



# The Fertilizer Institute

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## **2002 Farm Bill Implications to the Fertilizer Industry**

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## **2002 Farm Bill Implications**

- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
- Technical Service Providers (TSP)



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### EQIP

- “To promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals”
- Cost-share for structural practices
- Incentive payments for land management practices to farmers
- Additional technical assistance payments



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### EQIP

- **Fiscal Year 2003**
  - EQIP technical assistance funding - \$195 m
  - 63 million acres estimated if fully implemented
  - Established a TSP program to help write plans and advise farmers



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## **EQIP Comments**

- TFI submitted comments March 2003
- Promotes retail dealers and certified crop advisors
- USDA states potential for “conflict of interest” with private sector TSPs
- Equal playing field – farmers choice



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## **TSP Comments**

- TFI submits comments June 2003
- Again promotes level playing field
- Support a national certification with uniform criteria
- Oppose conflict of interest statement
- Appears USDA/NRCS wants to control – no private sector TSPs



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## TSP Today

- October 2003
  - TFI meets with NRCS Chief Knight
  - Expresses concern with direction of TSP implementation
  - As currently written would effectively exclude private sector
  - State Conservationist – You MUST establish a relationship



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## Why?

- Complex certification process
- Ridiculously low proposed “not to exceed” TSP payment rates
- Proposed exclusion of private sector from participating in contribution agreements
- Excessive liability insurance requirements for TSPs



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## Results

- For Fiscal Year 2003 – may be less than 5% of EQIP technical assistance conservation dollars to private sector
- Private sector being shut-out of nutrient management planning
- Jeopardizes nutrient management planning service profitability
- Jeopardizes the need for Certified Crop Advisors