

## **Funding Sources: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

The following is a listing of the various funding sources offered to farmers by the USDA. Each source shows the eligibility, what it will do for the farmer, and where to seek additional information. The information is also showed more briefly on the next attachment titled, Offers.

### **Highlights of various programs**

#### **Wetlands Reserve program (WRP)**

This is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetland on their property.

##### Participant eligibility

1. You must be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conversation provisions
2. There are adjust gross income limitations
3. You must be able to show you have ownership of the land
4. You must have owned the land for the 7 year-period to the time the land is determined eligible for enrollment
5. Landowner must have clear title to the land or be able to provide consent or subordination agreements from the secured entity.
6. For easements you must have a recorded right of way that provides access to the easement from a public road

##### Land eligibility

1. Land enrolled in the WRP program must be private land.
  - a. Former or degraded wetlands occurring on pasture, hay land and forest production lands previously or currently used for food or FIBER production.
  - b. Riparian areas along streams of other waterways.
  - c. Adjacent land that contributes significantly to the wetland functions and values that do not exceed 50% of the easement area
  - d. Wetlands restored under a State of Federal program
  - e. Lands altered by flooding
  - f. Lands that provides endangered species habitat
  - g. Certain agricultural lands with restorable wetlands.

Application forms are available at your local USDA service centers or from the following website:

<http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/WRP/index.html>

## **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

### **BENEFITS OF CREP:**

1. CREP pays up to 90-140 percent of installation costs
2. Annual rental payments commonly \$90 + per acre for the 10 to 15 year contract
3. Professional help for project design and implementation
4. Prevents stream bank erosion and protect your property
5. Improve habitat for fish, songbirds, and other wild life
6. Improve herd health and cleanliness by managing stream access

### **WHAT LANDS ARE ELIGIBLE**

- CREP enrollment is limited to specific geographic areas and practices. To determine if your state and county are involved in CREP and if you land qualifies contact **1-800-941 CREP (2737)**
- Most rural, unforested areas within 180 feet of streams, ponds, lakes and wetlands with open water are eligible. Even small and seasonal streams qualify
- Buffer projects must be at least 35 feet wide; buffers over 50 feet wide earn substantially more
- Idle land, pasture land and crop land along streams are all eligible.
- Landowners **do not** need to be farmers

### **WHAT LANDS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE**

- Areas with more than 1/3 coverage by existing trees and shrubs do not qualify.

## **THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)**

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to private owners and operators of:

- Organic Farms
- Non-organic farms
- Livestock, dairy or poultry farms
- Fruit and vegetable farms
- Vineyards
- Specialty crop farms

- Grain/hay farms
- Forestland
- Other Ag Products

Small-scale producers are encouraged to utilize NRCS

- Learn how to increase soil fertility
- Manage pests
- Produce compost
- Increase pollinators
- Extend the growing season
- And more!

### **TARGETED GROUPS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL INCENTIVES**

You're a targeted underserved group if you qualify as one of the following:

- Beginning Farmer, A person who has operated a farm not more than 10 consecutive years
- Limited Resource Farmer a farm operator whose household income is below their local county poverty level and farm income is below annual total table, approximately \$150,000
- Socially Disadvantaged or Historically underserved farmers/landowners includes, Hispanics, Asians, Native American Indians, Blacks or African Americans, Alaska natives, native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

To contact your local USDA NRCS service center you can find a list of offices at:

<http://offices.usda.gov>

In Pennsylvania

<http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov>

Recaps of USDA offers are on the following pages.

# THE LEGAL STUFF

## Agricultural Environmental Requirements

### What is required?

#### **Erosion and Sediment Control Plan**

- Identify farm where agricultural plowing and or tilling and Animal Heavy Use areas disturb more than 5,000 square feet
- Conservation Best Management Practices (**BMPs**) on cropland, hay land, and or pastures used to limit soil loss
- **BMPs** needed to minimize accelerated soil and manure loss from animal heavy use areas
- Maps that show the location of features including:
  - Streams, lakes, and rivers
  - Field and property boundaries
  - Animal heavy use areas
  - Roads
  - Existing and planned **BMPs**
- An implementation schedule describing when the planned **BMPs** will be implemented
- Operation and maintenance criteria describing how **BMPs** will be operated and maintained

All farms are required to develop and implement a written plan to reduce erosion on their crop fields and Animal Heavy Use Areas. **ALL** farms need a plan. These plans do not have to be submitted for approval but must be kept on the farm and made available upon request

#### **Manure management plan**

- Acres of the operation, owned or rented
- Animal on the operation, animal type and animal number
- Manure application rates and timing
- Environmentally sensitive areas (streams, water wells, etc.)
- Winter application of manure if applicable
- Manure storage facilities if applicable
- Solid manure stockpiling or stacking
- Pasture areas
- Animal Concentration Areas (**ACAs**)

All farming operations that land applies manure whether they generate the manure or import it from another operation need to develop and implement a written manure management plan

A copy of an acceptable Manure Management Manual will is available online from the Department of Environmental Protection. A link for the local DEP regional offices can be found at:

[www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us)