



Draft

Indiana Job Sheet EQIP- Energy Conservation and Soil Quality Improvement System

200 - Energy Conservation and Soil Quality improvement System

DESCRIPTION - This system combines four components: Cover Crops (340); Residue and Tillage Management No-Till/Strip-Till (329); Nutrient Management (590); and Conservation Buffers (which include any or all of 393-Filter Strip, 386-Field Border, 332-Contour Buffer Strip, 390-Riparian Herbaceous Cover, 391-Riparian Forrest Buffer, 422-Hedgerow Planting, 380-Windbreak/ Shelterbelt Establishment, or 412-Grassed Waterway). The combination of these practices, implemented as a system, capture and sequester carbon and other nutrients while reducing the fuel and nitrogen consumption in a row crop production system.

Energy consumption is reduced by utilization of the efficiency tools and components of nutrient management and reduction of tillage passes as the no-till/strip-till system is implemented.

- Soil quality is improved when the combination of practices work in conjunction to improve soil structure, provide additional soil organic matter, increase biological activity, enhance nutrient cycling, and reduce erosion.
- Conservation buffers require no tillage or nitrogen and are strategically placed in areas along water bodies, fence rows, woodland and erosive areas, and provide increased carbon sequestration while reducing input costs on traditionally low producing or sensitive acres, and provide wildlife habitat.



Practice Requirements

Acres enrolled in this practice must have all four component practices installed and maintained according to the respective NRCS-FOTG Standards. Consider phasing the four components in over a two-year period. Establishing cover crops and nutrient management prior to starting a no-till system may have significant advantages to the overall system.

Buffers must be the minimum width required by the standards and be adjacent to all water bodies adjacent to the offered acres. Water bodies are defined as permanent lakes and ponds, sinkholes and karst, wetlands meeting a wetland or wooded wetland definition per the National Food Security Act Manual, permanent streams, or seasonal streams that have a defined stream channel and contain water more than just immediately before or after rainfall or snow melt. Additional buffers should be positioned where they address the most critical resource concerns. **The minimum buffer acreage must be at least 2% of the contracted cropland.**

Practice Eligibility and Payment

A participant may enroll up to **1,000 acres** that lack one or more of the component practices. The producer agrees to implement the needed practice(s), which completes the **Energy Conservation and Soil Quality Improvement system**, to receive an incentive payment of **\$20 per acre per year for up to three years**. Any practice needed to complete the system is eligible for cost-share separately under EQIP guidelines for that practice.

- Buffer acres enrolled under CRP, GRP, &/or WRP can be used to meet eligibility, but cannot be included in the EQIP contract for payment.
- Any land currently enrolled in CSP is not eligible to receive Energy Conservation and Soil Quality Improvement Systems incentives through EQIP.

Performance Requirements

Required Documentation:

- The EQIP Participant will be required to provide output results from the online “energy estimators” for Tillage and Nitrogen <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/energy/index.html> as well as COMET-VR (<http://www.cometvr.colostate.edu/>) for both their current and new systems each year.

The Participant will retain annual records that support the system has been applied to contracted acres.

Payment will be made each year on the cropland acres under contract for this practice.

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