

Garrett Soil Conservation District

“Conservation News”

District Operations During the Pandemic

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The Garrett Soil Conservation Office, along with their USDA partners are working hard to service our customers via email, telephone calls, and by appointment during this time. Unfortunately we are still not accepting visitors in the office. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, but these precautions have been put in place to insure public health and safety.

Conservation plans, program sign-ups, and engineering designs of agricultural best management practices continue to be developed. Office staff are still making farm visits (by appointment) and working with cooperators and contractors, social distancing and other precautions are being observed.

Review of erosion and sediment control plans are still occurring during this time.

The District's No-Till Drill and Lime Spreader continue to be rented by calling main line at 301-501-5886.

Important information regarding 20/21 MACS Cover Crop Program is enclosed!

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

PL-566 Flood Control Dam Mowing

The Garrett Soil Conservation District is accepting bids for mowing three (3) PL-566 Flood Control Dams, including cutting of herbaceous and woody vegetation adjacent to the toe of slope, emergency spillway, end of outlet pipe, and edge of plunge pool. The dams are located at Deer Park, Loch Lynn, and Route 219 north of Oakland. Work may commence anytime after the Agreement is signed by both the Contractor and the District but no later than July 14, 2020 and must be completed by August 4, 2020. Pre-bid and site information may be obtained by calling (301) 501-5886. Bid forms and specifications may be obtained by contacting the Garrett Soil Conservation District Office located at 1916 Maryland Highway, Suite C, Mt. Lake Park, MD (call 301-501-5886 to receive a copy by mail) or from the District's website at www.GarrettSCD.org. Sealed bids will be accepted until 4:00 p.m., July 7, 2020. Bids will be opened July 7, 2020 at 4:15 p.m. at the Garrett Soil Conservation District office. Bidders and interested parties are welcome to attend the bid opening; bid openings will proceed in accordance with local, state and federal guidelines, pertaining to COVID-19, that are in-place at the time of the opening (please notify the District office in advance if you plan to attend the bid opening). For more information call the District office at 301-501-5886. The District reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Important Dates

- Board of Supervisors Meeting Dates: July 21, August 18, September 15
- Offices Closed: July 3 & September 7
- Cover Crop Sign-Up: July 1 thru July 17 (watch your mail)
- Bids accepted for the PL-566 Flood Control Dam Mowing until July 7 @ 4:00 PM . Bid opening at 4:15 PM
- First day to plant cover crops: August 15
- MASCD Summer Conference: Cancelled
- Garrett County Fair: Aug 1st - 8th
- FSA's CFAP Applications accepted through August 28th

From the Chairman.... James “Smokey” Stanton



Let's talk about cover crops, soil health, finances, and conservation best practices.

Maryland's 2020 Cover Crop signup **opens July 1 and runs until July 17**, with specific information about the water quality cost share program on pages 3-4 in this newsletter.

The cover crop program provides direct grants to help farmers offset seed, labor, and equipment costs to plant cover crops in fields with a five acre minimum, and allows a base payment of \$40 per acre. Eligible cover crop species include wheat/spelt, rye, triticale, oats, ryegrass, forage radish, canola/rape, clover, Austrian winter peas, and hairy vetch, with planting generally running from mid-August through September.

Maryland ranks first in the nation for use of cover crops, partly due to the 2017 Legislature creating the Healthy Soils Program to expand the adoption of soil health practices. The Maryland Department of Agriculture estimates that more than half of the state's agriculture fields use cover crops and conservation (no-till) tillage.

One small demonstration compares a no-tilled, cover cropped farm and one from a conventionally tilled field. By dropping clods of soil into two beakers, the conventionally tilled soil quickly dissolves and falls to the bottom. The no-tilled, cover-cropped soil stays clumped together, even as holes from worms, bugs, and air soaked up some of the water.

In addition to conserving valuable topsoil in a rocky area such as ours, these best practices are sound business decisions. Instead of a costly strategy of constant and cyclic application of fertilizers and pesticides, adopting a strategy of using cover crops, along with other best management practices, give a direct financial return. As soil structure improves, the ability of the soil to hold more moisture during dry periods and release water during dry periods also improves. While results vary, estimates report an average yield increase of 9.6% in corn that followed a cover crop, and an increase of 11.6% in soybeans.

Please take a moment to look over the Maryland Cover Crop Program announcement for details, and remember: this year's sign-up is by mail, so there is no need to sign up in person at our offices.

