

## Soil Conservation Districts

Allegany	(301) 777-1747, ext. 4
Anne Arundel	(410) 222-7822
Baltimore County	(410) 666-1188, ext. 3
Calvert	(410) 535-1521, ext. 3
Caroline	(410) 479-1202, ext. 3
Carroll	(410) 848-8200, ext. 3
Catoctin	(301) 695-2803, ext. 3
Cecil	(410) 398-4411, ext. 3
Charles	(301) 934-9588, ext. 3
Dorchester	(410) 228-5640, ext. 3
Frederick	(301) 695-2803, ext. 3
Garrett	(301) 334-6951
Harford	(410) 838-6181, ext. 3
Howard	(410) 489-7987
Kent	(410) 778-5150, ext. 3
Montgomery	(301) 590-2855
Prince George's	(301) 574-5162, ext. 3
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	(301) 797-6821, ext. 3
Wicomico	(410) 546-4777, ext. 3
Worcester	(410) 632-5439, ext. 3

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### Maryland Department of Agriculture Office of Resource Conservation

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## Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

# Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program

**PROVIDING GRANTS  
TO HELP FARMERS  
PROTECT NATURAL  
RESOURCES**



Waste Storage Structure

## MACS Works for Farmers

Since 1984, the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program has been helping farmers protect natural resources on their farms, maintain farm productivity and comply with a growing number of federal, state and local environmental requirements. MACS provides farmers with grants that cover up to 87.5 percent of the cost to install best management practices (BMPs) on their farms to control soil erosion, manage nutrients and safeguard water quality in streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. Cover crops planted after the fall harvest to soak up unused fertilizers, streamside buffers of grasses and trees planted to protect waterways from sedimentation and agricultural runoff and animal waste storage systems designed to help farmers safely handle and store manure resources are among more than 30 BMPs currently eligible for funding.



Livestock Crossing

## The MACS Solution

Soil erosion poses the biggest threat to farm productivity and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Many of the BMPs that MACS supports reduce soil losses from farm fields, pastures and environmentally sensitive areas. Farmers can control soil erosion by selecting from a menu of structural BMPs such as terrace systems, water control structures and diversions or vegetative BMPs including grassed waterways, critical area plantings and filter strips.

Environmental laws, including the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law and the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998 require farmers to use certain BMPs as part of a larger, more comprehensive natural resources protection program. In addition, new regulations for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) require high risk animal operations to install advanced water quality protection measures.

MACS provides animal operations with grants to install waste storage structures, heavy use protection areas and livestock crossings. Livestock producers with high soil phosphorus levels may be eligible to receive assistance to transport excess manure to other operations or alternative use facilities that can use the manure safely.



Water Control Structure

## Maximum Funding Levels

The cost of installing BMPs varies from project to project and site to site. The scope of the problem, site characteristics and cost effectiveness of the proposed project are all taken into consideration. The following maximum funding levels apply:

### Animal Waste Management Systems

- Up to \$100,000 per project, with a maximum of \$150,000 per farm, when combined with other BMPs.

### All Other BMPs

- Up to \$35,000 per project, with a maximum of \$75,000 per farm.

A flat rate ceiling applies to all BMP components. Average allowable rates for materials and services necessary to install a BMP are established annually by each county. Maximum costs are determined by applying the standard flat rates to the components approved for each project.

## BMPs Eligible for MACS Funding

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ✓ Conservation Cover            | ✓ Nutrient Management Services |
| ✓ Contour Farming               | ✓ Riparian Forest Buffer       |
| ✓ Contour Orchard               | ✓ Roof Runoff Structure        |
| ✓ Cover Crops                   | ✓ Sediment Basin               |
| ✓ Critical Area Planting        | ✓ Sediment Control Pond        |
| ✓ Dead Bird Composting Facility | ✓ Spring Development           |
| ✓ Diversion                     | ✓ Stream Crossing              |
| ✓ Fencing                       | ✓ Strip Cropping, Contour      |
| ✓ Field Border                  | ✓ Strip Cropping, Field        |
| ✓ Filter Strip                  | ✓ Terrace System               |
| ✓ Grade Stabilization Structure | ✓ Waste Storage Structure      |
| ✓ Grassed Waterway              | ✓ Waste Treatment Lagoon       |
| ✓ Heavy Use Area Protection     | ✓ Wastewater Treatment Strip   |
| ✓ Lined Waterway or Outlet      | ✓ Water Control Structure      |
| ✓ Manure Transport              | ✓ Water Well                   |
|                                 | ✓ Watering Facility            |



Watering Trough

## Eligibility

- MACS is available to individuals, partnerships, corporations, trusts or other businesses that operate a Maryland farm.
- Proposed projects must meet MACS eligibility and cost-effectiveness requirements.
- Applicants must have an existing or potentially critical condition on agricultural land that causes soil, nutrients or other pollutants to enter state waters; or the proposed project will improve water quality.
- Applicants must be in compliance with the Maryland Nutrient Management Program and other environmental laws and programs.

## Help Where You Need It

Every year, soil conservation districts help Maryland farmers secure millions of dollars in financial assistance from MACS and other state and federal programs to install protective best management practices on their farms. Located in every Maryland county, soil conservation districts—with technical guidance from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service—work with farmers to design BMPs, supervise their installation and construction and develop operation and maintenance plans to keep them in good working order. Agricultural planners work-

ing in the soil conservation district office also help farmers calculate costs to install BMPs and apply for state and federal cost-share and low interest loan programs.

## Take Action—Get MACS

Contact your local soil conservation district to find out how conservation practices can improve your farm. MACS applications must be approved by the Maryland Department of Agriculture and submitted through your local soil conservation district office *before* you begin the project.

You may also consider applying for cost-share funds through USDA. In many instances, USDA and MACS funds can be combined. Ask your soil conservation district for more details.



Grassed Waterway