

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Guide
 EQIP Cropland-HT Pilot - Massachusetts

Program: EQIP 2008 - FY2010

Ranking Tool: EQIP Cropland - High Tunnel Pilot

National Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
1. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
1. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	<i>Not Applicable (N/A)</i>	
1. 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.
1. 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 = 15
2. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
2. a. Increase groundwater recharge in identified groundwater depletion areas (http://water.usgs.gov/ogw/rasa/html/TOC.html)?	N/A	
2. 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?	N/A	
2. c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 0
3. Clean Air: Treatment of Air Quality from Agricultural Sources – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
3. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	N/A	
3. b. Reduce green house gases such as methane, nitrous oxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC)?	N/A	
3. c. Increase carbon sequestration?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 0
4. High Quality, Productive Soils Erosion Reduction – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
4. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 0

5. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer		
5. a. Benefit threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	N/A	
5. b. Retain wildlife and plant benefits on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 0
6. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives – Will		
6. a. Eradicate or control noxious or invasive species?	N/A	
6. b. Increase, improve or establish pollinator habitat?	N/A	
6. c. Properly dispose of animal carcasses?	N/A	
6. d. Implement an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10 Point(s)	
6. e. Implement precision agricultural methods?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 10
7. Strategic Initiative – Energy Conservation and Sustainable Production Energy Conservation – Will the proposed project		
7. a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 0
8. Business Lines – Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:		
8. a. Implementation of all planned conservation practices within three years of contract obligation?	10 Point(s)	ALL - YES: single practice/2-year contracts.
8. 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?	N/A	
		National - Possible Points = 10
9. Does the applicant meet the following conditions:		
9. a. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?	10 Point(s)	Documented on CPA-13 Contract Review and included in ranking package. No re-scheduling modifications.
9. 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.
9. c. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	5 Point(s)	
		National - Possible Points = 20

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
1. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
1. 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).	30 Point(s)	<i>May select S1a or S1b, but not both .</i>
2. 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 S1a or S1b, but not both .</i>
		State - Possible Points = 30
4. High Quality, Productive Soils Erosion Reduction – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
3. S4a. Install a high tunnel on an A or B hydro group soil?	40 Point(s)	Dependent on soils
4. S4b. Install a high tunnel on flat land (0-3% slope) so that no grading is needed?	25 Point(s)	Slope
		State - Possible Points = 65
6. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
5. S6a. Install a high tunnel where irrigation water is available to supply the crop needs?	25 Point(s)	Water source?
6. S6b. Extend the growing season to produce more local food?	10 Point(s)	Food crops?
		State - Possible Points = 35
7. Strategic Initiative – Energy Conservation and Sustainable Production Energy Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
7. S7a. Maintain or reduce energy inputs while lengthening the growing season?	10 Point(s)	ALL - YES
		State - Possible Points = 10
8. Business Lines – Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:		
8. S8a. Improvement of PROTECTED LAND (i.e. APR or CR).	10 Point(s)	APR?
		State - Possible Points = 10
9. Does the applicant meet the following conditions:		
9. S9a. This is the first use of high tunnel technology for crop production by the applicant.	15 Point(s)	Do they use high tunnels anywhere? O.K. if they have greenhouses--this is different technology.
		State - Possible Points = 15

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses	Notes
1. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
1. L1. a. Reduce use of nutrients and pesticides in Outstanding Resource Waters?	20 Point(s)	Yes, if documented location factor. <i>May select L1a or L1b, but not both.</i>
2. L1. b. Reduce nonpoint source pollution affecting other surface or ground water resources (within 300' up-gradient of surface water, or within groundwater zone)?	10 Point(s)	Yes, if documented location factor. <i>May select L1a or L1b, but not both.</i>
		Local - Possible Points = 20
6. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:		
3. L6a. Enhance or improve local food production (locally marketed)?	10 Point(s)	Food locally marketed?
4. L6b. Extend the length of the growing season for specialty crops?	10 Point(s)	Truck crops
		Local - Possible Points = 20
8. Business Lines – Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:		
5. L8.a. Adoption of high tunnels within a state ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern)?	20 Point(s)	Yes, if documented location factor.
6. L8d. Implementation of a progressive plan potentially leading to an RMS?	5 Point(s)	NOT a stand alone-one practice event. Foot in the door -- potential for future work. Willing and able to plan an RMS.
7. L8e. Accelerated implementation of "shovel-ready" practices, within 6 months of contract obligation?	10 Point(s)	Participant has design/manufacture, and will install by September 2010.
		Local - Possible Points = 35
9. Does the applicant meet the following conditions:		
8. L9a. The applicant has self-certified as a historically underserved individual or entity?	25 Point(s)	Checked box (question #9) on CPA-1200 application form
9. L9b. Has the applicant applied in the past but not been selected for funding?	5 Point(s)	Has been constantly rejected.
		Local - Possible Points = 30

Resource Concerns	Practice	
Plant Condition: Plants not adapted or suited	Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops	All
Plant Condition: Productivity, Health and Vigor		All
Water Quality: Excessive Nutrients & Organics in Groundwater		<i>Yes, if documented location factor</i>
Water Quality: Excessive Nutrients & Organics in Surface Water		
Water Quality: Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Groundwater		
Water Quality: Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water		

% of Score	Multiplier	Scoring Components	Points
25%	0.884210526	Total Possible (National) =	55
40%	0.995555556	Total Possible (State) =	165
25%	0.8	Total Possible (Local) =	105
10%	33.6	Efficiency Score =	1