventory) demonstrates to the satisfaction of NRCS that the applicant has addressed the nationally significant resource concerns of water quality and soil quality to the minimum level of treatment for any eligible land use on **part of the agricultural operation**. Only the acreage meeting such requirements is eligible for stewardship and existing practice payments in CSP.

CSP Tier II - documenting the kind of land (land use) and the existing condition and conservation work done so far (the benchmark condition inventory) demonstrates to the satisfaction of NRCS that the applicant has addressed the nationally significant resource concerns of water quality and soil quality to the minimum level of treatment for all eligible land uses on the **entire agricultural operation**. Additionally, the applicant must agree to address another significant resource concern applicable to the watershed to be completed by the end of the contract period. If the applicable resource concern is already addressed or does not pertain to the operation, then this requirement is waived.

CSP Tier III - documenting the kind of land (land use) and the existing condition and the conservation work done so far (the benchmark condition inventory) demonstrates to the satisfaction of NRCS that the applicant has addressed all of the existing resource concerns listed in Section III of the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) with a resource management system that meets the **minimum level of treatment for all eligible land uses on the entire agricultural operation**.

Your application will then be placed into an enrollment category for funding consideration based on the criteria specified in the sign-up notice. You may choose to be placed into the highest enrollment category for which your application qualifies. It is likely that you will have several tier and enrollment category options from which to choose. NRCS cannot make this decision for applicants or advise them on which tier and category combination is most advantageous for their situation, nor predict if funding will be available for any specific category. The NRCS staff will explain the requirements and payments of the different options available to you so that you can make the right decision for your operation.

In addition to a stewardship payment, you may also receive payments for enhancements that you are willing to implement as part of your CSP contract. Enhancements are new or innovative activities, techniques, or methods used to improve resource conditions beyond the minimum level of treatment needed for protection. In general, enhancements provide resource benefits; result in an observable or measurable improvement to the condition of one or more of the soil, water air, plant or animal resources; and provide for more efficient resource use. During your interview, you will be provided with a list of the enhancements available in your watershed.

Please review the Application Checklist on the following page to make sure you have all of the necessary information and documents ready for your interview.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST		
☐	1.	Completed Self-Assessment Workbook
☐	2.	Conservation Plan OR a map delineating your agricultural operation: ☐ An aerial photo, or overlay of the land you wish to enroll showing the land use, acreage, approximate location, and type of practices installed on each field you wish to enroll
☐	3.	Records - You must have at least 2 years of written records for each of the following practices you apply: ☐ Nutrient Management Records should include: yields, soil analysis, dates and application rates of all inorganic and organic fertilizers, including animal waste ☐ Pest Management Records should include: target pest, crop or forage type and the type of pesticide used, dates and application rates or the cultural or biological control method used and dates implemented, including spot treatments ☐ Grazing Management Records should include: total acres, production per acre, number of livestock, grazing schedules, maps showing existing practices, such as fences and watering facilities, and aerial photos showing the condition of the grazing land ☐ Irrigation Schedule/ Water Management Records should include: crop type, rainfall amounts (if appropriate), irrigation dates and amounts applied ☐ Waste Utilization Records should include crop type, projected yields, soil analysis, waste analysis, dates and application rates of all animal waste applied
☐	4.	Tests/Analyses - You must provide a record of the following tests, as applicable: ☐ Soil Test If you are applying nutrients (includes all types), you must provide historical records of a soil test conducted within the last 5 years at a minimum. If you are traditionally applying at or below the recommended rates for your soil and cropping system, this requirement may be waived. ☐ Animal Waste and/or Sludge Analysis If you are applying animal waste or sludge, you must provide records of an analysis conducted within the last 5 years at a minimum
☐	5.	Control of the Land Control means possession of the land by ownership, lease, or agreement; and authority to make decisions about the management and operation of the land
☐	6.	Form CCC-526, Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification (Appendix B)
☐	7.	Form AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (Appendix C)
☐	8.	Form CCC-1200, Conservation Program Application/Contract (Appendix D)

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM (CSP)
Control of Land Certification

Land Unit Description(s)
Farm Name, Number, Tract Number, or other legal description:

For the above described land unit(s) that I own, I hereby certify that my Tenant,

_____,

will have control of this land for the purpose of satisfying the terms and conditions of a Conservation Stewardship Contract, for the proposed contract period of _____ years.

