

# CT No-Till & Cover Crop Equipment Exchange Pilot Project

## Farm Equipment Host & Farm Equipment User Application



### Overview

Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (CT RC&D) through a USDA NRCS CIG Grant (Conservation Innovation Grant) is creating a no-till and cover crop equipment exchange pilot program. The purpose of the project is to introduce no-till equipment to aid the implementation of soil health principles such as organic cover crop and no-till planting on Connecticut farms. The program will foster collaborative education and use of the no-till equipment to crop producers in two geographically diverse areas of Connecticut.

CT RC&D seeks to create two hubs or locations where the no-till equipment will be housed. The equipment will be available for use by farms in the surrounding area. The primary goal is to make no-till equipment available to reduce the cost and risk of adopting no-till crop production practices. Reported benefits of no-till production suggests reduced farm inputs (herbicides, fertilizers, irrigation) and improved soil health and crop productivity. The concept of using equipment attachments rather than use of herbicides is nothing new, however it's underutilized in CT. By implementation of this project, more agriculture producers will have the opportunity to cooperatively use the no-till equipment, develop a network for information sharing, and implement no-till and cover crops on their farms thereby increasing soil health without individually buying each of the equipment aides on their own.

CT RC&D is currently accepting applications from interested farms who would like to participate in the equipment exchange and be either a Farm Equipment Host or surrounding area Farm Equipment User. Two farm equipment hosts will be selected. Farm hosts will be required to provide barn space for storage of 1) a roller/crimper, 2) a seed planter, and 3) a transplanter. All equipment is designed for planting into cover crops. There will be one set of equipment at each of the Two Hubs (farm equipment host locations). CT RC&D will work with the Farm Equipment Host on sizing the equipment for each farm hub. Several farm equipment users will be selected. For producers interested in using the equipment from the Farm Hub, there will be a reservation process and schedule for use throughout the year. For all equipment users, there will be an acreage meter attached to each piece of equipment and a nominal fee will be assessed for usage of the equipment per acre to help pay for any required maintenance or repairs. Farm Equipment Hosts and Users are responsible for supplying their own tractor or equipment to pull the no-till and cover crop attachments. Farm Equipment Users are responsible for transporting the equipment to and from the Farm Host with the provided trailer from CT RC&D. This is a 3-year pilot project.

Both farm equipment host and farm equipment users should be USDA NRCS EQIP eligible to participate in the pilot project. Producers will not be receiving any direct payments through participation in this CIG project. The benefit of this project is having access to no-till equipment at a steeply reduced rate per acre. Each participating farm will be required to provide in-kind time to assist with monitoring the results of the pilot project on their farm for the duration of the three year project. The selection process will take place in the fall of 2017 by a selection committee, equipment will be ordered winter of 2017 and ready for use spring of 2018 and thereafter until the spring of 2020. CT RC&D will continually monitor the progress of the pilot project and seeks to host educational field days/workshop at each of the farm equipment hubs and/or equipment user's farms. Project collaborators include but are not limited to: CT NOFA, Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, Inc., Eastern Connecticut Conservation District, Inc., Granby Agricultural Commission, Salmon River Watershed Partnership and The Last Green Valley.

## Applicant Information

Farm Name	
Contact Name	
Farm Address	
Phone	
E-Mail Address	
Type of Farm	
Years in Business	
Is the farm currently certified organic or practicing organic methods? (This is not a requirement)	
Total Farm Acres	
Acres in Production	
Acreage of Farm currently in no-till and/or cover crop	
Are you USDA NRCS EQIP Eligible? (Yes, No, Unsure)	
Are you currently enrolled in any USDA NRCS EQIP programs?	
If yes, please describe	
Are you willing to participate for the entire pilot project (3 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Are you applying to be a Farm Equipment Host	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Are you applying to be a Farm Equipment User	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

If you are applying as a Farm Equipment User how far are you willing to travel to a Farm Hub to pick equipment?

\_\_\_\_\_ miles

**Describe the farm in general (type, size, history)**

**Describe current crop production methods (type of soil and methods used for crop production)**

**Existing no-till and/or cover crop practices implemented on the farm**

**Future or planned no-till and/or cover crop practices implemented on the farm**

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**Why are you interested in being a farm equipment host or farm equipment user**

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**Agreement and Signature**

By submitting this application, I affirm that the facts set forth in it are true and complete. I understand that if I am accepted, any false statements, omissions, or other misrepresentations made by me on this application may result in an immediate retraction of this application.

Signature	
Name (printed)	
Date	

**The deadline for applications to CT RC&D Office is Friday, November 17, 2017 by 4pm**, electronic submission is preferred, please send to [ajohnson@ctrctd.org](mailto:ajohnson@ctrctd.org). If you need to mail the application please send it to CT RC&D 1066 Saybrook Road, PO Box 70, Haddam, CT 06438. After applications are received they will be reviewed by a selection committee after which farms will be notified by mid December 2017 if they have been selected for the No-Till and Cover Crop Equipment Exchange Pilot Project. If you have any questions you can reach the CT RC&D office at 860-345-3977.

*\*Note: CT RC&D recognizes that National Historic Preservation (NHPA) Section 106 review and consultation by NRCS state or field office with required consulting parties (such as the pertinent State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and federally recognized Tribes) are required prior to the implementation of conservation practices and/or activities for this pilot project and the potential it has to affect cultural resources.*