

Improve Your Yields



Protect The Bay

Plant Cover Crops This Fall

Maryland's 2016-2017 Cover Crop Sign-up

Accepting grant applications June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices

2016-2017 COVER CROP PROGRAM FEATURES



Farmers can receive up to \$75/acre to plant cover crops in their fields this fall



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



A variety of legume/small grain mixes are eligible for grants

Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program
2016-2017 Cover Crop Sign-Up

June 24 through July 15 at
soil conservation district offices



Maryland
Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

Conservation Grants Program
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401



MACS



CHANGING
Maryland
for the Better

Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

Joseph Bartenfelder
Secretary

James P. Eichhorst
Deputy Secretary

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Allegany	301-777-1747, ext. 3	Harford	410-838-6181, ext. 3
Anne Arundel	410-571-6757	Howard	410-313-0680
Baltimore County	410-527-5920, ext. 3	Kent	410-778-5150, ext. 3
Calvert	410-535-1521, ext. 3	Montgomery	301-590-2855
Caroline	410-479-1202, ext. 3	Prince George's	301-574-5162, ext. 3
Carroll	410-848-8200, ext. 3	Queen Anne's	410-758-3136, ext. 3
Catoctin	301-695-2803, ext. 3	St. Mary's	301-475-8402, ext. 3
Cecil	410-398-4411, ext. 3	Somerset	410-651-0370, ext. 3
Charles	301-934-9588, ext. 3	Talbot	410-822-1577, ext. 3
Dorchester	410-228-3733, ext. 3	Washington County	301-797-6821, ext. 3
Frederick	301-695-2803, ext. 3	Wicomico	410-546-4777, ext. 3
Garrett	301-334-6950, ext. 3	Worcester	410-632-5439, ext. 3

THE MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAM

COVER CROPS

Improve Your Yields  Protect The Bay

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ADD COVER CROPS TO YOUR ROTATION

Maryland farmers are reaping the benefits of adding cover crops to their rotations. Studies have shown that planting cover crops in the fall can increase yields of cash crops like corn and soybeans after only a few years. Cover crops provide water management benefits for all weather conditions including too much or too little rain. Other benefits include improved soil health, fewer weeds and insect pests, and increased biodiversity. Cover crops faithfully protect water quality by recycling unused plant nutrients in the soil while working all winter to protect fields against erosion. Isn't it time you added cover crops to your rotation?




GRANTS TO PLANT

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 \$22.5 million for this year's program.






SIGN-UP DATES

June 24 – July 15, 2016 at soil conservation district offices statewide. No appointment is necessary, just walk in.









ELIGIBLE COVER CROP SPECIES

-  **Cereal Grains:** Wheat/speltz, rye, barley, triticale, spring oats, ryegrass and canola/rape (brassica)
-  **Forage Radish**
-  **Legumes:** Crimson clover, Austrian winter peas and hairy vetch (these species may only be planted with a cereal grain as part of a mix)

PLANTING REQUIREMENTS

-  Plant cereal grains by November 5, 2016. Some species have earlier deadlines. Ask your soil conservation district for a complete list of planting deadlines by species.
-  To create diversity, any two cover crop species may be mixed at a rate of 60 percent cereal grains (except spring oats) 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, 2016.
-  Mixes containing legumes must be planted by October 1, 2016.

GUIDELINES AND CONDITIONS

-  Plant cover crops after corn, soybeans, sorghum, tobacco or vegetables are harvested.
-  There is a five acre minimum. There are 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 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.
-  Direct deposit is now available for faster payment.
-  Applicants must be in good standing with MACS and in compliance with the Nutrient Management Program.

Traditional

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 planted early or when highly valued planting practices are used. Manure may be applied in the fall following Maryland's nutrient management requirements. Farmers must certify their cover crop with their soil conservation district within one week of planting and no later than November 14, 2016. Killdown/suppression may take place between March 1 and June 1, 2017.






TRADITIONAL COVER CROPS PAYMENT OPTIONS*	NO-TILL	CONVENTIONAL	BROADCAST WITH LIGHT, MINIMUM OR VERTICAL TILLAGE	AERIAL	BROADCAST STALK CHOP, AERIAL GROUND, AND BROADCAST CULTIPACKER
Base payment:	\$45/acre	\$45/acre	\$45/acre	\$50/acre	\$45/acre
Plant by October 1, add:	\$20/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$0/acre	\$0/acre
or Plant by October 15, add:	\$10/acre	\$5/acre	\$5/acre	\$0/acre	\$0/acre
Plant rye (no mixes), add:	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre
Maximum Payment Amount:	\$75/acre	\$65/acre	\$65/acre	\$60/acre	\$55/acre

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

Harvest

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.

-  **Payment:** \$25/acre
-  **Bonus Payment:** \$10/acre if rye is planted as the cover crop.
-  **Acreage Cap:** None.
-  **Fertilizer Use:** After March 1, 2017. Early fertilization at green up may be restricted.
-  **Certification:** Farmers must certify harvested cover crops with their soil conservation district within one week of planting and no later than November 14, 2016.

The 2016-2017 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. Additional restrictions and conditions may apply. See your soil conservation district representative and contract for details.