

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Guide
EQIP General FA- Massachusetts

Program: EQIP 2008 - FY2010

Ranking Tool: EQIP General FA

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
1. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N1. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures? AFO/CAFO	15 Point(s)	Use EPA-CAFO criteria, document on Share Point\Programs\2010 Program Documents\CAFO.pdf
N1. b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated IMPAIRED water body?	10 Point(s)	<i>Adjacent</i> to 303D list 4&5, erosion and water quality practices.
N1. c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a water body?	5 Point(s)	<i>Adjacent</i> to surface water, erosion and water quality practices.
		National - Possible Points = 30
S1a. Improve the quality of 303D listed IMPAIRED WATER categories 4-5 (within ½ mile up-gradient of the designated waters), and DRINKING WATER, Surface Water Zones A-B (within zone, up-gradient), Groundwater Zones 1-2 or IWPA's (within zone).	50 Point(s)	<i>May select one of the state questions, but not both . Practices:</i> water quality associated practices (positive CPPE value).
S1b. Improve the quality of OTHER WATER, including designated shellfish growing areas, surface water, aquifers and wells (within 300' up-gradient of surface water or within groundwater zone)?	10 Point(s)	<i>May select one of the state questions, but not both . Practices:</i> water quality associated practices (positive CPPE value).
		State - Possible Points = 50
L1. a. Address animal waste issues impacting designated Outstanding Resource Waters?	25 Point(s)	<i>May select one of the local questions, but not both . Practices:</i> Animal Mortality Facility (316), Composting Facility (317), Stream Crossing (578), Vegetated Treatment Area (635), Waste Storage Facility (313), Waste Treatment (629), Waste Utilization (633), Waste Transfer (634)
L1. b. Address nonpoint or point source pollution affecting identified surface or ground water resources (within 300' up-gradient of surface water, or within groundwater zone)?	10 Point(s)	<i>May select one of the local questions, but not both . Practices:</i> water quality associated practices (positive CPPE value).
		Local - Possible Points = 25
2. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N2. a. Increase groundwater recharge in identified groundwater depletion areas (http://water.usgs.gov/ogw/rasa/html/TOC.html)?	N/A	

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N2. b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and result in estimated water savings of at least 5% and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Micro-Irrigation (441), Sprinkler Irrigation (442) (<i>improvements</i>), Subsurface Irrigation (443), Irrigation Water Conveyance (430) (<i>cranberry H-pattern</i>), Land Smoothing (466), Tailwater Recovery (447), Cranberry Auto-Start System (533).
N2. c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 10
S2. a. Increase groundwater recharge in a state identified STRESSED BASIN or HIGH YIELD AQUIFER?	10 Point(s)	<u>Irrigation Efficiency Practices:</u> Micro-Irrigation (441), Subsurface Irrigation (443), Land Smoothing (466), Tailwater Recovery (447), Cranberry Auto-Start System (533). <u>Infiltration Practices:</u> Filter Strip (393), Field Border (386), Stripcropping (585), Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390).
		State - Possible Points = 10
L2 a. Planned practices improve existing irrigation systems and result in estimated water savings of at least 15%?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Micro-Irrigation (441), Sprinkler Irrigation (442) (<i>improvements</i>), Subsurface Irrigation (443), Land Smoothing (466), Tailwater Recovery (447), Cranberry Auto-Start System (533).
		Local - Possible Points = 10
3. Clean Air: Treatment of Air Quality from Agricultural Sources – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N3. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	N/A	EQIP-AQ Only
N3. b. Reduce green house gases such as methane, nitrous oxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC)?	15 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Anerobic Digester (366), Atmospheric Resource Quality Management (370). <u>Establishment of:</u> Conservation Cover (327), Cover Crop (340), Pasture & Hayland Planting (512), Prescribed Grazing (528), <u>Residue Management (329).</u>
N3. c. Increase carbon sequestration?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Tree/Shrub Establishment (612), Windbreak Establishment (380).
		National - Possible Points = 25
		State - Possible Points = 0
		Local - Possible Points = 0
4. High Quality, Productive Soils Erosion Reduction – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N4. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	15 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Residue Management (329), Crop Rotation (328), Pasture/Hayland Planting (512), Cover Crop (340), Strip Cropping (585), Terrace (600). Must provide RUSLE2 documentation of before and after conditions.
		National - Possible Points = 15
		State - Possible Points = 0

