

307.10 National Air Quality Initiative

Initiative Name and Acronym National Air Quality Initiative (NAQI)

Initiative Description/Summary

The Agricultural Act of 2014 Section 2207 (16 U.S.C. Section 3839aa) authorizes program support to eligible producers to implement practices that address air quality concerns from agricultural operations. The National Air Quality Initiative (NAQI) is designed to help producers address agricultural air emissions of particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), ammonia (NH₃), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), odorous sulfur compounds (OSCs), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and carbon dioxide (CO₂). NAQI funding will be allocated based on three priorities:

- 1) **National nonattainment priority areas** address regulated agricultural air emissions in the designated nonattainment counties of California and Arizona.
- 2) **Regional air quality priority areas** address regional agricultural air quality issues by targeting agricultural air emissions in multistate areas that may or may not be designated as nonattainment areas by EPA.
- 3) **State air quality priority areas** address local and Statewide agricultural air quality issues in areas that may or may not be designated as nonattainment areas by EPA.

Request to Participate

States with significant air quality resource concerns are invited to submit *requests to participate* in EQIP NAQI. *Requests to participate* will be submitted to the NAQI Program manager in conjunction with the State resource assessment (SRA) process. States are encouraged to collaborate on *requests to participate* for regional air quality priorities. *Requests to participate* will include at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) Priority type (national nonattainment, regional air quality, or State air quality)
- 2) Geographic extent (e.g., States and counties) of the initiative area
- 3) Air quality resource concerns to be targeted in the initiative area
- 4) Priority pollutants to be addressed
- 5) Reasons for the importance of the agricultural air quality issues in the initiative area
- 6) Any existing or potential air quality regulatory requirements related to the specific agricultural air quality issues to be addressed
- 7) Discussion of whether the geographic extent of the initiative areas includes a nonattainment or maintenance area for the priority pollutants to be addressed
- 8) Description of the proposed strategy to address the agricultural air quality issues, including a discussion of the overall goal to be achieved, what is the expected timeline if a multiyear commitment is being proposed, and what are the interim or annual milestones to measure success
- 9) Proposed core air quality practices to be utilized in the initiative and any supporting practices with the justification
- 10) Amount of funding requested by State
- 11) External partners, if any, and their expected role in the initiative

Priority for funding consideration will be based on the following:

- 1) Mitigation of pollutants or precursors which contribute to nonattainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards
- 2) Air quality regulatory compliance related to agricultural sources
- 3) Participation with external partners

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ProTracts Subaccount Requirements

States approved for NAQI will be notified through their annual allocation transmittals and will follow the guidance provided below for ProTracts.

The following subaccounts will be established in ProTracts to support NAQI in each State approved for the initiative:

- “Air Quality National Non-attainment” with an account type of “Air Quality National” for proposals approved for national nonattainment funds.
- “Air Quality Regional” with an account type of “Air Quality Priority” for proposals approved for regional funds.
- “Air Quality State” with an account type of “Air Quality National” or “Air Quality Priority” depending on the funds source utilized.

States will evaluate and fund applications for air-quality-related projects using the appropriate subaccount. States may establish additional air-quality-related subaccounts using other program funds, but will attach an account type of “Air Quality State.”

ProTracts Application, Evaluation, and Ranking Tool (AERT)

1. Approved Land Types to be Populated in ProTracts AERT

States will assign the following land uses as eligible for this initiative. No other land uses are authorized for NAQI.

Approved Land Use
Crop
Forest
Range
Farmstead
Pasture

2. Approved Natural Resource Concerns to be Populated in ProTracts AERT

States will assign the following natural resource concerns for this initiative in accordance with the approved *request to participate*. No other resource concerns are authorized for this initiative.

Natural Resource Concern	Applicable Air Contaminant
Air Quality Impacts – Emissions of Particulate Matter (PM) and PM Precursors	PM ₁₀ /PM _{2.5} , NH ₃ , NO _x , and VOC
Air Quality Impacts – Emissions of Ozone Precursors	NO _x and VOCs
Air Quality Impacts – Emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)	CH ₄ , N ₂ O, and CO
Air Quality Impacts – Objectionable Odors	NH ₃ , VOCs, and OSCs

3. Approved Conservation Practices to be Populated in ProTracts AERT Matrix

Conservation activity plans (CAPs) and conservation practices will address the air quality natural resource concerns identified by States in their respective *requests to participate*. The CAPs and

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conservation practices approved for use may be obtained from the NAQI program manager or technical coordinator and will be used to populate the ProTracts AERT tool. Requests to add additional supporting practices to the initiative must be submitted to the NAQI program manager with justification and supported by the *request to participate*.

4. Application, Evaluation, and Ranking Tool Guidance

The total ranking points associated with the initiative are to be distributed in AERT as follows:

AERT Level	Maximum Points	Point Percentage
National-Level Ranking Questions	250	25%
State-Level Ranking Questions	400	40%
Local-Level Ranking Questions	250	25%
Efficiency Score	100	10%
Total points for this initiative:	1,000	100%

States must adjust AERT “multipliers” in ProTracts to assure that the above target percentages will properly distribute available ranking points for each category.

5. State Ranking Criteria Requirements

State ranking questions for this initiative will be established by the State consistent with the approved proposal.

6. Local Ranking Criteria Requirements

Local ranking questions for this initiative will be established by the State.

7. Screening Criteria Requirements:

Screening criteria are optional for use to support this initiative if needed to manage workload.