

Best Management Practices

Agency/Organization: Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
Program: **Best Management Practices (BMPs)**
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Program Description:

This program provides state financial assistance to Vermont farmers in support of their voluntary construction of on-farm improvements designed to abate non-point source agricultural waste discharges into the waters of the state of Vermont, consistent with goals of the federal Water Pollution Control Act and with state water quality standards.

Assistance Type: Financial; Technical

Financial Assistance: This program can be coupled with Federal NRCS programs to increase the maximum cost-share available to the farm from 80% (state only) to 85% (50% federal, 35% state). An applicant for a state grant shall pay at least 15% of the total eligible project cost. The dollar amount of a state grant shall be equal to the total eligible project cost, less 15% of the total as paid by the applicant, and less the amount of any federal assistance awarded, except that a state grant shall not exceed 80% of the total eligible project cost.

ELIGIBILITY

Landscape Type: Agriculture, Production Areas

Resource Type: Water Quality

Criteria: BMPs shall be eligible for cost sharing provided that they meet one of the following:

(a) are components of the following BMP Systems contained in the NRCS's National Handbook of Conservation Practices that are eligible for cost share funding including, but not limited to: permanent vegetative cover; animal waste management; strip cropping; terraces; diversions; pasture and hayland management; waterways; cropland protection; conservation tillage; stream protection; permanent vegetative cover on critical areas; sediment retention, erosion or water control structures; tree planting; nutrient management; or conservation cropping; or

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(b) are the FSA Agricultural Conservation Program-eligible practices that are defined in the FSA's handbook "1-ACP (Rev. 3) Amend. 3" or as subsequently amended; or

(c) infrastructure that is designed and certified by a professional engineer licensed in the State of Vermont to be equivalent to the performance standards of those practices contained in subsections (a) or (b); or

(d) are integrated crop management systems designed to achieve the source reduction of nonpoint source agricultural wastes that are developed by certified crop advisors or other agricultural professionals such as, but not limited to, the University Extension Specialists; and

(e) are consistent with a "nutrient management plan" prepared by the Vermont field office of the NRCS, or with an animal waste management plan based on standards equivalent to those of the NRCS.