

FACT SHEET:

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM:

WORKING LANDS CONSERVATION IN SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota's strong agricultural economy plays a pivotal role as a leading agriculture-centric state in the U.S. To increase productivity and protect the value of the land for future generations, it is imperative that conservation programs continue to receive funding in the upcoming 2018 farm bill.



SOUTH DAKOTA FARMS RELY ON CSP TO SUPPLEMENT LAND STEWARDSHIP

Working lands conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), provide the necessary tools for farmers and producers to maintain the agricultural production on their land, simultaneously addressing resource concerns within their operations. Funding and strengthening working lands conservation programs ensure farmers and producers are supported and rewarded for their environmental stewardship.



WHAT SOUTH DAKOTANS ARE SAYING

“ It provided me with training, equipment needed, and taught me ways to enhance my pasture land to the fullest potential. ”

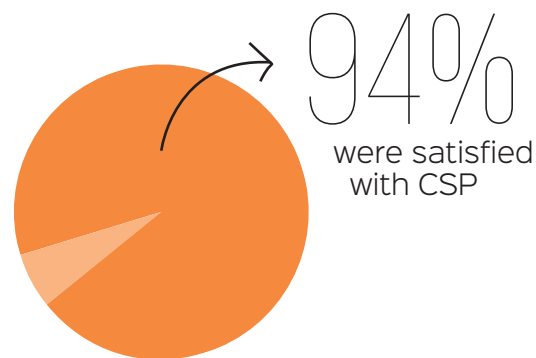
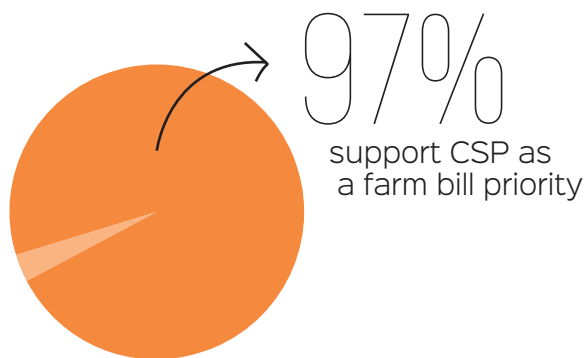
“ The extra payment allowed me to be more bold in trying different practices which don't always work out right away and require a learning curve. ”

“ CSP has taught us so much. We are learning so much about grasses, feed, and farming practices. We have always loved the land and our animals, but this program has helped us grow even more in the love of land and animals. ”



SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS AND PRODUCERS SUPPORT CSP AS A FARM BILL PRIORITY

In 2017, the Center for Rural Affairs surveyed constituents in South Dakota who have used CSP.



WHAT IS CSP?

CSP is a widely utilized land management tool focused on working lands in the U.S. The program encompasses 70 million total acres of productive agricultural and forest land nationally.

The program incentivizes conservation practices on South Dakota farms through education and contract payments. This provides farmers with foundational knowledge and funding to implement conservation practices in their farming operations. CSP promotes environmental stewardship and sustainability that not only benefits the productivity of the farm, but also improves water quality, air quality, and wildlife habitat.



Farmers want to enroll in CSP: in 2016, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was only able to accept **50.6 percent** of all eligible applications for CSP in South Dakota.

CSP ADDRESSES RESOURCE CONCERNS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

According to NRCS, there are five targeted resource concerns in South Dakota:

1. Animals;
2. Plants;
3. Soil erosion;
4. Soil quality; and
5. Water quality.

CSP not only affects land management, but the positive environmental effects impact all constituents in South Dakota.

The program effectively addresses each of these concerns by accepting applications on a year-round basis and developing individualized conservation plans for participants until funding is depleted.

