



South Dakota Fact Sheet

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

SD-FS-51
November 2006

Ground and Surface Water Conservation (GSWC)

Overview

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the 2002 Farm Bill) authorizes the Ground and Surface Water Conservation (GSWC) provision of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The EQIP GSWC provision allows for additional water saving funding in the High Plains Aquifer region.

The purpose of this provision is to install "water savings" practices in agricultural operations, particularly in cropland. Water savings means actions that will:

- Improve irrigations systems.
- Enhance irrigation efficiencies.
- Convert to less water intensive commodities or dry land farming.
- Improve water storage through water banking and groundwater recharge.
- Mitigate the effects of the drought.
- Include other practices that improve groundwater or surface water conservation, as deemed by the USDA secretary.

These funds can be provided through cost-share and incentive payments.

Drought Disaster Assistance

Historically, EQIP GSWC funding was only available for the seven South Dakota counties covered by a portion of the High Plains Aquifer; however, funding is available statewide for Fiscal Year 2007. The EQIP GSWC funds will be used to implement conservation measures that result in net savings in groundwater or surface water resources in the agricultural operation of the producer. Net savings means a producer implements water conservation activities such as enhanced irrigation efficiencies; improve water storage measures, or dry land farming. The net savings is not transferable. Priority will be given to the following:

- High Plains Aquifer (Ogallala);
- Belle Fourche and Angostura Reservoirs; and
- Big Sioux Aquifer.

EQIP GSWC Provision Information

- Cost-share and incentive payments for irrigation system practices are only eligible

on land that has been irrigated at least two of the past five years.

- All irrigated land that is served by any cost-share practices requires irrigation water management and flow measurement devices.
- Required tools for Irrigation Water Management, such as flow measurement devices, soil moisture monitoring, irrigation scheduling, etc., are eligible for cost-share at 50 percent of the actual cost not to exceed the specified maximum.
- Well modifications and power facilities for irrigation systems are not eligible for cost-share.
- Cost-share for conversion from gravity/surface irrigation to sprinkler irrigation will be 30 percent of the actual cost not to exceed \$100 per acre. Cost-share will be allowed for pivots (including corner systems) and non-traditional sprinkler systems (side rolls, solid set, etc.). End guns are allowed but are not eligible for cost-share. Dump valves will not be allowed on any sprinkler systems.
- Cost-share is not eligible for any systems that replace existing sprinkler systems.
- Cost-share is eligible for an additional span or pivot extension on an existing system if an end gun is replaced with the additional span or pivot extension.
- Cost-share for nozzle packages is only eligible for existing sprinkler systems. New irrigation systems are not eligible for cost-share.
- Cost-share for conversion from gravity/surface irrigation to subsurface drip irrigation will be 30 percent of the actual cost not to exceed \$100 per irrigated acre.
- Incentive payment for conversion of irrigated cropland to non-irrigated cropland or to non-irrigated permanent cover is available.

For more information about technical assistance and conservation programs, contact the local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office listed in the phone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture or go to <http://www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov>.