



FALL 2024

AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

ACAP, or the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program, provides financial and technical assistance for the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) in agricultural operations within the Commonwealth. The Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) was created through the Clean Streams Fund established by the FY2022-2023 Pennsylvania Budget and is administered by the State Conservation Commission. The Conservation District has approximately \$250,000.00 over the next year to reduce non-point source pollution in local streams and rivers by implementing BMPs that reduce nutrient and sediment pollution on local farms.

There are a few requirements for participating in ACAP. To be eligible, the applicant must be an active farmer who owns their land and has animals. Farmers must have a written Ag Erosion and Sediment Plan or Conservation Plan and a Manure Management Plan or Nutrient Management Plan that includes the BMPs required to control nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment. BMPs must be in place to address runoff of pollutants and soils associated with animal concentration areas (ACAs), otherwise, these BMPs must be included in the proposed ACAP project. All projects must meet design and construction standards set by the SCC.

ACAP Additional Criteria

- Best Management Practices (BMPs) funded need to meet the goals of any applicable Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) or Countywide Action Plan (CAP).
- The BMP must be part of a Conservation Plan or an Agriculture Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan and a Manure Management Plan or a Nutrient Management Plan.
- Priority is given to BMPs that implement BMPs for control of nitrogen, phosphorus, or sediment.
- All Animal Concentration Areas (ACA) on the farm must be treated to abate stormwater runoff, loss of sediment, and loss of nutrients from the ACA, or the implementation of such BMPs shall be included in an application for funds.
- Buffer installation is required as part of an ACAP application if the existing Conservation Plan or Ag E&S Control Plan includes a buffer as a BMP and the project proposes a manure storage or heavy-use area.
- BMPs in proximity to surface waters, public drinking water sources, or Karst Geology with underground drainage systems or open sinkholes are to be given priority during the ranking of projects.
- The project must meet the design and construction standards established by the PA Technical Design Guide, or other standards established by the SCC.
- The maximum grant award is \$500,000 unless approved by the SCC.
- PA State Prevailing Wages are required for projects that exceed \$25,000.
- The cost share percentage will be determined by each conservation district. Greene's cost share is 90%.
- Funding is able to be paired with other funding programs. The district strongly encourages applicants to contact NRCS for matching funds.

A farmer will need the following things to get started with the ACAP application:

- Schedule a pre-application site visit with GCCD
- Must have or obtain an Ag Erosion and Sediment plan (E&S) or a Conservation Plan (CP)
- If applicable, the applicant must have either a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) or a Manure Management Plan (MMP)
- Schedule an engineering site visit

GCCD decided to embrace this program to protect and preserve local soil and water which will ensure future generations of farming in Greene County and is hopeful that this program will improve the overall health of soils and water. ACAP is a reimbursement grant that lowers the financial burden on landowners and farmers.

Applications are received on a rolling basis. **FINAL DEADLINE: JULY 2025**

For any questions, or to schedule a pre-application visit, please contact us at 724-852-5278 or gccd@co.greene.pa.us for full details on the ACAP program and assistance with the application.

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COOPERATING AGENCIES

- Greene County Department of Economic Development
Jeremy Kelly, Planning and Business Development Manager
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
Jack Lee, District Conservationist
- PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry
Russell Gibbs, Service Forester
- PA Fish and Boat Commission
Dorian Siebel, SW Region Waterways Conservation Officer
- Penn State Cooperative Extension
Justin Brackenrich, Agronomy Educator
- Washington/Greene County Farm Service Agency
Michal Roup, CED

WE ARE HIRING

JOIN OUR TEAM NOW!

