

FARM BILL PRIORITIES



CONSERVATION PROGRAMS GUIDE FARMERS AND RANCHERS IN IMPROVING LAND, SOIL, AND WATER QUALITY.

GOAL:

MAINTAIN THE STRENGTH OF OUR WORKING LANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAMS, EQIP AND CSP.

- STRATEGY** ➤ Preserve funding and continue technical assistance support. With these programs, farmers and ranchers can steward their soil and water resources for the next generation without breaking the bank.
- Support farmers and ranchers in expanding conservation practices by making the transition from EQIP to CSP clear and easy.

GOAL:

MANAGE RISK THROUGH CONSERVATION.

- STRATEGY** ➤ Strengthen links between crop insurance and conservation programs to reward farmers who invest in healthy soil and water.
- Offer higher crop insurance premium subsidy rates to farmers implementing conservation plans. This both rewards and incentivizes responsible stewardship.
 - Cover crops are a valuable tool for farmers to use to manage the health of their soil and water. However, crop insurance rules currently treat planting cover crops differently from other farming practices, and farmers have to terminate cover crops by a certain date in order to qualify for crop insurance. These special rules for cover crops should be eliminated, and planting cover crops should be treated like every other farming practice, from planting to spraying.

EQIP = Environmental Quality Incentive Program
CSP = Conservation Stewardship Program
CRP = Conservation Reserve Program



How do EQIP, CSP, and CRP differ?

EQIP supports a variety of conservation practices, while CSP assists farmers who want to go “the extra mile” with additional practices. After enrolling in EQIP and CSP, farmers and ranchers can continue to work on their land, so EQIP and CSP are known as “working lands” programs. CRP provides rental payments for 10 to 15 years to landowners if they take land out of production and install various conservation practices.



WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

- Sign up for our **email updates** at <http://www.cfra.org/contact>. We send out Rural Action Alert emails explaining issues and how you can help.
- **Call your representatives:** A simple phone call to your representative can make a huge difference! To prepare, look up who your representatives are (call the Congressional switchboard at 202.224.3121 to ask) and write down their phone numbers somewhere easy to access.
- **First-time caller?** Your call can be as simple as this:
“Hello, my name is _____ and I live in [city where you live - so they know that you’re a voter in their district]. I am calling to let Rep./Sen. _____ know that I support [full funding for conservation programs, targeted support for small and mid-sized farmers, programs that support beginning farmers... etc.]. Thank you!”
- **Get more involved:** Sign a letter of support to Congress or write a letter to the editor. We’re always happy to brainstorm ideas and work with you to draft a letter. Call us at 402.687.2103 ext. 1012.

“We want to do our part and share our story; we’re taking care of the land, we’re taking care of the water because we depend on it.”

HENRY BEEL, EQIP PARTICIPANT, NEBRASKA
PICTURED: BROTHERS HENRY, FRANK, AND ADAM BEEL AT THEIR RANCH.

