

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is extending the sign-up to June 12 for farmers and ranchers wishing to apply for financial or technical assistance related to organic ag production, said Steve Chick, State Conservationist for NRCS.

“We have received a favorable response showing interest in organic farming or ranching from around the state, plus it’s the busy planting season, so I decided to extend the application process for this initiative,” said Chick.

Over \$1.8 million is available through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Applications received by June 12 will be considered first for any funding, but producers may continue to sign up after June 12.

This program is aimed at agricultural producers who have at least \$1,000 of off farm/ranch sales. This is a cost-share program and not a grant program. To be eligible, the producer is required to be pursuing organic certification or already have an organic system plan.

The 2009 Organic Initiative is a nationwide special initiative to provide financial and technical assistance to National Organic Program certified organic producers, as well as producers starting or transitioning to organic production.

Interested producers should visit their nearest NRCS office at the USDA Service Center to determine eligibility or apply. Additional information on the 2009 EQIP Organic Initiative is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/.