

NRCS to explain new conservation program

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Meetings set throughout state

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is holding 108 public meetings across the state by the end of August for producers to learn about the new Conservation Stewardship Program.

This program was announced Aug. 10 by USDA officials. This is the first nationwide sign-up for this program, according to Steve Chick, NRCS state conservationist. Previous sign-ups under a similar program were on a watershed or area basis.

Farm and ranch operators will have until Sept. 30 to apply for this first program sign-up at local NRCS offices.

Area meetings to learn about the program include:

Lexington—Wednesday, Aug. 26, 1-3 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express.

North Platte—Wednesday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express, Sioux Room, at 300 Holiday Frontage Road.

Broken Bow—Thursday, Aug. 27, 11-1 p.m. at Huckleberry's, 625 S. 10.

The Conservation Stewardship Program is a voluntary program that encourages ag producers to maintain existing conservation practices and adopt new ones in their operations.

This program was authorized through 2017 in the last farm bill. NRCS will be taking applications on a continuous sign-up and periodically ranking applications for funding in the future also.

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“During the application process the operator will have to provide some documentation of their operations, and if they rent land be able to show control of the land for the length of a five year contract,” said Chick. There are also some operators, especially grazing folks that may not have a Farm Service Agency number for their operations. That number will be needed for the CSP application. These meetings will give more producers time to get ready, he added.

CSP is not a cost-share program but rather pays for conservation work already accomplished and offers incentives to apply additional conservation practices.

Further information is available at any NRCS office or the [Nebraska Web site](#) or the national [NRCS Web site](#)