

# IDAHO POTATO PULSE



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## Deadline for Signups of Popular NRCS Financial Assistance Programs Approaches

**BOISE, ID – November 20, 2013** – The Idaho Natural Resources Conservation Service reminds producers that applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are due December 20, 2013, for fiscal year 2014 funding. Applications for the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, and the Soil Health and Sage-Grouse Initiatives are also due.

“EQIP is a popular program that can help agricultural producers with conservation projects or management changes they want to make on their lands,” said Jeff Burwell, Idaho NRCS State Conservationist. “Fortunately, NRCS is still authorized to offer these programs through 2014.”

Additionally, Idaho NRCS set aside funds for conservation practices on non-industrial private forest lands.

AWEP funds activities that contribute to sustaining the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer. Farmers can apply for AWEP funding for practices that: reduce the amount of irrigation water drawn from the aquifer; convert fields to dry land farming; grow crops with lower water requirements; convert from using irrigation wells to surface water; and, modify irrigation systems to improve water delivery.

The Soil Health Initiative encourages producers to adopt certain conservation practices to improve their soil. This statewide initiative started last year to help reduce wind and water erosion issues by increasing soil health.

The Sage-Grouse Initiative provides technical and financial support to landowners that want to restore sage-grouse habitat on their land. Enhancing sage-grouse habitat and rangeland conditions can benefit sustainable ranching.

“We accept applications for these programs on a continuous basis, however only the applications received by December 20<sup>th</sup> will be considered for funding this fiscal year,” said Burwell. For details on these programs as well as eligibility requirements, stop by your local USDA service center or visit NRCS online at <http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>.

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