James “Smokey” Stanton, Chairman, GSCD

Coloring Contest Winners

The Garrett Soil Conservation District held its annual Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) Coloring Contest judging during the May 19th Board of Supervisors meeting held via teleconference. The coloring contest was open to all Garrett County children in grades K through 5. The contest encouraged children to channel their own creativity on an agricultural designed coloring template.

This was a challenging year with entries due to the COVID pandemic and schools being closed mid March. The coloring contest was posted on our Facebook page and we received 3 entries. The Garrett SCD Board of Supervisors decided to award cash prizes to all entries received. There will be no MASCD Summer Meeting this year. We are hopeful that next year we will be able to resume the coloring contest and forward the winners on-to the 2021 MASCD Summer Meeting to compete against the other SCD winners in the State. Thank you to the Rohrbaugh family for participating.

The Garrett SCD is committed to promoting education by helping students understand the benefits of proper management and conservation of our nation's natural resources. Congratulations to our winners.





Count on us for grants to plant...

COVER CROPS

Maryland's 2020-2021 Cover Crop Sign-up
Mail-In Registration Runs July 1 - July 17, 2020



MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAM

COUNT ON MACS

Maryland farmers can count on MACS for grants to plant cover crops this fall to build healthy soils and protect the Chesapeake Bay. It's easy to understand why cover crops are so popular. Cover crops recycle nitrogen, reduce erosion, add valuable organic matter to the soil, and help protect fields from too much or too little rain. Thinking about adding cover crops to your planting rotation this year? Count on MACS to help you make it happen.

GRANTS TO PLANT COVER CROPS

The Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program provides grants to help farmers offset seed, labor, and equipment costs to plant cover crops in their fields following the harvest of summer crops. Our grants can make planting cover crops on your fields this fall affordable.

MAIL-IN ENROLLMENT

- To ensure everyone's safety, *this year's sign-up will be conducted by mail*. There is no need for farmers to sign up in person at local soil conservation district offices.
- Farmers who participated in last year's cover crop program were *mailed applications, instructions and a return envelope*.
- Applications, instructions and soil conservation district mailing addresses will be available at mda.maryland.gov beginning July 1, 2020.
- Completed applications must be mailed to the local soil conservation district and postmarked between July 1, 2020 and July 17, 2020.

2020 OVERVIEW AND INCENTIVE OPTIONS

- The 2020-2021 Cover Crop Program has been simplified and aligned with budget projections.
- The base payment is \$40/acre. The base rate for aerial/aerial ground seeding is \$45/acre.
- Farmers who aerial seed or aerial ground seed cover crops into standing corn on or before September 10, 2020 qualify for a \$10/acre incentive payment.
- Incorporated seed qualifies for a \$10/acre early planting incentive.
- Farmers who terminate cover crops after May 1, 2021 may be eligible for an Extended Season incentive payment of up to \$10/acre, contingent on available funds. A determination will be made in February 2021.
- Incentive payments to plant rye are not offered this year.
- Plant cover crops after corn, soybeans, sorghum, tobacco, vegetables—and *new this year, hemp and millet*.
- There is a five acre minimum. The total number of acres enrolled may not exceed acreage managed under the farm's current Nutrient Management Plan.
- Direct deposit of cost-share grants is available.

SEED REQUIREMENTS

- All seed purchased must be tested and labeled following Maryland Seed Law and Regulations.
- Purchased seed must be free of prohibited noxious weed seeds, have a minimum germination rate of 80%, and have no more than 16 restricted noxious weeds per pound.
- Homegrown seed with a germination rate between 65% and 79% may be used. Certain rules apply.
- Cost-share is available for seed testing.

2020-2021 COVER CROP PLANTING AND PAYMENT OPTIONS

TRADITIONAL COVER CROP PAYMENT OPTIONS	NO-TILL	CONVENTIONAL	BROADCAST WITH LIGHT, MINIMUM OR VERTICAL TILLAGE	AERIAL/AERIAL GROUND SEEDING	BROADCAST STALK CHOP AND BROADCAST CULTIPACKER
Base Payment	\$40/acre	\$40/acre	\$40/acre	\$45/acre	\$40/acre
Plant by October 10, add:	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$0/acre	\$0/acre
Aerial seed into standing corn on or before September 10, add:	\$0/acre	\$0/acre	\$0/acre	\$10/acre	\$0/acre
Terminate cover crop after May 1, (contingent on available funding) add:	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre
MAXIMUM PAYMENT AMOUNT:	\$60/acre	\$60/acre	\$60/acre	\$65/acre	\$50/acre

ELIGIBLE COVER CROP SPECIES

- **Cereal Grains** *Wheat/spelt, rye, barley, triticale, oats and ryegrass*
- **Brassicas** *Forage radish and canola/rape*
- **Legumes** *Clover, Austrian winter peas and hairy vetch (must be planted with a cereal grain as part of a mix)*

COVER CROP MIXES

- Two-species cover crop mixes may be planted at a rate of 50 percent cereal grains and 50 percent brassicas or legumes.
- Three species mixes (50/25/25) must contain a minimum of 50 percent eligible cereal grains.

