

A Grower's Guide to Accessing Funds for New Kernza Plantings through the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in Wisconsin

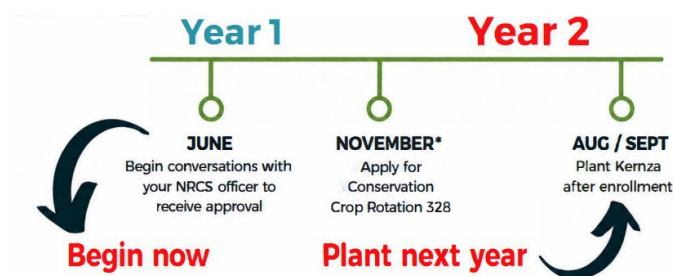
The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial support to growers for planting *new* Kernza acres through the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Funds are available through the Conservation Crop Rotation Practice 328.

This practice pays for the full estimated cost of adding Kernza to your rotation (practice scenarios specifically reference “intermediate wheatgrass”). Growers must maintain their Kernza planting for at least two out of the five years. For 2026, growers in Wisconsin receive annual payments of ~\$50-65 per acre over a period of five years, the length of the contract. Payment amounts may change from year to year. Find payment schedules here: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/payment-schedules>

Here are the key points to know before applying for funds in Wisconsin. For more detailed information, please see Additional Resources below.

- Funds are only available for *new* Kernza acres, NOT existing acres. Therefore, you are eligible to receive funds only if you are considering expanding your Kernza acreage or planting Kernza for the first time.
- The annual application deadline varies year to year. In 2026, the deadline in Wisconsin was January 15.
 - Find updated application deadlines here: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/ranking-dates>
- Contact your local NRCS office at *least* ONE YEAR prior to planting to begin the application process!** For example, if you are planning on planting Kernza in August 2027, you will need to contact your local NRCS office by spring/early summer of 2026. If you are a beginning farmer and don't have an existing relationship with your local NRCS or FSA staff, you should contact your NRCS office even earlier.
 - Find your local NRCS field office here: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>
- Your local NRCS staffers will work with you to develop a plan for your Kernza planting and help you maximize the conservation benefits. The NRCS provides this service for free.

Timeline for CSP application:



Additional Resources:

[Kernza.org - NRCS Programs Available Now for Perennial Grains – Conservation Crop Rotation Practice 328](#)

- This website has multiple resources about NRCS cost-share programs for Kernza plantings, including CSP. For an in-depth guide to enrolling in the CSP program, check out the [Step-by-Step Guide to United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Farm Program Enrollment & Incentives for Kernza](#).

[Conservation Stewardship Program - Wisconsin](#)

- This website gives an overview of the CSP program in Wisconsin. Scroll down to search for your local USDA Service Center where you can connect with NRCS staff.