USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resource Conservation Service Conservation Programs

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

Agency Differences

- FSA
  - Eligibility
  - Emergency Programs
  - Loans
  - And much more
- NRCS
  - Technical Assistance
  - Conservation Programs
  - We are cooler
  - Easier to get along with

Financial Assistance Programs

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - Cost-share Program-not a grant or a loan
  - Funding to assist structural practices or base management practices as part of the plan
  - May also fund transition to more conservation friendly practices
  - Contract length varies up to 10 years
  - Payments completed as practices are completed
  - Advanced Payment and Assignment of Payment available

EQIP Practice Examples

- Crossfence, wells, pipelines, tanks to manage grazing to benefit plants and soils
- High Tunnels to extend growing period and increase production
- Forest Stand Improvement/Thinning, fuel break, access roads, forest/brush management plan and reforestation/tree planting

Financial Assistance Programs

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
  - Funding to maintain and adopt management changes as part of the conservation plan
  - Contract length is 5 years
  - Annual payment based on what is already being done and what is planned
  - Individual maximum is $200,000

CSP Examples

- Grazing Plans
  - Rotational grazing
  - Changing seasons of use
- Wildlife Habitat Management
- Forest Manage Plans
  - Forest Stand Improvement
  - Brush Management
  - Reforestation/Tree Planting

Financial Assistance Programs

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) > partner-driven solutions

- **RCPP Classic:** uses NRCS programs and easements in *collaboration* with lead partner.
- **RCPP Alternative Funding Arrangement (AFA)** allows lead partner to work directly with agriculture customers to implement conservation efforts.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
United States Department of Agriculture

South Dakota CONSERVATION CHOICES

Urban/Small Farm Practices

Conservation practices help improve soil health, reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and provide other natural resource benefits.

USDA's NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE - South Dakota

April 2023 SD-FS-120

No matter the size of your farm, having the knowledge you need to conserve, maintain and restore the natural resources on your farm is a powerful tool. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can help urban and small farmers create a conservation plan that can serve as a road map towards improving the health and resiliency of your operation.

A conservation plan can enable you to make educated decisions for your farm, keep you from making costly management mistakes, and possibly help qualify you for financial programs.

The way we manage our soil resource has a greater impact on its ability to function than any other factor. Productive and resilient land can be obtained by using a soil health management system that incorporates these four simple principles:

- Minimizing disturbance from tillage and over-grazing.
- Maximizing soil cover with residues and living plants.
- Maximizing diversity with crop rotations and cover crops.
- Maximizing living roots year-round with crops, forages and cover crops.

Benefits can include increased soil organic matter, improved resilience to drought and floods, improved nutrient cycling, and overall increased profits.

This fact sheet lists common conservation practices that will help address natural resource concerns on your urban/small farm. To learn more about the assistance available for you farm and how to get started, visit your local USDA NRCS Office. We can help you make the right choices to protect and improve your land and other natural resources.

