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Conservation Assistance Available for Organic Producers

Funding Deadline Set for March 4, 2011

DAVIS, Calif., Dec. 13, 2010—California agricultural producers who are certified organic or transitioning to organic production may qualify for technical and financial assistance through a National Organic Initiative administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Over \$2.4 million in special organic funding will be available to eligible producers in California as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Producers must submit applications by March 4 for funding consideration during fiscal year 2011.

“We are happy to offer conservation assistance for California’s organic producers in 2011,” says Ed Burton NRCS State Conservationist. “Over the last two years, NRCS has helped over 240 organic farmers and ranchers from around the state install conservation practices to improve soil health and other natural resources.”

Organic producers can receive up to \$20,000 per year or \$80,000 over six years through the special organic EQIP funding. The assistance targets over two dozen core conservation practices, including conservation crop rotation, cover crop, nutrient management, pest management and prescribed grazing.

This is a nationwide initiative to provide assistance to certified organic producers as well as producers transitioning to organic production. Applicants must either have an organic system plan or certify they are working toward one. Organic producers also may apply for assistance under general EQIP.

Interested producers are encouraged to contact their local NRCS Service Center. Contact information is available at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=CA>.

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