COVER CROP PLANTING/TERMINATION DATES

- Plant cereal grains by November 5, 2020. Some species have earlier deadlines. *(See chart below)*
- Mixes containing legumes, forage radish, canola/rape, or oats must be planted by October 1, 2020.
- The aerial seeding deadline for cover crops is October 10, 2020. Some species have earlier deadlines. *(See chart below)*
- Terminate cover crops between March 1 and June 1, 2021.

FALL MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Eligible cover crops may be grazed or chopped for on-farm live-stock forage after becoming well established. Manure may be applied in fall following Maryland’s nutrient management regulations.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

To receive payment, farmers must certify cover crops with their soil conservation district within one week of planting and no later than November 13, 2020.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- Applicants must be in good standing with MACS and in compliance with Maryland’s nutrient management requirements.
- A Current Nutrient Management Plan Certification is required and must be submitted with the application. Additional restrictions may apply.

FIND A COVER CROP CONTRACTOR

Visit mda.maryland.gov for a list of contractors who can plant cover crops in your fields this fall.



Maryland Department of Agriculture
Office of Resource Conservation

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
mda.maryland.gov

410-841-5864

2020-2021 COVER CROP SEEDING RATES AND PLANTING DEADLINES

COVER CROP	SEEDING RATE PER ACRE/POUNDS		BASE PAYMENT FOR TRADITIONAL COVER CROP ONLY	STATEWIDE PLANTING PERIOD FOR TRADITIONAL COVER CROP PROGRAM ¹	AERIAL PLANTING DEADLINES	BROADCAST STALK CHOP AND BROADCAST CULTIPACKER
	AERIAL ³ BROADCAST STALK CHOP BROADCAST CULTIPACKER	INCORPORATED ⁴				
Canola/Rape	10	6	\$25 ²	8/15-10/01	10/01	10/01
Forage Radish	12.5	7.5	\$40	8/15-10/01	10/01	10/01
Oats	120	72	\$40	8/15-10/01	10/01	10/01
Barley	150	90	\$40	8/15-10/15	10/10	10/15
Rye	140	84	\$40	8/15-11/05	10/10	10/15
Triticale	140	84	\$40	8/15-11/05	10/10	10/15
Wheat/Spelt	150	90	\$40	8/15-11/05	10/10	10/15
Ryegrass	25	15	\$40	8/15-10/15	10/10	10/15
MUST BE PLANTED AS PART OF A CEREAL GRAIN MIX						
Clover	25	15	\$40	8/15-10/01	10/01	10/01
Hairy Vetch	31.25	20	\$40	8/15-10/01	10/01	10/01
Winter Peas	75	45	\$40	8/15-10/01	10/01	10/01

¹Seeding may begin on 08/15/2020 for all planting options.

²The base payment for planting canola/rape as a single species is \$25/acre. No reduction in payment when planted as part of a mix.

³The seeding rate for aerial and non-incorporated planting methods is increased by 25%.

⁴The seeding rate for incorporated planting methods is 25% less than in previous years.

The 2020-2021 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 and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund.

FSA Information Center

USDA Announces Details of Direct Assistance to Farmers through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced details of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which will provide up to \$16 billion in direct payments to deliver relief to America's farmers and ranchers impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to this direct support to farmers and ranchers, USDA's [Farmers to Families Food Box](#) program is partnering with regional and local distributors, whose workforces have been significantly impacted by the closure of many restaurants, hotels, and other food service entities, to purchase \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy, and meat and deliver boxes to Americans in need.

Beginning May 26, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), will be accepting applications from agricultural producers who have suffered losses.

Background:

CFAP provides vital financial assistance to producers of agricultural commodities who have suffered a five-percent-or-greater price decline due to COVID-19 and face additional significant marketing costs as a result of lower demand, surplus production, and disruptions to shipping patterns and the orderly marketing of commodities.

