

**Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets  
SFY 2010 Livestock Exclusion Grants**

**Request for Proposals**

As part of the State of Vermont's on-going efforts to reduce the amount of phosphorous and sediment entering surface water, the 2010 legislative session has authorized the use of the Agency of Agriculture capital funds to support livestock exclusion projects. The Agency of Agriculture is currently seeking proposals to implement on-farm livestock exclusion from surface waters in the northern Lake Champlain watershed, which is considered to include all of the land that drains to Missisquoi Bay, St. Albans Bay, and the Northeast Arm (also known as the Inland Sea). In this instance, livestock includes bovine and equine species, and implementation includes fencing, alternative watering systems, and stream crossings. Eligible respondents include Vermont municipalities, local or regional governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, or citizen groups. Individuals and state and federal agencies are not eligible to receive funds directly, but may partner with an eligible project sponsor. Budgets for these proposals are expected to be between \$5,000 and \$50,000 including the cost of materials; however, individual practices also have specified cost limits as noted below. The total project costs (materials + installation) will be covered 90% and in-kind contributions, such as labor by the landowners, can count towards the 10% cost-share.

The selected grant recipient will be responsible for the following:

1. Identifying farms interested in implementing practices outlined in this grant,
2. Developing a project plan outlining practices to be installed including appropriate design documentation and spatially referencing the project location on a map,
3. Performing the necessary mathematical calculations to design stream crossings and/or animal trails and walkways where applicable, and to ensure that a newly developed watering system will provide sufficient water to the number and type of livestock being excluded,
4. Obtaining landowner signature(s) on a 10-year operation and maintenance agreement for implemented practices (agreement template will be provided by the Agency),
5. Signing off that practices were implemented as planned and making modifications to the recorded plan if necessary,
6. Providing photo documentation of the project area before and after the practices are implemented,
7. Issuing payments upon receipt of invoices and ensuring all costs are reasonable and necessary,
8. Providing to the Agency the project plans as implemented, signed operation and maintenance agreements and copies of all receipts on financial transactions for paid practices.

From the proposals received, an internal Agency Project Review Committee will select the successful applicant(s). Selected applicants will enter into a grant agreement with the Agency to perform the work within the 2011 fiscal year which ends on June 30, 2011.

***Eligible Practices and Maximum Costs***

All costs shall be the minimum needed to meet the desired outcome of livestock exclusion and must be related to the actual site where animals are being excluded. For example, additional watering tubs for pastures where no livestock exclusion is occurring would be considered ineligible. Where costs are

expected to exceed the cost limitations established below, waivers may be requested to the Agency for case-specific consideration.

Fence: Must be equal to or greater than single strand poly-wire, unless site-specific conditions and/or livestock type demand a more robust fence. Fencing selection should be the minimum required for the livestock type. For instance, fences made completely of wood or plastic composite may be aesthetically pleasing, however they are not the most cost effective fencing option to meet the needs of the livestock. If a landowner chooses to build a fence greater than that of the minimum, the additional costs will be the responsibility of the landowner. The landowner will be reimbursed for the materials on a per linear foot costs.

Pipeline: There are no limitations on the type of pipeline system installed so long as it meets the intended purpose and is not excessive in meeting the needs of the livestock type. All costs will be reimbursed upon receipt of an invoice with a maximum of \$0.60/foot or \$2,000 per project.

Water Source Development: Where clean water is not readily available, alternative sources such as shallow wells, pump stations, etc. can be developed. The expectation is that the lowest cost alternative will be implemented to meet the needs of the project. There is a total project maximum of \$4,000 and costs will be reimbursed upon receipt of an invoice.

Water Tanks: There are no limitations on the type of watering tank/trough so long as it meets the intended purpose and is not excessive for the livestock types and use demands. All costs will be reimbursed upon receipt of an invoice with a maximum of \$1,000 per project.

Stream Crossings: Where possible an in-stream ford shall be installed with geo-textile fabric and stone rather than a culvert. The goal is to keep the stream channel open and not to create restrictions. In instances where the in-stream ford is not feasible, the grantee will need to perform the necessary work to ensure the culvert is appropriately sized and set, and that the slopes of the approaches are designed to minimize erosion or mass failures. There is a maximum of \$3,000 per project for all crossings, and payments will be based on invoices.

Electric Fence Chargers: Most farms have a fence charger, however in the event that the current charger cannot meet the capacity of the newly installed fencing or a charger does not exist, up to \$300 per farm may be spent on a charger.

### ***Livestock Exclusion Grants Selection Criteria***

Proposals are to be no more than two pages in length. Projects are limited to the northern Lake Champlain watershed. Proposed projects must meet all of the initial eligibility tests provided below.

#### ***Initial Eligibility Tests*** for Livestock Exclusion Grant proposals:

- Project must be located in the northern Lake Champlain watershed (considered to include all of the land that drains to Missisquoi Bay, St. Albans Bay, and the Northeast Arm.
- Applicant must be a Vermont municipality, local or regional governmental agency, non-profit organization, or a citizen group. Individuals and state and federal agencies are not eligible to receive funds directly, but may partner with an eligible project sponsor.

- Projects cannot be implemented on farms that are under Final Order on an enforcement action with the Agency of Agriculture to perform the same practice.
- All projects must be completed by June 30, 2011 unless otherwise authorized by the Agency.

Proposals shall address the anticipated number of farms and the general geographic or watershed location where the project will be promoted and therefore implementation is expected to occur, a detailed description of project development methods and associated costs, and identify persons who will be involved in the project and their respective roles and/or functions. Prior to signing any operation and maintenance agreement and implementing a project on an individual farm, the project will be reviewed by the Agency to ensure the deliverables and expectations of the grant are being met.

***Application review criteria*** used to evaluate eligible projects submitted for funding. Please answer each of the following questions in narrative form:

- Demonstrate the level of experience necessary to manage and implement animal exclusion projects.
- Demonstrate knowledge of other related funding mechanisms and programs, including but not limited to programs available such as CREP, EQIP, WRP, etc.
- Show experience managing and reporting financial transactions similar to those expected in this grant.
- Describe your proposed method for farm identification, project planning, and implementation; please be detailed.
- Provide a list of potential farms that could benefit from the practices in this grant that you intend to contact if awarded the grant. This list does not need to be exhaustive or complete, but will provide an understanding of how prepared you are to identify potential farms.
- Describe how the practice plan will be developed and documented (ie. autoCAD, GIS, hand drawn on printed map).
- Describe how the practice implementation will be checked against the practice plan and how confirmation of practice completion for payments will be made.
- Although match is not required for this grant, please list all source(s) and amounts of financial match to this grant. The value of the match can consist of cash, donation, and in-kind contributions.

### ***Proposal Submission***

Proposals must be clearly marked and emailed to Laura DiPietro ([laura.dipietro@state.vt.us](mailto:laura.dipietro@state.vt.us)). The deadline for submission is 4:00 pm on Friday, August 27, 2010.

For additional information or questions regarding the pre-proposal process or to discuss potential projects, please contact Laura DiPietro at: 828-1289.