

USDA Conservation Programs: Nationally Valued, Locally Driven, and Oversubscribed

Did you know farmers already want to enroll in USDA conservation programs and invest their own dollars in practices that help reduce carbon emissions? It's on Congress to make sure we meet that demand.

THE PROBLEM: Many U.S. farmers are left out of popular conservation programs.

USDA's top two programs—the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)—are routinely oversubscribed and have more applicants than available funding.

- EQIP and CSP received nearly 115,000 combined applications in FY2021 but were only able to fund a third of applicants.
- Oversubscription is especially true for EQIP—in FY2021 nearly 60% of the 113,000 applications received were deemed to be valid but only half of those projects received funding.
- The CSP acceptance rate has steadily declined from a peak of over 50% in the mid-to late- 2010s, corresponding to budget cuts to the program over the last decade.

Conservation Programs	2022 Awarded Projects
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	25.9%
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	24.8%

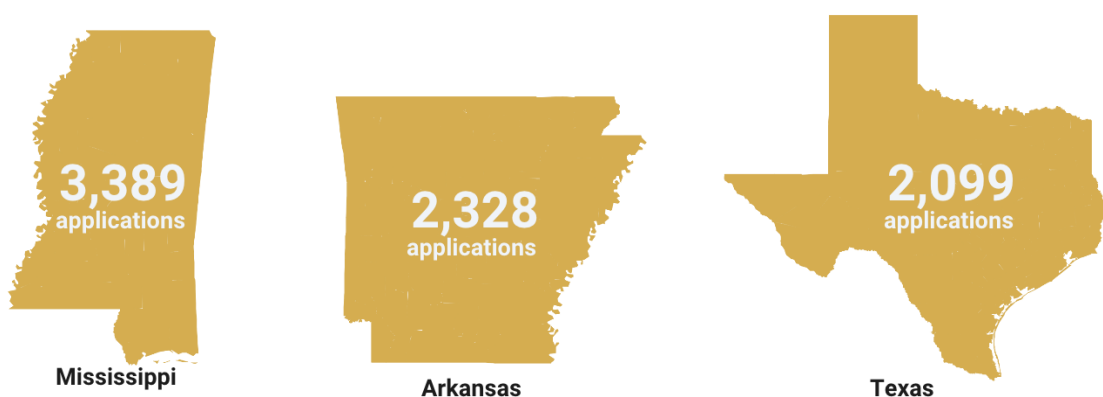
TOP 10 STATES: LOW EQIP/CSP ACCEPTANCE RATE, HIGH DEMAND (2022)

EQIP		CSP	
State	% of Applications Awarded Contracts	State	% of Applicants Awarded Contracts
North Carolina	15.53%	Mississippi	7.53%
Illinois	16.39%	Minnesota	8.03%
Georgia	18.58%	Arkansas	10.40%
Mississippi	19.46%	South Dakota	12.08%
Pennsylvania	19.79%	Georgia	13.97%
Iowa	19.94%	Nebraska	14.25%
Arkansas	20.24%	Montana	17.76%
Utah	21.24%	North Dakota	17.81%
Missouri	22.24%	Alaska	20.00%
Louisiana	23.19%	Kansas	21.08%

See data for all 50 states on pages 2-3.

VALID BUT UNFUNDED PROJECT APPLICATIONS

- Major agriculture states like Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas had the highest concentration of unfunded EQIP project applicants in FY2021.



THE SOLUTION: Prioritize maintaining Title II conservation programs in the upcoming Farm Bill.

Charts and data citation:

- Agricultural Conservation: A Guide to Programs. Congressional Research Service, 2021.
- USDA: Natural Resources Conservation Service. RCA Data Viewer.

EQIP ACCEPTANCE RATE BY STATE

EQIP	
State	% of Applications Awarded Contracts
North Carolina	15.53%
Illinois	16.39%
Georgia	18.58%
Mississippi	19.46%
Pennsylvania	19.79%
Iowa	19.94%
Arkansas	20.24%
Utah	21.24%
Missouri	22.24%
Louisiana	23.19%
California	23.53%
Kansas	23.58%
South Carolina	23.98%
Oklahoma	24.01%
South Dakota	24.56%
Kentucky	24.89%
New Mexico	25.06%
Colorado	26.01%
Minnesota	26.57%
Tennessee	26.57%
West Virginia	27.78%
Nebraska	27.86%
Florida	29.40%
Washington	30.76%
Vermont	31.53%
Indiana	32.17%
Hawaii	33.23%
New Jersey	33.77%
Virginia	34.23%
Ohio	34.41%
Wyoming	34.93%
Texas	34.98%
Maine	35.66%
Wisconsin	36.23%
Connecticut	37.62%
Michigan	38.33%
Arizona	39.12%
Maryland	39.16%
New York	39.78%
Montana	40.07%
Nevada	40.76%
Oregon	40.90%
Idaho	42.58%
Alaska	43.24%
Delaware	43.32%
Alabama	46.06%
Massachusetts	47.31%
North Dakota	47.54%
New Hampshire	48.80%
Rhode Island	58.91%

CSP ACCEPTANCE RATE BY STATE

CSP	
State	% of Applicants Awarded Contracts
Mississippi	7.53%
Minnesota	8.03%
Arkansas	10.40%
South Dakota	12.08%
Georgia	13.97%
Nebraska	14.25%
Montana	17.76%
North Dakota	17.81%
Alaska	20.00%
Kansas	21.08%
Oklahoma	21.11%
Illinois	21.96%
Texas	23.89%
Louisiana	24.14%
Delaware	25.00%
Missouri	26.25%
Oregon	27.78%
Iowa	30.17%
North Carolina	31.48%
New Mexico	32.10%
Kentucky	34.17%
Wisconsin	34.32%
Virginia	34.50%
Alabama	35.51%
Washington	36.55%
Tennessee	38.39%
Colorado	39.12%
Wyoming	39.39%
Maine	39.44%
Pennsylvania	42.11%
Nevada	47.06%
Florida	49.08%
California	51.74%
Indiana	51.88%
New Jersey	52.17%
Arizona	53.85%
Maryland	54.35%
Utah	54.61%
Hawaii	54.93%
Vermont	56.67%
Massachusetts	58.06%
New Hampshire	58.93%
South Carolina	61.34%
New York	63.94%
Michigan	67.40%
Ohio	70.59%
Connecticut	70.59%
Idaho	72.03%
West Virginia	73.40%
Rhode Island	85.37%