

2009 Application Ranking Guide

EQIP-General & Historically Underserved (HU) Ranking Tools

General Rules: Resource concern and practice associations must be listed on the 2009 RCPA for points to be applied in the ranking tool. National priority points require a Practice CPPE value of 4-5; State Issues require practices with CPPE values > 3, unless otherwise noted. Resource concern must be documented with digital photos or an approved NRCS tool such as MA P Index, WIN PST, RUSLE2, Soil Conditioning Index. As a general rule, "double dipping" for extra points is not allowed when assessing points.

National Priorities (110 points)

<i>Issue Questions</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution , such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds, groundwater contamination or point source contamination from confined animal feeding operations?	30 Points	Impaired Waters Categories 5 - 4 (1/2 mile buffer), or Drinking Water - Surface Water Zones A-B, Groundwater Zones 1-2 or IWPA areas (within boundaries). Practices: water quality associated practices (see 2009 RCPA).
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement for water conservation or irrigation efficiency using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in water use?	25 Points	Practices: Micro-Irrigation (442), Subsurface Irrigation (443), Land Smoothing (466), Tailwater Recovery (447), IWM-Cranberry Auto System (449).
3. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction of emissions , such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards?	10 Points	This element is addressed primarily by the <i>EQIP-Air Quality Initiative</i> . General EQIP offers these additional practices: Firebreak (394), Prescribed Grazing (528), Riparian Forst Buffer (391), Shellfish Aquaculture-remote scenarios (706), Tree/Shrub Establishment (612), Windbreak Establishment (380).
4. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land?	10 Points	Practices: Crop Rotation (328), Cover Crop (340), Pasture/Hayland Planting (512), Strip Cropping (585), Grassed Waterway (412), Terrace (600), Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580). If points were taken in Q#1 for sediment, no points may be awarded here.
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	15 Points	Must benefit species listed in <i>Key At-Risk Species.doc</i> as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. Does NOT require the site be within the habitat polygon. Practices: Early Successional (647), Wetland Wildlife (644), Upland Wildlife (645), Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Field Border (386), Open Channel (582).
6. Will treatment that you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable benefits to residue management, nutrient management, air quality management, invasive species management, pollinator habitat, and animal carcass management technology or pest management?	20 Points	Practices: Residue Mgt. (329), Nutrient Management (590), Pest Management (595), Animal Mortality Facility (316); <i>Pollinator Habitat</i> practices include: Conservation Cover (327), Field Border (386), Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390), Upland Wildlife Habitat (645), and Wetland Wildlife Habitat (644).

National Priorities (continued)

<i>Issue Questions</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Notes</i>
7. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in energy conservation benefits?	0 Points	DO NOT USE #7. This is being addressed through the <i>EQIP-Air Quality Initiative</i> .

State Issues (90 points)

<i>Issue Questions</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1. WATER QUALITY & QUANTITY (35 points)		
1. STRESSED BASINS/GROUNDWATER: Treatment will improve water use efficiency or water recharge in Stressed Basins or Groundwater Zones 1-2 .	5 Points	<u>Irrigation Efficiency Practices</u> : Micro-Irrigation (442), Subsurface Irrigation (443), Land Smoothing (466), Tailwater Recovery (447), IWM-Cranberry Auto System (449). <u>Infiltration Practices</u> : Filter Strip (393), Field Border (386), Stripcropping (585), Terrace (600), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), or conversion of cropland to permanent vegetation.
2. OTHER WATER: The treatment will improve water quality or quantity concerns in other waters, including designated shellfish growing areas, surface water, aquifers and wells.	10 Points	Practices: see 2009 Resource Concern and Practice Associations (RCPA) list for water quality and water quality.
2. FORESTRY & WILDLIFE (30 points)		
1. SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY: Forestland treatment will promote biological diversity, productive capacity, health and vitality of forest ecosystems and promote healthy watersheds.	30 Points	<u>Practices</u> : Early Successional Habitat (647), Firebreak (394), Forest Slash Treatment (384), Forest Stand Improvement (666), Forest Trails and Landings (655), Obstruction Removal (500), Pest Management (595), Restoration/Management of Declining Habitats (643), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Tree/Shrub Establishment (612), Tree/Shrub Pruning (660), Tree/Shrub Site Prep (490).
2. TURTLE HABITAT: Treatment will create, enhance or protect habitat for wood or box turtles.	15 Points	<u>Practices</u> : Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644).
3. SOIL QUALITY & SPECIALIZED FARMING OPERATIONS (25 points)		
1. SPECIALIZED OPERATIONS: The EQIP plan includes implementation of organic or aquaculture practices to address FOTG quality criteria standards.	15 Points	<u>Practices</u> : Shellfish Aquaculture Management (706), Transition to Organic (789) and other conservation practices to support the organic operation.
2. SOIL CONDITION/CARBON SEQUESTRATION: Treatment will improve soil condition and/or sequester carbon.	10 Points	SCI changes from negative to positive value, or increases positive value by 25%. Cranberry production excluded. <u>Practices</u> : Composting Facility (317), Conservation Cover (327), Cover Crop (340), Pasture & Hayland Planting (512), Prescribed Grazing (528), Residue Management (329), Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Tree/Shrub Establishment (612).

4. CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENTS (30 points)		
1. PROTECTED LAND: Treatment area falls within or directly impacts protected farmland or conservation land.	15 Points	Land is under permant restriction such as APR or CR.
2. PRACTICE/SYSTEM ENHANCEMENT: The contract will improve conservation practices already in place, or complete a conservation system.	10 Points	Final practice of an RMS, or enhances functioning of an existing practice.
3. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE: The EQIP plan will help the applicant meet imposed regulatory requirements.	5 Points	
5. PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION (-30 points)		
1. EXPEDITED COMPLETION: The EQIP plan schedule of operations provides for implementation of all funded practices within three years or less.	15 Points	Schedule of Operations: ≤ 3 years for implementation.
2. LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: The contract includes land management practices for which the applicant has previously received payments.	-15 Points	
3. COMPLIANCE: The applicant is out-of-compliance with other existing conservation program contracts.	-30 Points	Form 153 has been issued and corrective action has not been completed.

Local Issues (18 points)

<i>Issue Questions</i>	<i>Responses</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1. HIGHEST PRIORITY: The EQIP plan includes conservation practices that address the top local resource concern.	9 Point(s)	
2. SECOND PRIORITY: The EQIP plan includes conservation practices that address the second highest local resource concern.	6 Point(s)	
3. THIRD PRIORITY: The EQIP plan includes conservation practices that address the third highest local resource concern.	3 Point(s)	

* Efficiency Score formula: $((\sum \text{ccpe values}) * \text{lifespans}) / (\sum \text{practice average costs}) \times 9999$

Ranking Score

Efficiency Score:	
National Priorities:	
State Issues:	
Local Issues:	
Total Score:	

Notes: