

Was That CSP Or *CSP*?

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Producers in the nation who have had the luxury of participating in CSP, the Conservation Security Program, will see its successor being promoted over the duration of the new farm bill. Also labeled CSP, the Conservation Stewardship Program began sign up nationwide on August 10, 2009.

The new CSP not only has a name change, but has a facelift too. Enhancements are different and the monetary incentives are also different. CSP encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones on their operations. It is a voluntary conservation program that provides financial and technical assistance to conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on the land. CSP provides opportunities to both recognize excellent stewards and deliver valuable new conservation.

Program eligibility is limited to farm operators acknowledged through USDA Farm Services Agency records. Operators must have documented control of the land for the term of the contract and include all eligible land that is operated in the contract. Annual payments for cropland are estimated to range from \$12 - \$22, less any technical incentives provided to the agency. Pastureland and nonindustrial private forestland are eligible lands, but range lower in annual payments.

Payments will be made as soon as practical after October of each year for contract activities installed and maintained in the previous year. For all contracts, CSP payments to a person or legal entity may not exceed \$40,000 in any year. Each CSP contract will be limited to \$200,000 over the term of a 5-year contract period.

Although the sign up is continual, the first ranking period ended on September 30th. Don't wait to seek out the facts on the program. You can contact your local USDA Natural Re-

sources Conservation Service (NRCS) office to obtain more information about the new sign up and application process. Great resources are available on the web at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp/. State specific information is available on the following websites:

Missouri – http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSP/stewardship/csp_general.html

Arkansas – http://www.ar.nrcs.usda.gov/news/csp_09.html

Kentucky – <http://www.ky.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/2009CSP/index.html>

Illinois – <http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/index.html>

Tennessee – http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/news/News_releases/20090812_csp.html

Mississippi – <http://www.ms.nrcs.usda.gov/news/CSP2009.html>

Louisiana – <http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSTP/index.html>

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