



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

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Conservation Grants Program

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Dear Maryland Cover Crop Farmer:

We are pleased to announce that sign up for the 2020-2021 Cover Crop Grant Program will run July 1- July 17, 2020. To ensure everyone's safety and peace of mind, the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program has switched to a mail-in sign-up. We hope that you will sign up for our grants to plant cover crops this year. Here are a few pointers to help you through the application process.

- **Don't come to us—mail your application.** This year's cover crop sign-up will be conducted entirely by mail. There is no need to sign up in person at your local soil conservation district.
- **The 2020-2021 Cover Crop Program features a simplified application process.** Please look over the updated website to learn about changes to this year's program. These changes are aligned with State of Maryland budget considerations.
- **Please print out the application.** Complete the application by hand. We ask that you please print neatly. Always use your full legal name and/or the legal name of your operation. Mail the completed application and *Current Nutrient Management Plan Certification Form* (see below) to your local soil conservation district office. ***All applications must be postmarked by July 17, 2020.*** A list of soil conservation district addresses is available on the website.
- **You must be in compliance with Maryland's nutrient management regulations to receive our grants.** Please indicate that you have submitted a 2019 Annual Implementation Report (AIR) to the Nutrient Management Program. Check the box on line 6 of the application, provide the legal name of the farm operator/owner for whom the plan was written, and attach a completed *Current Nutrient Management Plan Certification Form*. This form must be signed by both the farm operator and the person who prepared the plan. The form can be downloaded from the website.
- Here are some additional tips to help you complete the application. Steps correspond with those listed on the application:

**Step 1** – Provide the total number of acres that you plan to plant in cover crops.

**Step 2** – Choose the incentives that you want and provide the number of acres associated with each incentive.

**Step 3** – A seed test is required for home-grown seed. Cost-share of \$15 per sample is available. Multiply the number of samples by \$15.

**Step 4** – Add the base payment and incentives to get a total cost-share amount. Please note that the aerial planting incentive and incorporated seed incentive cannot be greater than the total base acres.

**Step 5** – Register the number of acres you plan to enroll in the Extended Season incentive option—up to 500. Multiply this number by \$10. Add Steps 4 and 5 to get the total amount of cost-share that you have applied for.

**Step 6** – Sign your application. We cannot process your application without a signature.

**Step 7** – Due to social distancing requirements, most cover crop farmers were unable to sign their spring certifications for cover crops planted last fall. This section allows farmers to complete the 2019/2020 Cover Crop Program Spring Certification by providing a signature. ***In order to participate in the 2020/2021 Cover Crop Program, applicants who have received or expect to receive a 2020 cover crop payment must sign this section of the application.***

We look forward to helping you plant your cover crop. If you need assistance with your application, help is only a phone call away. A list of soil conservation districts is included on this website. You can also contact the MACS office directly in Annapolis at 410-841-5864 or Salisbury at 410-677-0802, ext. 3.

Happy Planting,

*The MACS staff and your local soil conservation district*