_____ _____
Landowner Signature Date

INSERT

Form CCC-526: Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification

As described on Page 6, Question 4, of this Self-Assessment Workbook, this form is used to document compliance with Adjusted Gross Income Requirements. It should be completed and provided to the USDA Farm Service Agency so they can properly document that you meet this requirement.

AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 included average adjusted gross income as a payment eligibility requirement. Any individual or entity requesting certain 2003 through 2007 program payments will be subject to this provision. Any individual or entity that is determined to have an average adjusted gross income, as defined, that is less than 75 percent from farming, ranching or forestry operations and that exceeds $2.5 million will be ineligible for any covered benefit during the applicable year.

DEFINITIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Average Adjusted Gross Income means the average of the adjusted gross income or comparable measure of the individual or entity over the preceding 3 tax years. For instance, if 2003 program benefits are requested, the tax years for average adjusted gross income determination would be 2002, 2001 and 2000.

Entity means a corporation, joint stock company, association, limited partnership, charitable organization, or similar entity, including any such entity or organization participating in the operation as a partner in a general partnership, a participant in a joint venture, a grantor in a revocable trust, or as a participant in a similar entity, as determined by the Secretary.

The manner in which the Adjusted Gross Income can be determined for an entity can be found in the regulations at 7 CFR Part 1400.

Commensurate Reduction means that any covered benefit issued to an entity, general partnership, or joint venture shall be reduced by an amount that is commensurate with the direct or indirect ownership interest the entity, general partnership, or joint venture of each individual who does not comply with the adjusted gross revenue requirement.

Certification of Compliance means that an individual or entity shall provide either a certification by a certified public accountant that the average adjusted gross income does not exceed the requirement; or provide information and documentation regarding the adjusted gross income through other procedures established by the Secretary.

Income from farming, ranching or forestry means income derived from producing crops, livestock, or unfinished raw forestry products.

Special Rules for Certain Individual and Entities are applicable to those entities that are not required to file a tax return, and individuals and entities that did not have taxable income in one or more tax years used to determine the 3-year average. Please consult with personnel at your local FSA office or service center for more information.

EXAMPLES

Situation 1 - Joe Smith requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program and from a Conservation Reserve Program contract approved effective for 2003. Mr. Smith's average adjusted gross income exceeds $2.5 million and was all from farming and livestock operations.

Determination - At least 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income was received from farming, ranching and forestry operations. Therefore, Mr. Smith complies with the adjusted gross income requirement and is eligible for the program benefits requested.

Situation 2 - Grace Jones is a share rent landowner and requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program on a contract with her tenant. Ms. Jones' average adjusted gross income was less than $2.5 million and over 75 percent was from non-agricultural interests.

Determination - Less than 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income was from farming, ranching and forestry, but the amount was less than $2.5 million. Therefore, Ms. Jones is eligible for the program benefits requested.

Situation 3 - William Davis is a share rent landowner and requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program on a contract with his tenant. Mr. Davis' average adjusted gross income was greater than $2.5 million and over 75 percent was from non-agricultural sources.

Determination - Less than 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income was from farming, ranching and forestry, and exceeds $2.5 million. Therefore, Mr. Davis is ineligible for the program benefits requested.

Situation 4 - Mark Johnson is a 25 percent stockholder in Johnson Farms, Inc. Johnson Farms requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program. The average adjusted gross income for Johnson Farms was all from farming and ranching. The average adjusted gross income for each of the stockholders was mostly from non-agricultural sources and the amounts were less than $2.5 million with the exception of Mark.

Determination - Any program benefit issued to an entity, general partnership, or joint operation shall be reduced by an amount commensurate with the direct or indirect ownership interest of an individual or entity who has an average adjusted gross income in excess of $2.5 million. Therefore, Johnson Farms is eligible for the benefits requested, but reduced by the 25 percent, which represents the interest held by Mark.

This form is available electronically.

