

## Best Management Practices (BMP) Program & Engineering Services

### Technical Assistance



Technical assistance is available to Vermont farmers for a variety of engineering services, often in preparation for implementation of structural water quality improvements.

Technical assistance can include:

- 1) Engineering Consultations
- 2) Design Services for BMP projects
- 3) Water Quality Compliance Consultations
- 4) State Permitting Consultations
- 5) State Variance Consultations

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. We highly recommend that farmers apply for technical assistance as soon as they are aware of a water quality issue.

### Financial Assistance



#### NRCS EQIP-Assist BMP

Financial assistance is available for farmers implementing a water quality project through the USDA-NRCS' EQIP program. Payment rates, between combined federal and state contributions, are up to 90% of eligible costs. State payment cannot exceed *any* of the following rates:

- \$200,000 per farm operation
- Award amount listed on the BMP grant agreement
- 90 % of the total sum of expenses listed on receipts & invoices
- Total sum of the federal payment on the practice(s)

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. We suggest applying when a farmer has ranked out for an NRCS EQIP contract.



#### State BMP

Financial assistance is available for farmers implementing structural practices on farmsteads which improve water quality. All practices must be designed and/or approved by a VAAFME engineer prior to project funding or implementation. Payment rates are up to 90% of eligible costs. State payment cannot exceed *any* of the following rates:

- \$100,000 per farm operation
- Award amount listed on the grant agreement
- 90% of the total sum of expenses listed on receipts & invoices

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. April 1st application deadline for same-year assistance.

## **Eligibility:**

Farms required to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices are eligible to apply.

Examples of Eligible BMP Projects:

- Barnyard runoff collection
- Bedded pack facility
- Composting stack pad
- Exclusion fencing & watering facilities
- Gutter / ditch clean water diversion
- Laneway development & stream crossings
- Manure storage
- Milk house waste collection & treatment
- Silage leachate collection & treatment

**Please note the following information about this grant program:**

- BMP projects are only eligible for State cost share dollars if they meet the design standards and specifications established by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or if they are designed and certified by a professional engineer licensed in the State of Vermont and are equivalent to the federal performance standards and specifications.
- All practices are eligible to receive up to 90% cost share.
- Cost share rates vary based on proposed plan for practice implementation.
- Application does not ensure grant award.
- Grant agreements must be in place prior to the start of construction.
- Farmer receives reimbursement upon certified project completion and is responsible for the cost of the project until reimbursement.
- Final payment is determined by actual project costs as documented by itemized invoices.
- Farmer's equipment, material, and labor costs are eligible for reimbursement.

**Applications can be found online at [agriculture.vermont.gov/bmp](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/bmp) or by contacting the Water Quality Division at (802) 828-2430.**