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
L4. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits ("T").	10	<u>Practices:</u> Cover Crop (340), Crop Rotation (328), Pasture/Hayland Planting (512), Residue Management (329), Stripcropping (585), Terrace (600). Must provide RUSLE2 documentation of before and after conditions.
L4. b. Improve soil tilth, infiltration, organic matter, or compaction by implementing two or more soil building practices.	15 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Animal Trails & Walkways (575), Composting Facility (317), Conservation Cover (327), Cover Crop (340), Deep Tillage (324), Forest Trails & Landings (655), Pasture & Hayland Planting (512), Prescribed Grazing (528), Residue Management (329), Field Border (386), Filter Strip (393), Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390). Documentation of increase of SCI from negative to positive, or a 25% increase if it is already positive.
		Local - Possible Points = 25
5. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N5. a. Benefit threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15 Point(s)	<i>Site evaluation documents the species is present or potentially present.</i> <u>Practices:</u> Early Successional (647), Wetland Wildlife (644), Upland Wildlife (645), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Riparian Herbaceous Cover(390), Field Border (386), Open Channel (582).
N5. b. Retain wildlife and plant benefits on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 15
S5. a. Benefit Key AT-RISK SPECIES identified in a State wildlife plan, and site evaluation documentation shows that the species is present or potentially present?	15 Point(s)	<i>Site evaluation documents the species is present or potentially present.</i> Species listed in State WHIP Plan 2010 on Share Point\Programs\WHIP\WHIP FY2010. Does NOT require the site be within the GIS habitat polygon. <u>Practices:</u> Early Successional (647), Wetland Wildlife (644), Upland Wildlife (645), Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Field Border (386), Open Channel (582).
S5. b. Create or enhance habitat for box or wood TURTLES?	20 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644).
		State - Possible Points = 35
L5. a. Improve declining wildlife habitat, including grassland, shrubland and young forest?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645) Early Successional (647), Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
		Local - Possible Points = 10
6. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N6. a. Eradicate or control noxious or invasive species?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Pest Management (595), Brush Management (314).

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N6. b. Increase, improve or establish pollinator habitat?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Field Border (386), Upland Wildlife Habitat Mgt. (645).
N6. c. Properly dispose of animal carcasses?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practice:</u> Animal Mortality Facility (316).
N6. d. Implement an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Pest Management (595).
N6. e. Implement precision agricultural methods?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 40
S6. a. Control light density of INVASIVE SPECIES infestation?	10 Point(s)	<i>Either light or heavy density, not both.</i> <u>Practice:</u> Pest Management (595), Brush Management (314)..
S6. b. Control heavy density of INVASIVE SPECIES infestation?	15 Point(s)	<i>Either light or heavy density, not both.</i> <u>Practice:</u> Pest Management (595), Brush Management (314)..
S6. c. Control INVASIVE SPECIES infestation on forestland in close proximity to larger tracts of uninvaded forestland.	10 Point(s)	<u>Practice:</u> Pest Management (595).
S6. d. Improve the biological diversity, productive capacity, health and vitality of FORESTLAND by implementing 1-2 unique forestry practices?	10 Point(s)	Forestry practices. <i>Either S6d or S6e, but not both.</i>
S6. e. Improve the biological diversity, productive capacity, health and vitality of FORESTLAND by implementing 3-4 unique forestry practices?	15 Point(s)	Forestry practices. <i>Either S6d or S6e, but not both.</i>
S6. f. Create pollinator habitat?	20 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Field Border (386), Upland Wildlife Habitat Mgt. (645).
S6. g. Improve the sustainability of grass-fed animal agriculture?	15 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Animal Trails & Walkways (575), Fence (382), Prescribed Grazing (528), Watering Facility (614), Spring Development (574), Pipeline (516) if associated with a <u>grazing operation.</u>
S6. h. Adopt shellfish aquaculture management practices ?	15 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Access Control (472), Atmospheric Resource Quality Management (370), Obstruction Removal (500), Pest Management (595), Waste Utilization (633), Shellfish Aquaculture Management (706).
		State - Possible Points = 90
L6. a. Enhance pollinator habitat?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Field Border (386), Upland Wildlife Habitat Mgt. (645).
L6.b. Decrease pest pressures affecting agricultural operations or public health.	10 Point(s)	Not Forestland. <u>Practice:</u> Pest Management (595), Fence (382).
L6 c. Enhance the current level of pest management already being practiced, documented on IPM Guidesheets?	10 Point(s)	Not Forestland. <u>Practice:</u> Pest Management (595). <i>Document "enhancement" -- before/after.</i>
L6 d. Facilitate a prescribed grazing plan to improve animal distribution?	20 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Prescribed Grazing (528), Animal Trails & Walkways (575), Fence (382), Watering Facility (614), Spring Development (574), Pipeline (516) if associated with a <u>grazing operation.</u>

