



# Natural Resources Conservation Service

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# Overview

NRCS Mission

Programs Available in Yuba County

EQIP

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NRCS 5-Step Process

RCD Goals

RCD & NRCS Relationship

# NRCS Mission

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“Helping people help the land”

NRCS provides farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners with financial and technical assistance to conserve the soil, water, air and other natural resources. Programs are voluntary, non-regulatory, and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

NRCS works with conservation partners, including Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), to ensure local priorities are addressed.



# NRCS CA 5-Year Strategic Plan

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Support resilience of agriculture in California through addressing priority resource concerns.

- Obj 1 – Improve plant and forest health/productivity.
- Obj 2 – Improve air quality associated with agriculture operations.
- Obj 3 – Work with agriculture operations to protect surface and groundwater quality.
- Obj 4 – Work with agriculture operations to enhance surface and groundwater quantity.
- Obj 5 – Improve soil health.
- Obj 6 – Enhance habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species.

# Financial & Technical Assistance Programs in CA



# Programs administered by NRCS staff in Davis Office

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## Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- For landowners who want to place their land under easement.

## Conservation Innovation Grants

- Competitive grant program for individuals, organizations, universities, and others implementing new and innovative ways to solve natural resource problems.

## Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- Provides funding to partners addressing resource concerns on a regional or watershed scale.

# Programs administered by NRCS staff in Yuba City Office

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## Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Designed to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, increased soil health and reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, improved or created wildlife habitat, and mitigation against drought and increasing weather volatility.

## Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Designed to provide incentives for farmers/ranchers to steward their land (existing practices)
- Provides additional incentives for increasing stewardship (new activities)
- Common Activities: Nutrient management, irrigation water management, cover crops.

# EQIP Initiative Levels

## National, State, and Local

- In California, EQIP is divided into four Areas.
- The colors within each Area denote different “Clusters,” categorized by landscape and by similar natural resource concerns.
- Yuba County lies within the Sacramento Valley Cluster.



# EQIP National Initiatives Available to Yuba County

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## National Air Quality (\$23 million statewide)

- CA is the only state with this fund available for farmers and ranchers
- NRCS provides cost-share for common conservation practices such as tractor, forklift, loader, backhoe, or harvester replacements

## Seasonal High Tunnels (\$775,000 statewide)

- NRCS support includes technical assistance or cost-share to purchase and install hoop houses, irrigation systems with irrigation water management (IWM), mulching materials, etc.

## Organic & Transitioning to Organic Operations (\$200,000 statewide)

- Provides cost share for: Nutrient Management Plans, Pest Management Plans, cover crops, Organic System Plans, etc.

## Fish and Wildlife Habitat (\$0)

- Provides cost share for Wildlife Management Plans

## On-Farm Energy (\$200,000 statewide)

- Provides cost share for: energy audits, light bulb and fan replacements, **Conservation Activity Plans (CAP)**

## AFO-CAFO (Dairy) (\$150,000 statewide)

- Provides cost share for Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans

## Grazed Lands (\$0)

- Provides cost share for Grazing Management Plans

## Soil Health and Water Conservation (\$50,000 statewide)

- Provides cost share for Nutrient Management Plans, Pest Management Plans

## Forest Health (\$50,000 statewide)

- Provides cost share for Forest Management Plans

# EQIP State Initiatives Available in Yuba County

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## Declining Species (\$2,500,000 statewide)

- Flooding for wintering waterfowl
- Island nesting
- Forage or habitat

## Tribal (\$1,050,000 statewide)

- No Tribal land Identified in Yuba County but Yuba County Tribal members can apply for this fund.

## Catastrophic Wildfire (\$1.9 million statewide)

- Brush management

## California Air Quality

### Ag Irrigation Engines (\$50,000 statewide)

- Diesel or electric irrigation pump engine

## PM and Ozone Reduction (\$1 million statewide)

- Upgrade harvesters for walnuts or almonds to reduce dust by 30%
- Reduce tillage
- Orchard removal (to chip not burn)

# EQIP Local Initiatives in Yuba County (Sac Valley Cluster)

## Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) and Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) (\$0)

- Nutrient Management or Plan
- Pipeline to deliver manure water
- Flow meters

## Cropland (\$375,000)

- Cover crops
- Conservation cover
- Pollinator habitat

## Rangeland (\$315,000)

- Grazing management
- Fences
- Water troughs

## Pastureland (\$550,000)

- Grazing management
- Fences
- Water troughs

## Sac Valley Water Conservation (\$1,340,000)

- Irrigation systems with IWM
- Pipelines
- Pumps

## Forestland - Interior Coast Range and Southern Cascades (\$670,000)

- Thinning by machine or chemicals
- Erosion prevention



Where do I  
start?



