

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Report To
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
April 10, 2014
Neil Jensen, District Conservationist**

RESOURCES FOR SMALL FARMS



There is considerable emphasis being placed on small farms, beginning farmers, and veteran farmers, as well as a continued push on Organic, Hoop Houses and such. This USDA emphasis will also meet with much State support from Nebraska

Department of Agriculture, UNL and the Commodity Groups because Nebraska has set a new goal of increasing 5 major livestock areas by 10-20 percent in numbers and volume.

Nebraska ranks:

- 1st in commercial red meat production
- 1st in commercial cattle slaughter
- 2nd in cattle and calves cash receipts
- 3rd in meat animals cash receipts
- 4th in all livestock and products cash receipts
- 4th in beef cows and heifers calved
- 6th in all hogs and pigs produced

In addition, the Omaha field office is working with urban farms in the Omaha area. One organization NRCS has had contact with is No More Empty Pots. No More Empty Pots' vision is to support communities in becoming self-sufficient and food secure through collaboration, education, stewardship and sustainability. Their education and outreach capabilities will provide NRCS opportunities to work with non-traditional farmers.

REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

RCPP combines the authorities of four former conservation programs:

- Agricultural Water Enhancement Program
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program
- Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative
- Great Lakes Basin Program

Assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) and Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP); and in certain areas the Watershed Operations and Flood Prevention Program.

RCPP encourages partners to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales.

Through RCPP, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved. The Secretary of Agriculture may also designate up to eight critical conservation areas to focus RCPP assistance.



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