CCC-526
(10-15-03)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Commodity Credit Corporation

PAYMENT ELIGIBILITY
AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME CERTIFICATION

1A. County FSA Office or Service Center Address *(Include Zip Code)*

1B. Telephone Number *(Include Area Code)*:

The authority to collect the following information is Pub. L. 107-171. This authority allows for the collection of information without prior OMB approval mandated by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

NOTE: *The following statements are made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a), as amended. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-171), and the regulations at 7 CFR Part 1400, as amended, authorize the collection of the information required by this certification. The information will be used to establish payment eligibility in accordance with the requirements of the law for applicants who are requesting program benefits subject to these provisions. Providing this information is voluntary; however, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for program benefits. This information may be used by and provided to other agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, other State or Federal law enforcement agencies, and in response to orders of a court magistrate, or administrative tribunal. All information provided herein is subject to verification by the Commodity Credit Corporation. As provided in various statutes, failure to provide true and correct information may result in civil suit or criminal prosecution and the assessment of penalties or pursuit of other remedies.* ***PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OR SERVICE CENTER OFFICE.***

2A. Individual or Entity's Name and Address *(Include Zip Code)*

2B. Telephone Number *(Include Area Code)*:

3. Program Year

4. Identification Number *(SSN or Tax ID No.)*

CERTIFICATION OF AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME: Each individual or entity that requests program benefits must complete a certification of average adjusted gross income.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that:

- all definitions, requirements, and examples on Page 3 of this form were reviewed;
- this certification of average adjusted gross income is true and correct, and will be considered a continuous certification through 2007, unless changes or revisions are submitted;
- it is my responsibility to timely notify FSA in writing of any changes in the farming, ranching or forestry operation, or financial status that may affect this certification;
- evidence such as tax records, certified public accountant's certification, or other documentation may be required to validate this certification.

5. Type of Operation *(Check One)*

☐ Individual *(Complete Item 6)*

☐ Trust or Estate *(Complete Item 7)*

☐ Corporation *(Complete Item 8)*

☐ Limited Partnership, Limited Liability Company, Limited Liability Partnership or Similar Entity *(Complete Item 9)*

☐ Tax-Exempt or Non-Profit Organization *(Complete Item 10)*

6. **Individual** For individuals that file the IRS Form 1040, specific lines on the form represent the adjusted gross income and the income from farming, ranching or forestry operations. The income from farming, ranching or forestry is derived from the schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income, as specified on the IRS Form 1040 (or similar item on IRS Forms for individuals) for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 6B.

B. The average of the amount reported to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations on the IRS Form 1040 (or similar on Form 1040A or 1040EZ) for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount represented as adjusted gross income on the Form 1040 (or comparable amount on Form 1040A or 1040EZ). YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature

Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CERTIFICATION OF AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME *(Continuation)*

7. **Trust or Estate** For a trust or estate, the adjusted gross income is the total income and charitable contributions reported to IRS on the IRS Form 1041, or comparable forms. The income for farming, ranching and forestry is derived from the Schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above, and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 7B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 7A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

8. **Corporation** For a corporation, the adjusted gross income is the total of the final taxable income and any charitable contributions reported to the IRS on Form 1120, or comparable forms. The income from farming, ranching and forestry is derived from the Schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 8B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 8A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

9. **Limited Partnership (LP), Limited Liability Company (LLC), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) or Similar Entity** For an LP, LLC or LLP, the adjusted gross income is the total income from trade or business activities plus guaranteed payments to the members as reported to the IRS. The income from farming, ranching and forestry is derived from the Schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 9B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 9A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

10. **Tax-exempt or Non-profit Organization** For a tax-exempt and non-profit organization, the adjusted gross income is the unrelated business taxable income excluding any income from non-commercial activities as reported to the IRS. The income from farming, ranching and forestry would be derived from the schedule F, or IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 10B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching or forestry interests as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 10A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

INSERT

Form AD-1026 Appendix: Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certificatio

As described on Page 7, Question 5, of this Self-Assessment Workbook, this form is used to document compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation requirements. It should be completed and provided to the USDA Farm Service Agency so they can properly document that you meet this requirement. It is recommended that you review USDA records of your farming tracts to insure they are accurate.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Form Approved - OMB No. 0560-0185

Appendix to Form for AD-1026
Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification

The following conditions of eligibility are required for persons to receive any USDA loans or other program benefits that are subject to highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions, unless an exemption has been granted by USDA.

By signing Form AD-1026, Item 13, the producer certifies receipt of this form, and unless an exemption has been granted by USDA, agrees to the following on any farms in which such person has an interest.

