

Seasonal High Tunnels for Food and Other Specialty Crop Production

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in New Hampshire is providing financial assistance for high tunnels through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Agriculture Management Assistance program (AMA). Financial assistance will be offered for a maximum of 2178 square feet (approximately 30 x 72 ft) per agricultural operation.

Some requirements for producers that get high tunnel assistance through NH NRCS:

- The tunnel must be maintained according to NRCS specifications for a period of 4 years.
- This is a 3 year pilot study. NRCS will work with producers to collect information on the effectiveness of High Tunnels for improving soil quality and managing nutrients and pests. Producers who receive assistance will need to complete an evaluation every growing season.
- The payment rate for new, socially disadvantaged, or limited resource farmers is \$4.75/ft² and is \$3.95/ft² for all other applicants.
- Tunnels must be gothic-style and meet the criteria listed on the NH 789 Approved Product List and Selection Criteria.
- No permanent electricity or automatic ventilation will be permitted. Ventilation must be provided through roll up sides, doors, and manual, thermal, or solar-powered vents.
- The tunnel will be installed according to manufacturer's instructions. All designs must be approved by NRCS.
- The width of the tunnel shall not exceed 30 feet.
- The tunnel shall not be used to house livestock.

In order to be eligible, growers must have:

- At least ½ acre of cropland
- Control of the land (*i.e.* own the land or have a lease or rental agreement)
- Produced or sold at least \$1,000 of agricultural products in the past year

If you currently have a high tunnel then you could get assistance to build one additional tunnel, as long as the total square feet of high tunnels on your land (including the tunnel to be built) does not exceed 5% of the total acres of cultivated cropland. For example, 5% of one acre is 2178 ft² (approximately 30 x 72 ft). If you already use one 30 x 72 ft high tunnel, you would need to have a minimum of 2 acres of cropland to be eligible for a 30 x 72 ft tunnel through NRCS. This ratio is used only for eligibility purposes; new tunnels can be installed next to each other on the same acre of land.

To apply for high tunnel assistance, contact your local field office

<http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/directory/offices.html>

- Applications can be filled out anytime throughout the year
- Funding is competitive.
- Funding cycles vary. If you are not selected for funding during this cycle, your application can be deferred to the next funding cycle.

For more information about high tunnels in NH, visit

<http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/features/High%20Tunnels.html>