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NRCS Extends Sign-up Period for Conservation Stewardship Program Applications accepted through January 27, 2012

BOISE, Idaho, Jan. 12, 2012 – USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) extended the ranking period cut-off date for applications in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to January 27, 2012.

“NRCS extended the deadline for applications two more weeks to give agricultural producers more time apply for this program,” said Idaho State Conservationist Jeff Burwell. “Idaho has a lot of conservation-oriented producers that NRCS can help through this program.”

CSP offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and who agree to adopt new conservation practices. Payments are paid on a per acre basis. The program has a continuous sign-up with announced cut-off dates for ranking and processing applications.

The program is open to all producers on cropland, pastureland, rangeland and non-industrial forestland, Burwell said. “Private forest landowners may not be aware of the financial assistance this program presents,” he said, “but CSP offers them an opportunity to implement conservation practices that can significantly improve their forests’ health.”

“Organic producers can also benefit from this program. Because of the nature of organic production they may have already addressed resource problems on their operation; CSP can reward them for maintaining those practices and help fund additional conservation activities they plan to implement.”

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices or online at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html.

Over the last three years, NRCS funded 261 CSP contracts with Idaho producers and provided over \$4 million to help farmers, ranchers and private forest landowners implement resource conserving practices on their land.

To learn more, interested landowners should contact their local NRCS office or go online to <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp>.

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