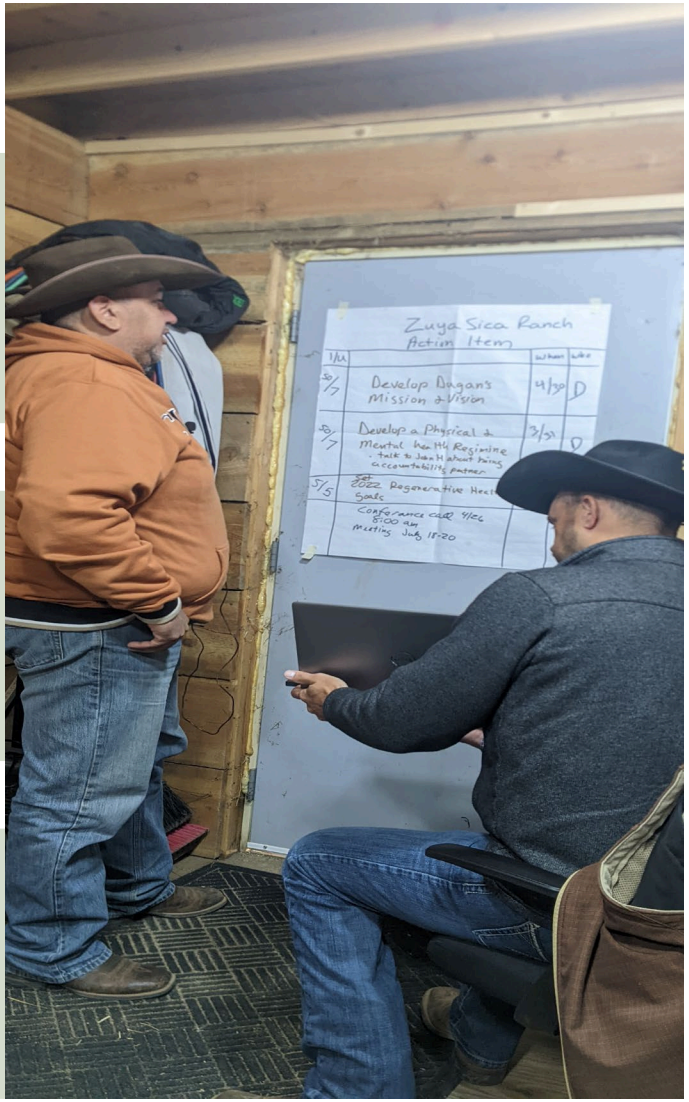
Practice		Description	Benefits
High Tunnel		A covered structure used to protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall, or cold.	» Improves plant growing conditions » Extends the growing season » Improve plant quality
Low Tunnel		A low-profile temporary covered structure that protects plants.	» Protects plants from cold, sun and wind » Extends the growing season » Excludes pests from crops
Cover Crops		Grasses, legumes, and/ or broadleaves planted for seasonal cover.	» Reduces erosion » Maintains or increases soil organic matter » Traps and cycles nutrients » Improves water infiltration and water-holding capacity » Reduces compaction
Mulching		Applying plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface.	» Improves soil moisture management » Reduces weed pressure and erosion » Builds or maintains soil organic matter
Pollinator and Beneficial Insect Habitat		Planting wildlife friendly grasses and wildflowers to support pollinators and beneficial insects.	» Increases pollination of crops » Increases predation and parasitism of pests » Reduces soil erosion, runoff and improves water quality
Raised Beds		An enclosed, above ground growing environment.	» Improves growing conditions where soils are unsuitable for production » Can reduce erosion, runoff and improves water quality » Improves accessibility when farming
Microirrigation		Managing the volume, frequency, and rate of irrigation water.	» Improves irrigation water use efficiency » Minimize irrigation-induced soil erosion » Improves plant growing conditions » Reduces energy use

For more information visit: www.nrcs.usda.gov/South Dakota

Helping People Help the Land.
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Conservation Planning Process

- Assess Resource Concerns and Opportunities
- Developing Your Plan
- Implementing Conservation Practices



Planning Process

- Assessing Resource Concerns & Opportunities
  - Identify concerns, goals, and changes
  - Inventory resources
  - In the field

Planning Process

- Developing Your Conservation Plan
  - Options discussed and evaluated to reach goals
  - Decision maker selects what they want to do

Conservation Plan includes:

- Objectives and Goals
- Aerial photo map
- Soils map and descriptions
- Inventory data
- Chosen treatment decisions
- Location and schedule of practices
- Operation and Maintenance

Planning Process

- Implementing Conservation Practices
  - Detailed Implementation information
  - Evaluate and Adjust


penny
nickel
dime
quarter

Tribal Assistance Contact List

Tribal Liaisons

- Vacant – Pine Ridge
- Mary Scott – Rosebud
- Dave Pesicka – Cheyenne River
- Merris Miller – Standing Rock
- Stacy Turgeon(Acting) –Crow Creek
- Shane Reis (Acting) – Lower Brule
- Tim Cogger- Sisseton
- Rhonda Nelson – Flandreau
- Vacant – Yankton
- Nathan Grueb– State TL

District Conservationists

- Sandy Huber – Martin
- Joseph Eastman– White River
- Dustin Jewett – Dupree
- Bailey Alley – Timber Lake
- Colin Nehl– McIntosh
- Jody Jessop - Kennebec
- Amber Bunker – Chamberlin

Questions?

- Contact Info
  - Nate Grueb, SD State Tribal Liaison
    - nathan.grueb@usda.gov
    - 605-218-0153