

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Report To
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
July 14, 2011
Neil Jensen, District Conservationist**



NRCS Receives Additional Conservation Funding for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

NRCS recently approved additional funding for EQIP contracts in the amount of \$133,374. This brings the total to 41 contracts for \$750, 502 within the 6 county area of the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resource District.

Practices funded in the EQIP contracts include:

- Cropland - terraces, underground outlets, diversions, no-till residue management and a grade stabilization structure.
- Pastureland – fencing, brush management, water well, pumping plant, pipeline and pasture planting.
- Animal Feeding Operation – waste storage facility.
- Seasonal High Tunnels for crop production.
- Organic Farming.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program received \$1,238 billion, \$350 below the level authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill for fiscal year 2011. This reduction does not include the 0.2 percent across the board cut to non-defense accounts.



Secretary Vilsack Visits the Tekamah USDA Service Center

On June 16 and 17, 2011, Secretary Tom Vilsack traveled to Iowa and Nebraska to visit with farmers and others affected by floodwaters along the Missouri River. A copy of the secretary's report can be found at

www.usda.gov.



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS.

NRCS Notified of CRP General Acceptance

26 participants have agreed to enroll 847 acres into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). NRCS will be providing planning assistance to the participants within the next month. The CRP program is administered by USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

CRP is a voluntary program that assists farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers to use their environmentally-sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers in exchange for rental payments, cost-share and technical assistance. By reducing water runoff and sedimentation, CRP also protects groundwater and helps improve the condition of lakes, rivers, ponds and streams. Acreage enrolled in the CRP is planted to resource-conserving vegetative covers, making the program a major contributor to wildlife population increases in many parts of the country.



STAFFING UPDATES

NRCS has advertised the job opportunity for the Soil Conservation Technician position in Tekamah. Closing date for submitting applications is July 15.

USDA REMINDS HISPANIC AND WOMEN FARMERS AND RANCHERS OF DISCRIMINATION SETTLEMENT CLAIMS PROCESS

As part of continued efforts to close the chapter on allegations of past discrimination at USDA, outreach meetings are being held throughout the country with farmers and ranchers to talk about the settlement claims process available to women and Hispanic farmers and ranchers who assert that they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans.

Maxine Moul, State Director for Nebraska Rural Development; Dan Steinkruger, Executive Director for the Nebraska Farm Service Agency, and Craig Derickson, State Conservationist for the Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation Service, are leading the outreach efforts for their respective agencies. This leadership team is talking with individuals, as well as farmer and community organizations to underscore USDA's commitment to resolving allegations of past discrimination and usher in "a new era of civil rights".

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS AND RANCHERS

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. This means you may be eligible if:

- 1.** You sought a farm loan or farm-loan servicing during that period;
- 2.** The loan was denied, provided late, approved for a lesser amount than requested, approved with restrictive conditions, or USDA failed to provide an appropriate loan service; and
- 3.** You believe these actions were based on your being Hispanic or your being female.

In 2011, a claims administrator will begin mailing claims packages to those who have requested one through the Call Center or website. The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.

If you want to register your name to receive a claims package, access the Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Call Center or website:

Call Center: 1-888-508-4429

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

For guidance, you may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider in your community. **USDA cannot provide legal advice to you.**

If you are currently represented by counsel regarding allegations of discrimination or in a lawsuit claiming discrimination, you should contact your counsel regarding this claims process.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

June 2011



USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.