



Fact Sheet

**Conservation Reserve Program
Biomass Pilot Projects**

Background

Authorized by the FY **2000** agricultural appropriations bill, FSA issued a Federal Register notice on October 20 providing an opportunity to submit applications to conduct pilot projects for harvesting of biomass from CRP land to be used for energy production.

Under the statute, up to 6 projects (no more than one of which in each State) are authorized.

Pilot Project Terms

The terms of the projects include:

- Acreage may not be harvested more than once every other year.
- No more than 25 percent of the total CRP acreage in any NASS Crop Reporting District (map attached) may be harvested in any 1 year.
- No commercial use may be made other than energy production from biomass.
- The total of all projects may not exceed 250,000 acres and individual pilot projects will not generally be approved if they exceed 50,000 acres.

- A payment reduction equal to 25 percent of the annual rental payment will apply during the year the acreage is harvested.
- Pilot projects must be conducted for a minimum of 10 years.

Eligible Land

All CRP land is eligible except that land:

- devoted to field windbreaks, waterways, shallow water ways for wildlife, contour grass strips, shelter belts, living snow fences, permanent vegetation to reduce salinity, salt tolerant vegetative cover, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restoration, and cross-wind trap strips or
- land that is within an approved wellhead protection area not to exceed 2,000 foot radius, has an erodibility index of more than 15, is within 1,000 feet of a stream or other waterbody, or considered a wetland under the regulations at 7 CFR part 12.

Project Applications

Project applications must be submitted to the FSA State Executive Director by December 19, 2000. Comments may be included with submissions to suggest that the limitations, to the extent that they

are not statutory, should not apply or that other limitations should apply.

Project Applications Review

State FSA Committees, in consultation with NRCS and the State Technical Committee, will make recommendations to a National level interagency group.

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NASS Crop Reporting Districts

