

# Urban and Small Acreage Program

USDA-NRCS Idaho



In recent years, Idaho has seen an influx of new residents from across the country. This has created a situation where many of our traditional farms have been sold to developers to accommodate our population increase.

When these developments include farmettes and ranchettes, the new landowners sometimes need assistance to get the land back up and operational as pastures, gardens and the like. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) may be able to assist them.

Our voluntary conservation practices are based on the most current science and the associated Technical Assistance allows landowners to make the best decisions for their operation. Financial Assistance to help install practices may be available through the Farm Bill Programs we administer, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

Part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the NRCS is a voluntary service-based agency and strives to help farmers improve their operations where and when we can. As such, we are committed to working with farms of all sizes and in all locations, including those in urban areas. The USDA is working department-wide to support urban agriculture as it plays an important role in producing nutritious food, but also in providing jobs, and offering access to fresh, healthy food in areas where grocery stores are scarce. When it comes to small and urban acreages, Idaho NRCS works with the University of Idaho Extension offices, Tribes and other State agencies, including Idaho Fish and Game and as well as our local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, to help landowners accomplish their goals.

NRCS would like to help individuals, municipalities and Tribes throughout Idaho become more resilient and continue to build the local food system in their communities. If we can empower landowners and residents to protect and preserve the small acreage and urban lands, it benefits the community and Idaho as a whole.

The People's Garden Initiative through USDA offers an opportunity for communities to learn more about food access and growing local, nutritious food from seed to plant. We're excited to bring back this successful, popular effort that invites more individuals to participate in agriculture in their own communities.

NRCS is opening the People's Garden community to eligible gardens nationwide, including school gardens, community gardens, urban farms, and small-scale agriculture projects in rural and urban areas. For more information about how to become a People's Garden, visit [usda.gov/peoples-garden](https://usda.gov/peoples-garden).



## Opportunities for Urban Agriculture

- Residential Parcels
- Cut flowers
- Farmers Markets
- Pollinator gardens

## Farm Bill Programs Supporting Urban Agriculture

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)
- ACEP - Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE)
- EQIP-Conservation Incentive Contracts (EQIP-CIC)



## Examples of Conservation Practices

- Cover crops
- Conservation crop rotation
- Critical area planting
- Pest management
- Micro irrigation
- Nutrient management
- Heavy use protection
- Salinity management
- Irrigation water management
- High tunnels
- Stock Water
- Cross Fencing
- Prescribed Grazing

## What is a high tunnel?

High Tunnels, also called hoop houses, are an enclosed polyurethane, polycarbonate, plastic, or fabric covered structure that is used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive precipitation or extreme temperatures. Crops are grown directly in the ground and an irrigation source is usually required.

## High tunnels help:

- Improving plant vigor
- Provide a local, fresh produce source
- Maintain or improve soil health
- Extend the growing season
- Reduce nutrient and pesticide transportation

For more information, contact:

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