

California: Historically Underserved -----

RICE STEWARDSHIP PARTNERSHIP FOR CLIMATE-SMART COMMODITIES



Through the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities (PCSC) initiative, 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 likely that not all applications will be funded.



Only Historically Underserved (HU) producers meeting the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's definition may apply under this funding pool. Please see definitions on next page.

Who is eligible to apply?

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

What is the maximum contract amount I could apply for?

These three-year producer contracts will have an overall limit of \$250,000 for individuals and partnerships. Producers approved for Marketing Assistance are eligible for an additional \$100,000.

What practices can I sign up for?

Land leveling, 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.

Who will my application be competing against?

Only other HU applicants in your state. For this program only, applications will be funded in the sequence of Socially Disadvantaged and Limited Resource Farmers, then Veteran Farmers, then Beginning Farmers.

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 personal information and 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. 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 again.

How 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 Tiers 1-4 practices (management & structural) and compete in a separate pool from the General signup. HU applicants that apply for the General signup as well, 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.

How do I apply?

The deadline to apply is Thursday, August 15, 2024. Applications and additional information can be found at www.usarice.com/climate-smart.

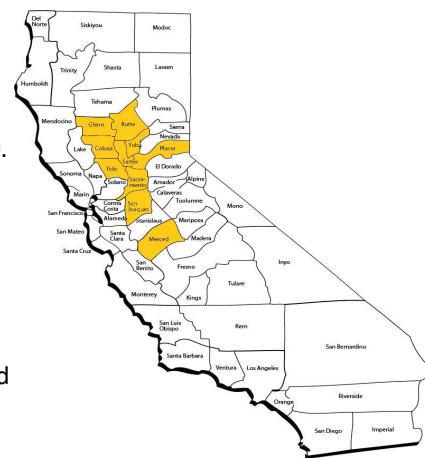
Field Staff Contacts:

Regina Stafford
(916) 279-2867
rstafford@ducks.org
Rancho Cordova, CA

Craig Garner
(707) 301-3667
cgarner@ducks.org
Rancho Cordova, CA

Josh Hankins
(501) 398-6678
jhankins@usarice.com
Little Rock, AR

Emily Woodall
(571) 213-3006
ewoodall@usarice.com
Little Rock, AR



Are you a Historically Underserved Farmer or Rancher?

Some groups of people are identified in Farm Bill legislation and in USDA policy as being Historically Underserved (HU). Members of these groups have been historically underserved by, or subject to discrimination in, Federal policies and programs. Four groups are defined by USDA as “Historically Underserved,” including farmers or ranchers who are: Beginning; Socially Disadvantaged; Veterans; and Limited Resource.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher

Socially disadvantaged refers to an individual or a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.

Socially disadvantaged groups consist of the following:

- American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- Asians
- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
- Hispanics

For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals

Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation program authorities. The term entities reflect a broad interpretation to include partnerships, couples, legal entities, etc.

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

A participant with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous two years, and who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years.

A Self-Determination Tool is available to the public and may be completed on-line or printed and completed hardcopy at: <https://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>.

Veteran Farmer or Rancher

A producer who served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve component thereof; was released from service under conditions other than dishonorable; and: Has not operated a farm or ranch, or has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years; or who first obtained status as a veteran during the most recent 10-year period.

A legal entity or joint operation can be a Veteran Farmer or Rancher only if all individual members independently qualify.

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

A participant who has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years, and who will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located.

In the case of a contract made with a legal entity, all members must meet these requirements.