

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Overview
June 2026

EQIP 328 Conservation Crop Rotation is available for perennial grains in **Minnesota and Michigan** at this time to address specific, targeted natural resource concerns typically on a shorter-term basis than CSP. Unlike CSP, the EQIP program is *not* a whole farm program. However, the application process and requirements are similar to CSP, and there **is a ranking deadline by which applications must be submitted within the current funding cycle**. NRCS can accept applications throughout the year.

Both EQIP and CSP under Conservation Crop Rotation 328 include a small grain and a short-term perennial payment scenario. The EQIP 328 conservation crop rotation includes the establishment year as a program year. Whether planted in spring or early fall, the establishment year will count as the first crop year, with two additional years of productivity expected under the contract. While 3 years (inc. establishment year) is the minimum, the enhancement can be paid for a total of 5 years.

Like CSP, NRCS offers technical assistance for the program at no cost. The NRCS Technical Service Providers (TSP) offer personalized advice and information that is tailored to each operation to plan, design, and implement conservation practices.

The payment schedules for Minnesota and Michigan are specific to each state. Per NRCS, the scenario/practice payment is provided to the producer for the time needed to plan and implement the logistics of changing the rotation to effectively implement a conservation crop rotation on a cropland farm by adding a perennial grain to their cropping system. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and EQIP program pay for practice adoption at different rates, as included on the following page. Payments vary by whether a practice is stand-alone, part of a bundle, or a supplemental practice for CSP, but in general EQIP payment rate will be $\leq 75\%$ of the new practice adoption.

*Previously planted Kernza will not qualify for the program.

EQIP application process & information

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/apply-for-environmental-quality-incentives-program-eqip>

Current year payment schedules are posted for all states and programs online at this website: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/payment-schedules>

Current CSP payments are established per this policy:

Table 530.306-1: CSP Payment Percentages

Conservation Activity/ Payment Type	Payment Percentage
Enhancement	100%
Cover crop enhancement	125%
Bundle	115%
Conservation practice	10%
Supplemental payment	150%

EQIP rates vary by state with these maximums established in policy for 328:

Figure 530R-1: Authorized Cost Categories and Maximum Payment Percentages for EQIP

Cost Category	General Percentage	HU Percentage	High Priority Practice	Source Water Protection
Materials	75	90	90	90

Cost Category	General Percentage	HU Percentage	High Priority Practice	Source Water Protection
Equipment for installation	75	90	90	90
Labor	75	90	90	90
Mobilization	75	90	90	90
Acquisition of technical knowledge	75	90	90	90

Note: Program payment percentages for HU participants must be at least 25 percent above the otherwise applicable program payment percentage, not to exceed 90 percent.