

Upper Republican NRD program offers cost-share for soil-moisture probes

Written by Wauneta Breeze
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By Nate Jenkins

Upper Republican NRD

Farmers interested in using soil-moisture probes during the upcoming irrigation season can now apply for cost-share under a program administered by the Upper Republican Natural Resources District (URNRD).

The program is possible because of a new, \$50,000 grant the NRD is expected to receive this year from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to provide cost-share on soil-moisture probes.

Under the program, farmers can be reimbursed for up to 2/3 of the costs of soil-moisture probes used in 2014. Reimbursement will be capped at \$3,000 per probe that is purchased and \$1,500 per probe that is leased.

There was strong interest in a similar program last year. To increase the number of people that are exposed to use of the probes using the funds, enrollees in this year's program must not be receiving cost-share for probes under Natural Resources Conservation Services Programs.

Reimbursement under the new program will be limited to three probes per person or entity for 2014. There are no restrictions on what types of soil-moisture probes that can be used. The probes must be used within the URNRD.

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The NRD is now taking applications for the program. Those accepted into the program will be chosen on a first-come, first-serve basis. Preference may be given to those who don't currently have a probe cost-share contract with the NRD that expires Sept. 30.

Application forms are available on the URNRD website at www.urnrd.org or can be picked up at the NRD office at 511 East Fifth St. in Imperial.

Completed forms can be dropped off at the office, mailed to the office at Upper Republican NRD, PO Box 1140, Imperial, NE 69033, scanned and e-mailed to natejenkins@urnrd.org, or faxed to 308-882-4521.

The Nebraska Legislature created the Environmental Trust in 1992. Using revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided over \$199 million in grants to over 1,600 projects across the state. Anyone can apply for funding, which is used to preserve, protect and restore natural resources for future generations.