2015-2016 COVER CROP PROGRAM FEATURES

Farmers can receive up to $90/acre to grow cover crops on their fields this fall.

Harvested cover crops qualify for up to $35/acre.

Legume cover crop mixes are now eligible for grants.

Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program
2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-Up
June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices

Improve Your Soil. Protect the Bay.
GROW COVER CROPS
Maryland’s 2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-up
June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Allegheny 301-277-1747, ext. 3
Anne Arundel 410-777-1747, ext. 3
Baltimore County 410-527-5920, ext. 3
Calvert 410-335-1521, ext. 3
Caroline 410-479-1202, ext. 3
Carroll 410-954-2200, ext. 3
Cecil 410-695-2003, ext. 3
Coal 410-198-4411, ext. 3
Charles 410-932-9588, ext. 3
Dorchester 410-228-5640, ext. 3
Frederick 301-695-2803, ext. 3
Garrett 301-934-9560, ext. 3
Harford 410-839-4181, ext. 3
Howard 410-313-0680
Kent 410-778-5150, ext. 3
Montgomery 301-590-2855
Prince George’s 301-574-7880
Queen Anne’s 410-758-3136, ext. 3
St. Mary’s 301-475-8402, ext. 3
Somerset 410-651-1575, ext. 3
Talbot 410-822-1577, ext. 3
Washington County 301-797-6821, ext. 3
Wicomico 410-546-4777, ext. 3
Worcester 410-632-5439, ext. 3

THE MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAM

Improve Your Soil. Protect the Bay.
GROW COVER CROPS
Maryland’s 2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-up
June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices

MARYLAND STATE OFFICE BUILDING
901 North Avenue, 2nd Floor, Annapolis, MD 21401

Maryland Department of Agriculture
Office of Resource Conservation
Conservation Grants Program
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

Cover crops improve soil health, reduce erosion, and increase agricultural production.

Cover crops are plants that are grown on fields during the fall or winter months to help protect the soil and conserve water.

The benefits of cover crops include:

- Reduced soil erosion and runoff
- Improved soil structure and fertility
- Reduced weed growth
- Increased water infiltration
- Attraction of beneficial insects

To learn more about the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program, visit www.mda.maryland.gov or call your local Soil Conservation District office.

For more information on the 2015-2016 Cover Crop Program, contact your local Soil Conservation District office.

Cover crops are a key component of Maryland’s efforts to improve soil health and protect the Bay.
TRADITIONAL COVER CROPS

Traditional cover crops may not be harvested, but may be grazed or chopped for on-farm livestock forage after becoming well established. These cover crops qualify for incentive payments when highly valued planting practices are used. Manure may be applied in the fall following Maryland’s nutrient management requirements, however, no incentives are offered. Certify with the local soil conservation district within one week of planting and no later than November 12, 2015. Killdown/suppression must take place between March 1 and June 1, 2016.

HARVESTED COVER CROPS

This program option is available to farmers who want to harvest their cover crops. Farmers should provide their best estimate of acres they plan to harvest on their applications.

 BENEFITS

Don’t let your fields sit idle this fall and winter. Growing cover crops after the summer harvest can help improve your soil, protect local waterways and bolster your fields’ productivity. Cover crops protect water quality by recycling unused plant nutrients remaining in the soil from the previous summer crop. They work all winter to protect fields against wind and water erosion. Better still, they improve the soil for next year’s crop by adding organic matter, suppressing weeds, and providing habitat for beneficial insects.

GRANTS FOR FARMERS

The Maryland Agricultural Water-Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program provides grants to help farmers offset seed, labor and equipment costs associated with planting cover crops in the fall. Maryland has earmarked approximately $22 million this year’s program.

SIGN-UP DATES

June 24 – July 15, 2015 at soil conservation district offices statewide.

ELIGIBLE COVER CROP SPECIES

Cereal Grains: Wheat/speltz, rye, barley, triticale, spring oats, ryegrass and canola/rape (brassica)

Forage Radish

Legumes: Crimson clover, Australian winter peas and hairy vetch

PLANTING REQUIREMENTS

- Plant cereal grains by November 5, 2015. Early planting incentives are offered.
- To create diversity, any two cover crop species may be mixed at a ratio of 60 percent cereal grains and 40 percent legumes or radish.
- Mixes containing rye do not qualify for the $10/acre rye incentive.
- Mixes containing forage radish must be planted by September 15, 2015.
- Mixes containing legumes must be planted by October 1, 2015.

GUIDELINES AND CONDITIONS

- Plant cover crops after corn, soybeans, sorghum, tobacco or vegetables are harvested.
- Five acre minimum; no acreage caps.
- All seed purchased must be tested and labeled following Maryland Seed Law and Regulations.
- Seed must be free of prohibited noxious weed seeds, have a minimum germination rate of 80 percent and have no more than 16 restricted noxious weeds per pound.
- Homegrown seed must be tested for germination and noxious weeds by the Maryland State Seed Laboratory before planting.
- Cost-share is available for seed testing. The current year’s seed tag for all purchased seed must be attached to the fall certification.
- Applicants must be in good standing with MACS and in compliance with the Maryland Nutrient Management Program.
- Call or visit your local soil conservation district for full program details.

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Traditional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Cover Crops Payment Options*</th>
<th>NO-TILL</th>
<th>CONVENTIONAL</th>
<th>BROADCAST WITH LIGHT, MINIMUM OR VERTICAL TILLAGE</th>
<th>AERIAL</th>
<th>BROADCAST STALK CHOP/ AERIAL GROUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base payment:</td>
<td>$45/acre</td>
<td>$45/acre</td>
<td>$45/acre</td>
<td>$50/acre</td>
<td>$45/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant by October 1, add: or</td>
<td>$20/acre</td>
<td>$10/acre</td>
<td>$10/acre</td>
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<td>$0/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant by October 15, add:</td>
<td>$10/acre</td>
<td>$5/acre</td>
<td>$5/acre</td>
<td>$0/acre</td>
<td>$0/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant fields where manure was used in spring, add:</td>
<td>$10/acre</td>
<td>$10/acre</td>
<td>$10/acre</td>
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<td>$10/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant in field with previous corn, tobacco or vegetable crop, add:</td>
<td>$5/acre</td>
<td>$5/acre</td>
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<td>$5/acre</td>
<td>$5/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant rye (no mixes), add:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum Payment Amount:</td>
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<td>$80/acre</td>
<td>$80/acre</td>
<td>$75/acre</td>
<td>$70/acre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Legume mixes receive base rate only. They do not qualify for incentive payments.

The 2015-2016 Cover Crop Program is administered by the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program and funded by the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and the Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund.

Improve Your Soil. Protect the Bay.

Maryland’s 2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-up

Open enrollment runs June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices.

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