A	**NOT** to plant or produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible fields unless actively applying an approved conservation plan or maintaining a fully applied conservation system.
B	**NOT** to plant or produce an agricultural commodity on wetlands converted after December 23, 1985.
C	**NOT** to convert wetlands by draining, dredging, filling, leveling, or any other means that would allow the planting of any crop, pasture, agricultural commodity, or other such crops.
D	**NOT** to use proceeds from any FSA farm loan, insured or guaranteed, received after December 23, 1985, for a purpose that will contribute to the conversion of a wetland to produce an agricultural commodity, or contribute to excessive erosion of highly erodible land as determined by NRCS.

NOTE: Signature on Form AD-1026 gives representatives of USDA authorization to enter upon and inspect all farms in which the producer has an interest for the purpose of confirming the above statements.

Any questions concerning the requirements of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, shall be directed to your County FSA Office personnel before signing AD-1026 in Item 13.

NOTE: *The following statements are made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information to be supplied on this form is the Food Security Act of 1985, Pub. L. 99-198, and regulations promulgated under the Act (7 CFR Part 12). The information will be used to determine eligibility for program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The information may be furnished to other USDA agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, or other State and Federal law enforcement agencies, and in response to orders of a court magistrate or administrative tribunal. Furnishing the Social Security Number is voluntary. Furnishing the other requested information is voluntary; however, failure to furnish to correct, complete information will result in a determination of ineligibility for certain program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The provisions of criminal and civil fraud statues, including 18 USC 286, 287, 371, 641, 1001; 15 USC 714m; and 31 USC 3729, may be applicable to the information provided by the produce on this form.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0185. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. ***RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AD-1026 TO YOUR COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) OFFICE (address printed in Item 6 of AD-1026A).***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION (HELC) AND WETLAND CONSERVATION (WC) CERTIFICATION

(See Page 2 for Public Burden and Privacy Act Statements).

1. Name of Producer	2. I.D. Number *(Last 4 digits only)*	3. Current Crop Year

	YES	NO
4. Do all your farming interests have current NRCS determinations? ***If "NO", contact your County FSA Office before completing this form.***	☐	☐
5. Are you a landlord on any farm that will not be in compliance with HELC and WC provisions? ***If "YES", enter the farm number at the end of this statement, or contact your County FSA Office before completing this form:*** _____	☐	☐
6. Do any of your landlord refuse to comply with HELC requirements on any farms? ***If "YES", enter the farm number at the end of this statement, or contact your County FSA Office before completing this form:*** _____	☐	☐
7. List affiliated persons with farming interests. ***See Page 2 for an explanation. Enter "NONE", if applicable.***		

	YES	NO
8. During the crop year entered in Item 3 above, or the term of a requested USDA loan, did or will you plant or produce an agricultural commodity on land for which a highly erodible determination has not been made?	☐	☐
9. On **any** land in which you have an interest, **has anyone** conducted any activities (since December 23, 1985) or **will anyone** conduct any activities (during the current crop year or the term of a requested USDA loan) to: (a) Create new drainage, conduct land leveling, filling, dredging, land clearing, or stump removal that has not been evaluated by NRCS? **Indicate year if answered " YES":** _____	☐	☐
(b) Maintain, improve, or modify an existing drainage that has not been evaluated by NRCS? **Indicate year if answered "YES":** _____	☐	☐
10. Will you conduct any activities for fish production, trees, vineyards, shrubs, building construction, or other non-agricultural purposes on lands for which a wetland determination has not been completed by NRCS?	☐	☐

If answers to Item 8, 9, or 10 are: } **"YES" for any one of these Items, sign and date in Item 11 below. A "YES" answer authorizes FSA to refer this AD-1026 to NRCS to make a HELC and or certified wetland determinations. DO NOT sign in Item 13 until the NRCS determination is complete.**

"NO" for all of these Items, complete Item 13. ***(Contact your County FSA Office if you are unsure about the answers to Items 9 or 10.)***

11. Signature of Producer ▶	***I hereby certify that the information on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.***	Date: *(MM-DD-YYYY)*
12. Referral to NRCS *(Completed by FSA)*	**Enter a checkmark if a NRCS determination is needed because "YES" is answered in Items 8, 9, or 10.** ☐	Signature of FSA Representative / Date *(MM-DD-YYYY)*

NOTE: Before signing in Item 13, Read AD-1026 Appendix.