Farmers and ranchers will receive direct support, drawn from two possible funding sources. The first source of funding is \$9.5 billion in appropriated funding provided in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stability (CARES) Act to compensate farmers for losses due to price declines that occurred between mid-January 2020, and mid-April 2020 and provides support for specialty crops for product that had been shipped from the farm between the same time period but subsequently spoiled due to loss of marketing channels. The second funding source uses the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act to compensate producers for \$6.5 billion in losses due to on-going market disruptions.

Non-Specialty Crops and Wool

Non-specialty crops eligible for CFAP payments include malting barley, canola, corn, upland cotton, millet, oats, soybeans, sorghum, sunflowers, durum wheat, and hard red spring wheat. Wool is also eligible. Producers will be paid based on inventory subject to price risk held as of January 15, 2020. A payment will be made based 50 percent of a producer's 2019 total production or the 2019 inventory as of January 15, 2020, whichever is smaller, multiplied by the commodity's applicable payment rates.

Livestock

Livestock eligible for CFAP include cattle, lambs, yearlings and hogs. The total payment will be calculated using the sum of the producer's number of livestock sold between January 15 and April 15, 2020, multiplied by the payment rates per head, and the highest inventory number of livestock between April 16 and May 14, 2020, multiplied by the payment rate per head.

Dairy

For dairy, the total payment will be calculated based on a producer's certification of milk production for the first quarter of calendar year 2020 multiplied by a national price decline during the same quarter. The second part of the payment is based a national adjustment to each producer's production in the first quarter.

FSA CFAP cont.

Specialty Crops

For eligible specialty crops, the total payment will be based on the volume of production sold between January 15 and April 15, 2020; the volume of production shipped, but unpaid; and the number of acres for which harvested production did not leave the farm or mature product destroyed or not harvested during that same time period, and which have not and will not be sold. Specialty crops include, but are not limited to, almonds, beans, broccoli, sweet corn, lemons, iceberg lettuce, spinach, squash, strawberries and tomatoes. A full list of eligible crops can be found on farmers.gov/cfap. Additional crops may be deemed eligible at a later date.

Eligibility

There is a payment limitation of \$250,000 per person or entity for all commodities combined. Applicants who are corporations, limited liability companies or limited partnerships may qualify for additional payment limits where members actively provide personal labor or personal management for the farming operation. Producers will also have to certify they meet the Adjusted Gross Income limitation of \$900,000 unless at least 75 percent or more of their income is derived from farming, ranching or forestry-related activities. Producers must also be in compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions.

Applying for Assistance

Producers can apply for assistance beginning on May 26, 2020. Additional information and application forms can be found at farmers.gov/cfap. Producers of all eligible commodities will apply through their local FSA office. Documentation to support the producer's application and certification may be requested. FSA has streamlined the signup process to not require an acreage report at the time of application and a USDA farm number may not be immediately needed. Applications will be accepted through August 28, 2020.

Payment Structure

To ensure the availability of funding throughout the application period, producers will receive 80 percent of their maximum total payment upon approval of the application. The remaining portion of the payment, not to exceed the payment limit, will be paid at a later date as funds remain available.

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Questions?

Please contact your local [FSA Office](#) at 301-501-5885

Connie Stemple
Program Technician in Charge
Garrett and Allegany County FSA Office
301-501-5857

healthy, productive soils checklist for growers




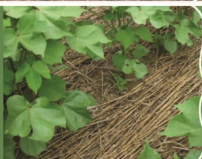



Managing for soil health is one of the best ways farmers can increase crop productivity while improving the environment.

Results are often realized immediately and last well into the future. Following are four basic principles to improving the health of your soil.

1. Keep the soil covered as much as possible
2. Disturb the soil as little as possible
3. Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil
4. Diversify as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops

Use the checklist to determine if you're using core Soil Health Management System farming practices. It is important to note that not all practices are applicable to all crops. Some operations will benefit from just one soil health practice while others may require additional practices for maximum benefit. These core practices form the basis of a Soil Health Management System that can help you optimize your inputs, protect against drought, and increase production.

