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Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2013 - FY13 Seasonal High Tunnels

(Released 12/07/2012)

Description:

National Bulletin 300-13-3, National Programmatic and Landscape Conservation Initiative Guidance - Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 dated October 26, 2012, provided State Conservationists (STCs) and the Directors, Caribbean and Pacific Islands Areas, with guidance for administering FY 2013 national programmatic and landscape conservation initiatives funded through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program, and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). Attachment C (pp.) of NB 300-13-3, provided instructions specific to the National Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative (NSHTI) including the establishment of subaccounts and application ranking tools. Before processing applications, planners should also be thoroughly familiar with the Regulation and Final Rule for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (7 CFR 1466) and the NRCS Manual, Title 440 - Programs, in general with specific emphasis on Part 512 - Conservation Program Contracting and Part 515 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program. National Bulletin 300-13-1, dated October 10, 2012, provides direction for processing applications for Conservation Activity Plans (CAPS) for FY 2013. The ProTracts application type of "planning" or "plan-organic" must be associated with each EQIP CAP application and ranking of these applications is required for FY 2013 ProTracts will not allow the application to be approved or obligated without a ranking score for applications for CAPS. Eligible EQIP applications for CAPs may be approved on a continuous basis, as funds are available.

Land Uses:

Crop

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 309.889

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 1000 - 250	Medium: 245 - 100	Low: 95 - 0
Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are high priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are medium priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, but are low priority for funding.

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 250 - 90	Medium: 85 - 45	Low: 40 - 0
Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are high priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are medium priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, but are low priority for funding.

Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
2	a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15

2	b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15
2	c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5
3	a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15
3	b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10
3	c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5
4	a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
4	b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), CH4 (Methane), and N2O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15
4	c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5
5	a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15
5	b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5
6	a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15
6	b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10
7	a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7	b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10
7	c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5
7	d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10
7	e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10
7	f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5
8	a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15
8	b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP (122,124)?	10
8	c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10
9	a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10
9	b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5
9	c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5
Total Points		500

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 400 - 225	Medium: 220 - 110	Low: 105 - 0
Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are high priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are medium priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, but are low priority for funding.

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		Answer ALL of the following criteria that apply regarding the project's impact on addressing resource concerns. Maximum points 250.	

	1	a The Schedule of Operations includes a seasonal high tunnel which will assist the producer to improve plant productivity, health and vigor.	75
	1	b The Schedule of Operations includes a seasonal high tunnel which will assist the producer to grow plants in areas where they are not typically suited or adapted to grow.	75
	1	c The Schedule of Operations includes practices or supports the use of existing practices (such as; cover crops, residue management, and residue and tillage management) which will result in a positive Soil Condition Index (SCI) score as determined by RUSLE II.	50
	1	d The Schedule of Operations includes supporting practices necessary to support a new or existing seasonal high tunnel in order to address soil erosion.	50
2		Answer ONE of the following criteria that apply regarding the projects ability to address excess nutrients and organics in surface water.	
	2	a The Schedule of Operations includes a seasonal high tunnel which will assist the producer to reduce excess nutrients and organics in surface water from a field that adjoins a designated ?impaired water body? (TMDL, 303d, etc.).	75
	2	b The Schedule of Operations includes a seasonal high tunnel which will assist the producer to reduce excess nutrients and organics in surface water from a field that adjoins a ?non-impaired water body?.	25
3		Answer ONE of the following criteria that apply regarding the projects ability to address harmful levels of pesticides in surface water.	
	3	a The Schedule of Operations includes a seasonal high tunnel which will assist the producer to reduce harmful levels of pesticides in surface water from a field that adjoins a designated ?impaired water body? (TMDL, 303d, etc.).	75
	3	b The Schedule of Operations includes a seasonal high tunnel which will assist the producer to reduce harmful levels of pesticides in surface water from a field that adjoins a ?non-impaired water body?.	25
Maximum Points: 400 Total Points			450

Local Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.658

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 250 - 90	Medium: 85 - 45	Low: 40 - 0
Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are high priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, and are medium priority for funding.	Represents projects which meet intent of program, but are low priority for funding.

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		What type of crops will be produced? Choose only one	
	1	More than 90 percent of the crops produced will be consumed as human food.	150
	2	More than 75 percent of the crops produced will be consumed as human food.	100
	3	Less than 75 percent of the crops produced will be consumed as human food.	50
2		How will the crops produced be used? Choose only one	
	1	More than 90 percent of the crops produced will be used for subsistence consumption.	100

	2	More than 75 percent of the crops produced will be used for subsistence consumption.	75
	3	Less than 75 percent of the crops produced will be used for subsistence consumption.	50
3		Additional resource concerns. Select all that apply.	
	1	Will compost and/or animal waste be used and can NRCS document a CNMP.	50
	2	Will crop residues be used for livestock feed or bedding.	30
	3	Is fertigation part of an existing irrigation system.	50
Maximum Points: 250 Total Points			655

Selected Resource Concerns and Practices:

Plant Condition: Plants not adapted or suited

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Diversion (362)
- Grassed Waterway (412)
- Irrigation Reservoir (436)
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441)
- Residue Mgmt, Mulch Till (345)
- Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops (798)

Plant Condition: Productivity, Health and Vigor

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Irrigation Reservoir (436)
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441)
- Residue Management, Seasonal (344)
- Residue Mgmt, Mulch Till (345)
- Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops (798)

Soil Condition: Organic Matter Depletion

- Conservation Cover (327)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Integrated Pest Management (595)
- Residue Mgmt-No-Till/Strip Till/Direct S (329)
- Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops (798)

Soil Erosion: Sheet and Rill

- Conservation Cover (327)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Diversion (362)
- Grassed Waterway (412)
- Residue Management, Seasonal (344)
- Residue Mgmt-No-Till/Strip Till/Direct S (329)
- Subsurface Drain (606)
- Surface Drain, Field Ditch (607)
- Underground Outlet (620)

Water Quality: Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water

- Composting Facility (317)
- Conservation Cover (327)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Integrated Pest Management (595)

Residue Management, Seasonal (344)
Residue Mgmt-No-Till/Strip Till/Direct S (329)
Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops (798)
Water Quality: Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water
Conservation Cover (327)
Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
Cover Crop (340)
Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops (798)

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