Continuous AD-1026 Certification

I understand and agree that my eligibility for certain USDA program benefits is contingent upon this certification of compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act as amended. This agreement shall serve as a continuous certification and agreement for subsequent crop years. For current and subsequent crop years:

- **I agree to the terms and conditions stated on AD-1026 Appendix on all land in which I have or will have an interest.**
- **I agree that if there are any changes in my operation or activities that may affect compliance with these provisions, I will file a revised AD-1026.**
- **I agree to file any required exemption requests for each applicable crop year.**
- **I understand that affiliated persons are also subject to compliance with these provisions and their failure to comply or file AD-1026 will result in loss of eligibility to persons or enterprises with whom they are affiliated.** ***(Affiliated person rules are printed on Page 2 of this form.)***

13. Producer Sign Here ▶	Date *(MM-DD-YYYY)*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D. C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ORIGINAL - FSA COPY ☐ **NRCS COPY** ☐ **PRODUCER'S COPY** ☐

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITEM 7 OF AD-1026

The producer requesting benefits on AD-1026 shall attach a list of the applicable affiliated persons with farming interests who are required to file AD-1026. Follow the rules in this table to determine affiliated persons.

IF *producer, requesting benefits is a (an) . . .*	***THEN*** *affiliated persons who must file AD-1026 if they have farming interests are . . .*
individual **NOTE: If the individual filing is a minor child, the father and mother shall be listed as affiliates**	spouse or minor children with separate farming interests, or who receives benefits under their individual ID number.
	estates, trusts, partnerships, and joint ventures in which the individual filing, or the individual's spouse or minor children have an interest.
	corporations in which the individual filing or the individual's spouse or minor children have more than 20% interest.
general partnership	first level members of the entity.
limited partnership	
joint venture	
estate	
irrevocable or revocable trust	
Indian tribal venture or group	
corporation with stockholders	first level members with more than 20% interest in the corporation.
State	none
Church or other charitable organization	
county	
city	
public schools	
corporation with no stockholders	

KEY TO NRCS DETERMINATIONS IN ITEMS 8 THROUGH 11 LISTED ON AD-1026A

8. HEL = Highly Erodible Land:
- **"Y"** = NRCS determined highly erodible land.
- **"N"** = NRCS determined no highly erodible land.
- **" "** = NRCS has not made a determination.

9. 027 = Approved Conservation Plan (CPA-027):
- **"Y"** = Tract has an approved conservation plan.
- **"N"** = Tract **does not have** an approved conservation plan.
- **"X"** = HEL flag is "Y". Producer has a 2-year grace period after soil survey is available to obtain an approved conservation plan.

10. A027 = Applying Conservation Plan:
- **"Y"** = Producer is actively applying an approved conservation plan or system.
- **"N"** = Producer is **NOT** actively applying an approved conservation plan or system.

11. W = Wetlands:
- **"Y"** = NRCS determined wetlands on this tract. (* See footnote.)
- **"N"** = NRCS determined no wetlands on this tract.
- **" "** = NRCS has not made wetland determinations on entire tract.

***** NRCS has determined a wetland does exist on this tract. Contact your local NRCS office or FSA office for details concerning the location of the wetland and restrictions applying to the land according to NRCS determination before planting an agricultural commodity or performing any drainage or manipulation on this tract.

NOTE: *The following statements are made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information to be supplied on this form is the Food Security Act of 1985, Pub. L. 99-198, and regulations promulgated under the Act (7 CFR Part 12). The information will be used to determine eligibility for program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The information may be furnished to other USDA agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, or other State and Federal law enforcement agencies, and in response to orders of a court magistrate or administrative tribunal. Furnishing the Social Security Number is voluntary. Furnishing the other requested information is voluntary; however, failure to furnish to correct, complete information will result in a determination of ineligibility for certain program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The provisions of criminal and civil fraud statues, including 18 USC 286, 287, 371, 641, 1001; 15 USC 714m; and 31 USC 3729, may be applicable to the information provided by the produce on this form.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0185. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. ***RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AD-1026 TO YOUR COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) OFFICE (address printed in item 6 of AD-1026A).***

INSERT

Form CCC-1200: Conservation Program Application/Contract

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."