

**Purpose.** To notify the field of the need for peer review when ranking EQIP applications.

**Expiration Date.** September 30, 2004

**Background.** State Conservationists are responsible for ensuring that all ranking criteria and selection processes meet Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) rules, regulations, and policies. When the ranking process for EQIP applications is delegated by the State Conservationist to a Designated Conservationist, the Designated Conservationist will ensure that, in addition to meeting NRCS rules, regulations, and policies, the ranked applications will be reviewed by another appropriately qualified NRCS employee. The data and initials of the reviewer should be placed on the lower right hand corner of the first page of the ranking worksheet after the review is completed.

The purpose of this review is to ensure consistency and accuracy, and to avoid the appearance of bias in ranking.

**Contact.** Questions regarding this matter should be directed to the National EQIP Program Manager in the Conservation Operations Division, at (202) 720-1840.

/s/

JOSE J. ACEVEDO  
Deputy Chief for Programs

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