

## State CRP checks for October top \$64 million

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USDA has issued more than \$64 million in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments in October to eligible producers in Nebraska.

“The Conservation Reserve Program works cooperatively with farmers and ranchers to conserve and preserve environmentally sensitive land that can be improved by controlling soil erosion, enhancing habitats for waterfowl and wildlife or by improving water quality,” said Ryan Coleman, executive director for the Farm Service Agency in Custer County. “These payments compensate dedicated farmer and rancher conservationists who want to improve conservation on sensitive lands.”

These annual rental payments are earned on the 1.0 million acres enrolled in CRP, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Programs and Continuous Sign-Up Programs.

Statewide there are 28,285 producer contracts on 15,899 farms that received an average of \$4,050 per farm or \$60.85 per acre. The number of contracts is higher than the number of farms because producers may have multiple contracts on a single farm.

According to Coleman, the success of CRP has provided a significant return on USDA’s investment in the program since its start in 1986. CRP has resulted in an eight billion ton reduction in soil erosion, restoration of two million acres of wetlands and adjacent buffers and significant increases in upland game and waterfowl numbers which translates to recreational dollars for many rural economies nationwide.

Producers who enroll in CRP, plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve water quality, control soil erosion and enhance habitats for waterfowl and wildlife. In return, USDA provides producers with rental payments.

The CRP contract duration is from 10 to 15 years. Eligible land must be either highly erodible, contribute to a serious water quality problem, provide important wildlife habitat or provide substantial environmental benefits if devoted to certain specific conservation uses.

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U.S. farmers and ranchers have had a 25 year CRP conservation partnership with the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

“Conservation and production agriculture are not separate from one another. On the contrary, they are common efforts for a common good, said Coleman. “Suffice it to say that, many of the most dedicated conservationists are our nation’s farmers and ranchers.”

For more information on CRP, producers should contact their local FSA office or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.