Soil Health Management Systems Include:

What is it?	What does it do?	How does it help?
<p>Conservation Crop Rotation</p> <p>Growing a diverse number of crops in a planned sequence to increase soil organic matter and biodiversity in the soil.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases nutrient cycling Manages plant pests (weeds, insects, and diseases) Reduces sheet, rill and wind erosion Holds soil moisture Adds diversity so soil microbes can thrive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves nutrient use efficiency Decreases use of pesticides Improves water quality Conserves water Improves plant production
<p>Cover Crop</p> <p>An un-harvested crop grown as part of planned rotation to provide conservation benefits to the soil.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases soil organic matter Prevents soil erosion Conserves soil moisture Increases nutrient cycling Provides nitrogen for plant use Suppresses weeds Reduces compaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves crop production Improves water quality Conserves water Improves nutrient use efficiency Decreases use of pesticides Improves water efficiency to crops
<p>No Till</p> <p>A way of growing crops without disturbing the soil through tillage.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves water holding capacity of soil Increases organic matter Reduces soil erosion Reduces energy use Decreases compaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves water efficiency Conserves water Improves crop production Improves water quality Saves renewable resources Improves air quality Increases productivity
<p>Mulch Tillage</p> <p>Using tillage methods where the soil surface is disturbed but maintains a high level of crop residue on the surface.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces soil erosion from wind and rain Increases soil moisture for plants Reduces energy use Increases soil organic matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves water quality Conserves water Saves renewable resources Improves air quality Improves crop production
<p>Mulching</p> <p>Applying plant residues or other suitable materials to the soil surface to compensate for loss of residue due to excessive tillage.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces erosion from wind and rain Moderates soil temperatures Increases soil organic matter Controls weeds Conserves soil moisture Reduces dust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves water quality Improves plant productivity Increases crop production Reduces pesticide usage Conserves water Improves air quality
<p>Nutrient Management</p> <p>Managing soil nutrients to meet crop needs while minimizing the impact on the environment and the soil.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases plant nutrient uptake Improves the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil Budgets, supplies, and conserves nutrients for plant production Reduces odors and nitrogen emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves water quality Improves plant production Improves air quality
<p>Pest Management</p> <p>Managing pests by following an ecological approach that promotes the growth of healthy plants with strong defenses, while increasing stress on pests and enhancing the habitat for beneficial organisms.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces pesticide risks to water quality Reduces threat of chemicals entering the air Decreases pesticide risk to pollinators and other beneficial organisms Increases soil organic matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves water quality Improves air quality Increases plant pollination Increases plant productivity



Farming for HEALTHY SOIL




You're Invited! ATTENTION FARMERS:

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has received a three year, \$1 million grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund to promote healthy soil practices to farmers.

The grant will provide participating farmers with technical assistance, as well as financial assistance ranging from \$10 to \$55 per acre, per year to install key soil health practices. Funding for soils data sampling is also available. Grant partners include the following organizations:



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure



SHORE RIVERS



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
EXTENSION
Solutions in your community



FUTURE HARVEST
Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture



DELAWARE MARYLAND
4R Alliance

ACT NOW! Please contact:
Alisha Mulkey
Maryland Department of Agriculture
Office of Resource Conservation
410.841.5863 or
alisha.mulkey@maryland.gov

www.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Garrett Soil Conservation District
1916 Maryland Highway Ste C
Mt Lake Park MD 21550**

SERVICE CENTER PHONE NUMBERS

Main Line: 301-501-5856

FSA Direct Line: 301-501-5885

NRCS/SCD Direct Line: 301-501-5886

**We are on the web and Facebook!
www.garrettscd.org and Garrett Soil Conservation District**

**Available to rent from Garrett SCD:
Transpread 5.5 Ton Lime & Fertilizer
Spreader & 1590 John Deere No-Till Drill.
Call the office at 301-501-5886.**

If you would like to:

- Receive an emailed version of this newsletter or
- Would like to submit an article or
- Have an idea for an article

Please contact, **Carrie Colebank**, at
carrie.colebank@maryland.gov

Business Hours: Monday thru Friday 8:00 am til 5:00 pm

Service Center Phone Number: 301-501-5856



1916 Maryland Highway Ste C / Mt Lake Park MD 21550

Office Staff

Roger Kitzmiller, District Manager (MDA)

Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist (USDA-NRCS)

Charles "Chuck" Hayes, Soil Conservation Associate (MDA)

Chris Herbert, Soil Conservation Engineering Technician (MDA)

Vacant, Soil Conservation Associate (MDA)

Vacant, Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist (MDA)

Jessica Aronhalt, Soil Conservationist (USDA-NRCS)

Vacant, Soil Conservation Technician (USDA-NRCS)

Carrie Colebank, Administrative Assistant (SCD)

Board of Supervisors

James "Smokey" Stanton, Chairman

Kristen Enlow, Vice Chairman

Cameron Crawford, Treasurer

Katharine Dubansky, Vice Treasurer

William Buckel, Member

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a supervisor or associate supervisor please contact the district office at 301-501-5886.

The Garrett Soil Conservation District (GSCD) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.