

Seasonal High Tunnel Money Available

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funding is now available to help farmers extend the growing season while protecting natural resources.

NRCS recently announced that they will be accepting fiscal year 2011 high tunnel establishment applications through September 1, 2010.

This practice will help to extend the growing season and provide locally grown, fresh produce in a conservation friendly way. 2011 will be the 2nd year of a three year pilot study established under the “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” initiative.

A seasonal high tunnel is a greenhouse-like structure, at least six feet high, which modifies the climate inside to create more favorable growing conditions for vegetable and other specialty crops grown in the natural soil. Made of ribbed metal pipe, covered with a layer of plastic sheeting, high tunnels are easy to build, maintain, and move.

This pilot program will test the potential conservation benefits of growing crops under these structures. Participants can receive funding ranging from \$3.75 to \$4.50/sq ft for a maximum area of 2,178 square feet.

Producers who would like to sign-up for the high tunnel pilot program should come into the NRCS office at the USDA Service Center - 107 Park Street in Farmington .

For general questions you may call 778-4767 or go to our web site at www.me.usda.nrcs.usda.gov