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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Applications Deadline Extended to February 21

Stillwater, OKLA – Gary O’Neill, USDA-NRCS State Conservationist for Oklahoma, announced this morning that the application deadline for the EQIP Program has been extended to February 21, 2014. The previously announced deadline was December 20. O’Neill said “In view of the busy holiday season, this extended period to file applications will allow producers more time while providing NRCS staff additional opportunities to work with producers. We want to make sure that all interested producers have ample time to file their applications.” He reminded producers that “The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that is available to owners of land in agricultural or forest production or persons who are engaged in livestock, agricultural, or forest production on eligible land and that have a natural resource concern to be addressed.”

The EQIP provides financial assistance for eligible producers to help plan and implement conservation practices that address existing natural resource concerns and for opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. Another purpose of EQIP is to help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal and local environmental regulations.

O’Neill added “The EQIP is an important Farm Bill conservation program that helps established farmers as well as beginning, historically underserved, and limited resource producers. This is another example of the work of NRCS in Oklahoma and our efforts together with our partners to address environmental conservation issues and strengthen Oklahoma’s rural economy.”

Eligible landowners and operators in Oklahoma now have until February 21, 2014 to apply at their local field office to be considered for the current ranking period. While local offices accept EQIP applications throughout the year, NRCS evaluates applications during announced ranking periods. To be eligible for this enrollment, producers are encouraged to have their applications submitted to NRCS by the February 21, 2014 closing date.

Learn more about EQIP by viewing the NRCS website at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> or visiting a local NRCS field office.

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