# 5 Steps to Assistance

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## Step 1 - Planning

- Landowners contact their local NRCS office to fill out a Planning Interest form.
  - 1511 Butte House Rd, Ste B, Yuba City
  - (530) 216-5860
- NRCS Soil Conservationist schedules an initial field visit to:
  - Identify existing and potential natural resource concerns that are present on the property.
  - Evaluate the resource concerns with NRCS tools.
  - NRCS then proposes alternative solutions to address existing resource concerns.

## Step 2 - Application

- Landowner completes an application for support to address resource concerns.
- Farmers/ranchers establish a farm record with the Farm Service Agency if they have never worked with NRCS or FSA before or have acquired new farmland.

# 5 Steps to Assistance, continued

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## Step 3 - Eligibility

- Average Gross Income (AGI) for the last 3 years is under \$900,000
- Property is not Highly Erodible Land and not Wetland
- No violation with other federal agencies

## Step 4 - Ranking

- NRCS staff ranks the project and decides which Funding Pool(s) the project will be most competitive for.
  - Funding pool focus is chosen based on conservation practices
  - Points are awarded based on the extent to which resource concerns are addressed
  - Project selection is based on ranking points and available funding

## Step 5 - Implementing

- If application is selected, applicant has one year to start or complete the conservation practice to meet NRCS standards
  - Practice Certification and payment will be made by NRCS planner or engineer after completion

# 2021 EQIP Ranking Deadline

Applications are accepted on a continual basis

## Fiscal Year 2021 EQIP Schedule

Batching Period	Applicable Ranking Pools	Ranking Deadline	Funding Selections	Obligation Deadline
1	Wildfire Disaster Recovery	Weekly - November 27 – December 31 & Once on January 29	Weekly - November 27 – December 31 & Once on January 29	Within 30-60 days of Funding Selections
2	National Air Quality Initiative	January 29, 2021	January 29, 2021	March 12, 2021
3	All EQIP Ranking Pools	March 3, 2021	March 17, 2021	May 19, 2021
4	All EQIP Ranking Pools	June 9, 2021	June 23, 2021	August 25, 2021

# Yuba County Resource Conservation District

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The Yuba County RCD assists landowners and land managers in providing stewardship of the County's natural resources and educates stakeholders and policy makers about the County's natural resource base.



## Yuba County RCD Long-Range Goals

- Goal 1: Reduce erosion, sedimentation and pollution, reduction of fire risk
- Goal 2: Provide forum and facilitation for the resolution of conservation issues
- Goal 3: Assist with wildlife protection and enhancement, wildfire hazard mitigation
- Goal 4: Promote recreation and tourism
- Goal 5: Increase farm, range and forest sustainability
- Goal 6: Improve YCRCD viability

# Yuba County Resource Conservation District

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How can the RCD help our local stakeholders access NRCS resources and programs?

- RCD acts as an intermediary between landowners/stakeholders and NRCS
- Provides outreach to landowners and stakeholders
- RCD may provide technical and program assistance to NRCS on as-needed basis
- Shared resources and technical staff (NRCS has access to specialists, including Agronomist, Forester, Biologist, Conservationist, and Range Managers, to name a few)



# THANK YOU!

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## Questions?

Yuba City NRCS Service Center

EQIP & CSP: Pa Yang

530-216-5860

[Pa.yang@usda.gov](mailto:Pa.yang@usda.gov)

<http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/>

<http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>

Davis NRCS State Office

ACEP: Elizabeth Palmer

530-792-5672

CIG & RCPP: Amber Till

530-792-5603

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ca/programs/farmbill/>

Yuba County RCD

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