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
L6 e. Implement a shellfish aquaculture management plan?	45 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Access Control (472), Atmospheric Resource Quality Management (370), Obstruction Removal (500), Pest Management (595), Waste Utilization (633), Shellfish Aquaculture Management (706).
L6 f. Improve forest management on land within ½ mile of state owned land that is managed to maintain healthy, productive forests?	10 Point(s)	Purpose to reduce fire, pest and invasive pressure, improve wildlife habitat; reinforce public inputs on state lands. Forestry practices.
L6. g. Improve forest management on land associated with Forest Management or Stewardship Plan with documented activity within the past 5 years?	10 Point(s)	Forestry practices.
L6. h. <u>Adopt</u> cover cropping in the operation.	15 Point(s)	Practice: Cover Crop (340). For new adoption of practice only.
L6. i. Enhance or improve local food production (locally marketed)?	15 Point(s)	Farm stand, local farmers market, etc.
		Local - Possible Points = 145
7. Strategic Initiative – Energy Conservation and Sustainable Production Energy Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
N7. a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	10 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Cranberry Auto-Start System (533), Subsurface Irrigation (443) (<i>greenhouse</i>), Residue Management (329), conversion to Grass-fed operation that reduces tractor use.
		National - Possible Points = 10
		State - Possible Points = 0
L7. a. Reduce <u>fuel consumption of irrigation pumping plants?</u>	5 Point(s)	<u>Practices:</u> Cranberry Auto-Start System (533), Subsurface Irrigation (443) (<i>greenhouse</i>).
		Local - Possible Points = 5
8. Business Lines – Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:		
N8. a. Implementation of all planned conservation practices within three years of <u>contract obligation?</u>	10 Point(s)	
N8. b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted, or will complete an existing conservation system?	10 Point(s)	Enhancement (only 1-2 practices)
		National - Possible Points = 20
S8. a. Improvement of PROTECTED LAND (i.e. APR or CR)?	15 Point(s)	
S8 b. Continued implementation of land management practices (on the same land and same intensity) that has previously received conservation program compensation?	- 30 Point(s)	
		State - Possible Points = 15

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
L8.a. Implementation of practices within a state ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern)?	25 Point(s)	
L8. b. Implementation of a Resource Management System (RMS) Plan?	20 Point(s)	
L8. c. Implementation of practices that address 2 or more resource concerns?	10 Point(s)	
L8. d. Implementation of a progressive plan potentially leading to an RMS?	10 Point(s)	
L8. e. Accelerated implementation of "shovel-ready" practices, within 6 months of contract obligation?	10 Point(s)	Participant has final design and has secured materials and/or contractor.
L8. f. Will the planned practices assist producers working toward NOP certification?	20 Point(s)	
L8. g. Formation of partnerships among agencies (i.e. MDAR, DCR, NHESP, USFWS) to support financial and /or technical assistance?	10 Point(s)	
		Local - Possible Points = 105
9. Does the applicant meet the following conditions:		
N9. a. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, <u>and</u> is it now, on schedule <u>and</u> in full compliance?	10 Point(s)	Documented on CPA-13 Contract Review and included in ranking package. No re-scheduling modifications (100%).
N9. b. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	5 Point(s)	Documented on CPA-13 Contract Review and included in ranking package.
N9. c. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	5 Point(s)	<i>A deferral from last year does not get this.</i>
		National - Possible Points = 15
		State - Possible Points = 0
L9. a.. Has the applicant applied in the past but not been selected for funding?	10 Point(s)	Documented with past AERT reports and official approval lists. (<i>Ever applied/never selected?</i>)
		Local - Possible Points = 10

% of Score	Multiplier	Scoring Components	Points
25%	1.09	Total Possible (National) =	180
40%	1.41	Total Possible (State) =	200
25%	0.51	Total Possible (Local) =	335
10%	74.10	Efficiency Score =	1