Eliminate the Conservation Reserve Program

Heritage Recommendation:
Eliminate the Conservation Reserve Program. This proposal saves $19.2 billion over 10 years.

Rationale:
The Conservation Reserve Program pays farmers not to farm. In return for not farming allegedly environmentally sensitive land, farmers receive annual payments, courtesy of taxpayers; contracts last for 10 to 15 years. Much of this land could be highly productive land if it were used.

By taking land out of production, there is less land that could be used to meet important agricultural needs and increase the supply of important commodities. The reduced supply of land can drive up real-estate prices making it more difficult for farmers to expand operations and for new farmers to get a start in agriculture in the first place.

Additional Reading:

Calculations: