

## **Variable Rate Irrigation Incentive Assistance**

This program is intended to provide landowner assistance for installation of variable rate irrigation control equipment which improves precision application of irrigation water from the center pivot system. The equipment is calibrated according to the soils types, topography, yield data and other defined field conditions and applies water according to the specific needs of each identified cell or quadrant of the pivot system. The system provides for the most precise and efficient application of irrigation water therefore reducing irrigation water and energy inputs while reducing the potential for nitrogen leaching.

**Eligible Areas:** Eligible areas for the program includes all irrigated lands within the Little Blue NRD.

**Practices include:** The programmable equipment for the center pivot necessary to control the pivots speed and/or specific pre-set zone irrigation applications for more precise irrigation water placement.

**Requirements:**

- 1) The variable rate irrigation system must be designed by a qualified pivot manufacturer or certified dealer for the individual operator's tract.
- 2) The center pivot must irrigate a minimum of 65 acres.
- 3) Applicants will be ranked according to the risk to groundwater and Municipal drinking water supplies. Application will be ranked according to the following priority areas: (1) Wellhead Protection Management Areas, (2) Water Quality Sub-Areas, (3) Rest of the District.

**Application Process** Applications will be accepted between February 1<sup>st</sup> through April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. All applications received will be reviewed and ranked based on the above requirements and the applications approved by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Cost-Share** Cost-share funds may be made available at a rate of 50% up to \$3,500 per pivot system equipped with variable rate irrigation speed/zone control systems.

In no case will the cost share provided exceed 50% of the total cost of the control system.

Total funding for this practice will be limited to the amount budgeted for the program annually. This practice is a one-time only incentive for owners, operators or farm units. The NRD reserves the right to distribute cost-share funds throughout the district to expose more operators to this practice.