



Tater Talk

Date: December 30, 2011

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

- **Political Action Reminder**
- **Organic, Energy, and High Tunnels Offered through USDA Special Initiative**
- **Some Wisconsin Landowners Are Under Claiming Their Farmland Preservation Tax Credits**

Reminder!

The response to our Political Action against recall elections has been very good. In the first two weeks we have received pledges totaling 15% of our goal. We still have 3 more weeks to reach our goal of \$100,000. Please take a moment and determine an appropriate amount for your operation and contact the WPVGA.

Thank you.

Organic, Energy and High Tunnels Offered through USDA Special Initiative

Special sign-up opportunities are also now open for On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnel conservation practices. All three initiatives offer technical and financial assistance through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP).

Producers who apply for these new initiatives may need more time to make sure they choose the one that's right for their operation. Longer signup times and multiple ranking dates will make it easier for more producers to apply and help them get started with these new practices. The first application deadline date will be Feb. 3, the same date for the general EQIP signup.

The Organic, On-Farm Energy, and Seasonal High Tunnel initiatives will have additional application dates of March 30 and June 1, 2012. Applications must be received by these dates to be considered for funding in each round of ranking. Applicants need only apply once.

- **On-Farm Energy Initiative:** A Certified Technical Service Provider (TSP) must be used to develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS then uses audit data to develop energy conservation recommendations. Each AgEMP has a landscape component that assesses equipment and farming processes and a farm headquarters component that assesses power usage and efficiencies in buildings, grain handling operations, and similar facilities to support the farm operation. Examples of energy conserving practices available include Conservation Crop Rotation, Legume Cover Crop, and no-till planting.

- Organic Initiative: NRCS helps certified organic growers and producers working to achieve organic certification install conservation practices for organic production. A wide range of practices are available in this initiative.
- Seasonal High Tunnel Pilot Initiative: NRCS helps producers plan and implement high tunnels, steel-framed polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality, fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment, and better air quality due to fewer vehicles needed to transport crops. More than 4,000 high tunnels have been planned and implemented nationwide through this initiative over the past two years. Supporting conservation practices such as Grassed Waterways, Nutrient Management, and Integrated Pest Management are available to address resource concerns on operations with Seasonal High Tunnel structures.

Visit the [NRCS National Web site](#) for more information on these initiatives and contact Julie Ammel for more information.

Some Wisconsin Landowners Are Under Claiming Their Farmland Preservation Tax Credits

Date: 12/29/11

Contact: Jane H. Larson, jane.larson@wi.gov, (608) 224-5005, cell (608) 212-3094
Jim Dick, Communications Director, jim.dick@wi.gov, (608) 224-5020

Madison—If your land is zoned under Farmland Preservation, be sure to use the appropriate tax forms when claiming income tax credits. Too many landowners are not, according to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and that means they're not getting what they're entitled to receive.

Recent data collected by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue shows that some Wisconsin landowners are under claiming their Farmland Preservation tax credits at an average rate of about \$3.00 per acre or more than \$1.5 million total.

Farmers are eligible for Wisconsin income tax credits in exchange for keeping land in agricultural use and complying with state soil and water conservation requirements.

“What the data from the Department of Revenue shows is that a number of farmers aren't using the proper forms to claim their income tax credits and are claiming a lower tax credit than they should,” said Keith Foye, DATCP land management section chief. “Essentially, they're leaving money on the table.”

The department recommends the following when preparing 2011 tax information:

- Verify that your land is located within a state certified farmland preservation zoning district or that it is covered by a farmland preservation agreement.
- If you own land located in an area under a certified farmland preservation zoning, use the Schedule FC-A form. For those farmers who entered into a farmland preservation agreement **on or after July 1, 2009**, also use the Schedule FC-A form.
- If you entered into a farmland preservation agreement **prior to July 1, 2009**, continue to use the Schedule FC form.
- If you are unsure if your land is zoned or covered by an agreement, contact your town or county zoning office to see if your land is under zoning. Your county land conservation office can tell if you if your land is under a farmland preservation agreement. It may be helpful to have the parcel numbers that appear on your property tax bill when making the calls.

- Kris Modaff, DATCP farmland preservation program, is also available to answer questions on farmland preservation at (608) 224-4633 or email kris.modaff@wisconsin.gov.

“If you believe you may not have claimed the appropriate amount of tax credits for tax year 2010, you have up to four years after the initial claim was due to file an amended tax return,” Foye said. “Be sure to use the correct tax schedule when filing the amended return.”

Upcoming Events:

January 4-6	Potato Expo 2012, Loews Royal Pacific Resort, Orlando, FL
January 6-7	NPC Annual Meeting, Loews Royal Pacific Resort, Orlando, FL
January 10	Associate Division Meeting, United FCS Office, Stevens Point, WI 10:00 am
January 17-19	Eastern Idaho Ag Expo, Holt Arena, Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID
January 18-19	Idaho Potato Conference, Student Union Building, Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID
January 18	Auxiliary Meeting, Green Mill, Rothschild, WI 1:00 pm
January 19	Chip Committee Conference Call, 10:00 am
January 23	Research Meeting, Hancock Research Station, 9:00 am
January 24	Water Task Force Meeting, Elizabeth Inn, Plover, WI 10:00 am
January 24-25	Western Idaho Ag Expo, Caldwell Events Center, Caldwell, ID
January 24-26	Washington – Oregon Potato Conference, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, WA
Jan. 31 – Feb. 2	WPVGA Grower Education Conference and Industry Show, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
February 1	WPVGA Associate Division Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
February 2	WPVGA Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
February 10	Mint/Muck Annual Meetings, Best Western, Portage, WI 9:30 am
February 15	Long Range Planning Follow-up Meeting, Elizabeth Inn, Plover, WI 9am-3pm
Feb. 23-March 1	Potato Industry Leadership Institute, Washington DC
Feb. 27-March 1	Public Policy Conference, Washington DC
March 13-16	USPB Annual Meeting, The Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, CO
March 15	Spudpro Meeting, Rhinelander Research Station, 10:00 am

Share your questions and comments on the issues. Do you know somebody that would like to be included on the mailing list for this E-Newsletter? Please contact: wpvga@wisconsinpotatoes.com.

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