ARKANSAS

RICE STEWARDSHIP PARTNERSHIP FOR CLIMATE-SMART COMMODITIES

Through the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities (PCSC) program, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has three primary objectives: expand markets for America's climate-smart commodities, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production, and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture, including for small and underserved producers.

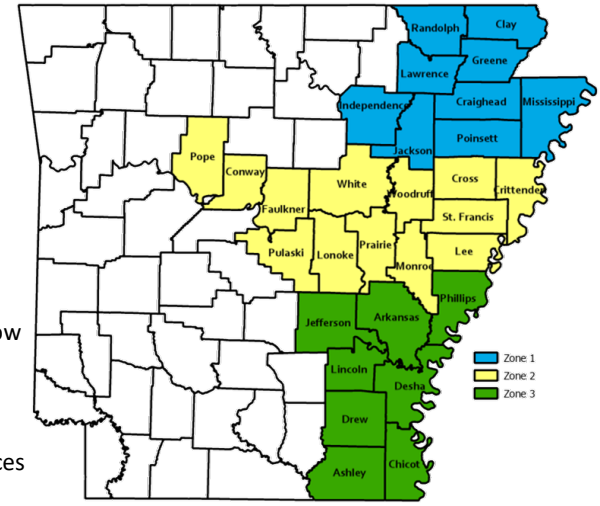
The Rice Stewardship Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities project will be able to offer more than $63 million in additional financial assistance to U.S. rice producers. This competitive process will offer rice producers a suite of more than 30 practices to choose from to fit the needs and capabilities of their operation. This is a competitive project so it is expected that not all applications will be funded.

Who is eligible to apply?

Arkansas producers with a history of harvesting rice may submit one application per entity.

Who will my application be competing against?

Eligible Arkansas counties have been divided into three separate zones (pictured right). Applications in each zone will only be ranked against other applications in the same zone.



What is the maximum contract amount I could apply for?

These three-year producer contracts will have an overall limit of $120,000 for individuals and partnerships.

What practices can I sign up for?

Alternate- Wetting and Drying, Furrow Irrigation (row rice), no-till, reduced till, nutrient management, conservation crop rotation, pump efficiency evaluation, Irrigation devices, flow meters, pump automation, cover crops, and more.

How much will I receive for implementing a practice?

The payment rate will vary based on which practice(s) you sign up for. Practice rates are calculated using the most up-to-date payment schedules from your state's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and are available with the application.

Will I be responsible for submitting any reports or data?

Yes. You will be responsible for submitting documentation that your contracted practices were implemented, and reporting requirements will be more stringent than a typical NRCS contract. Payment for practices will not be issued until necessary documentation has been submitted and reviewed. A full list of reporting requirements will be supplied before contracting. The Rice Stewardship Partnership ensures the security and privacy of your agricultural data.

I already have an EQIP or CSP contract with NRCS, and I am applying for or contracted with another PCSC, can I still apply for this project?

You can; however, you cannot enroll in the same practice on the same acre in the same year. For example, if you have an active EQIP contract to implement nutrient management on a specific field, that field could be enrolled in this project under a different practice, such as reduced tillage, but could not be enrolled in nutrient management at the same time.

Do Historically Underserved Producers have an opportunity to participate?

Producers that qualify as Historically Underserved (HU) under the USDA NRCS definitions, will be able to apply for Tier 4 practices (structural) and compete in a separate pool from the General signup. HU applicants can apply for the General signup, though can only be funded in one pool, General or HU, not both. Note that only management practices are available for applicants that apply for the General pool. Check the website listed below periodically for information on the HU-specific signup. Details will be posted as soon as they are available.

How do I apply?

The deadline to apply is Friday, March 22, 2024. Applications and additional information can be found at www.usarice.com/climate-smart.

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