TWO POSITIONS OPEN

- NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
- AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATIONIST

INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD APPLY ON
[INDEED.COM](https://www.indeed.com) OR [CO.GREENE.PA. US](https://www.co.greene.pa.us)

WASHINGTON & GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT ENGINEERING WORKSHOP

DETAILS

- WCCD & GCCD presentations
- DEP speakers
- Certificate of attendance available
- Q&A session
- **\$40 registration fee per attendee**
Please register by Nov 1

🕒 10:00AM - 2:00PM
📅 6 November 2024

📍 Chartiers Twp
Community Center
2013 Community Ctr Dr,
Houston

REGISTRATION OPEN
WWW.PAWCCD.ORG

REGISTRATION BEGINS 9:30AM
LUNCH PROVIDED

CONTACT SUE FOR ANY QUESTIONS
724-705-7098





50 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Suite 2,
Washington, PA 15301
Phone: 724-222-3060 Ext. 2

Apply for Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Greene County are eligible to apply for the 2024 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture, improved pasture, forage sorghum.

LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire.

You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2025, for 2024 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact your Washington-Greene County USDA Service Center at 724-222-3060 ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

FSA Is Accepting CRP Continuous Enrollment Offers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting offers for specific conservation practices under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Signup.

In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and to plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. The program's long-term goal is to re-establish valuable land cover to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are 10-15 years in length.

Under continuous CRP signup, environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled in CRP at any time. Offers for continuous enrollment are not subject to competitive bidding during specific periods. Instead they are automatically accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the statutory cap.

For more information, including a list of acceptable practices, contact your Washington-Greene County USDA Service Center at 724-222-3060 ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp.

GRACE 2024-2025 ROUND APPROVED

The Greene County's Reinvestment in Agriculture: Cost-share Enhancement (GRACE) Program is a conservation-based program directly funded by the Greene County Conservation District (GCCD) that was designed to enhance soil health and water quality within the agriculture community. This year, the program approved contracts with the largest funding amount in a single year compared to previous years. The GCCD Board of Directors approved \$230,000 in contracts for the 2024-2025 program year at their September 17, 2024 Board meeting.

The 58 contracts approved at the September Board meeting include 1,495 tons of lime for 928.48 acres, 616.06 acres of fertilizer, 17,845 feet of interior pasture division or streambank fencing, 1 stabilized stream crossing, 30 water systems, and 16 forestry projects. These Best Management Practices promote soil and water conservation practices that improve soil health in pastures and woodlands. These practices can lead to improvements in animal production as well as, healthier soils and forest stands. When these practices are implemented correctly, value and profit can be added to the land.

The district has had great success and participation in the GRACE Program. This would not be possible without the financial assistance received by PA Act 13 Unconventional Gas Impact Fee that is allocated through the Public Utility Commission and State Conservation. The district would like to recognize the Greene County Government and their support of our organization which covers many of the district's overhead costs and administrative assistance. The support of the county government allows the district to utilize "Impact Fee Funds" on the ground within the community that has been impacted by gas development over the past years. The money and support received from all of these funding sources could be utilized to cover other District expenses; however, support from the county government frees up funds allocated to the district allowing the ability to spend money on projects that are put back into Greene County. Through this cost-share assistance for landowners, the implementation of BMPs within their agricultural operations will enhance soil health, and water quality and create more productive farms within the County.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OFFERS OPTIONS FOR FARMERS SPREADING LIME

Applying lime to pasture and hay fields is one of the simplest management decisions to make. Increasing soil pH can increase forage yields and palatability, with relatively low cost to the producer. The District maintains two lime spreaders for use by Greene County farmers.

The 4½-ton spreader does not have surge brakes, like the District's 2-ton spreader, but has more than double the capacity. It is ideal for larger meadows where steep slopes are not as much of a concern. The large capacity means that a farmer can spend more time spreading lime and less time loading lime. The 2-ton spreader remains ideal for small pastures and areas where steep slopes are a concern. Offering these two different spreaders gives farmers more options to manage their forage with lime.

In addition to the two lime spreaders, the Conservation District also offers a seven-foot, end wheel no-till drill equipped with three seed boxes. This drill allows Greene County farmers to implement a no-till crop production system, which includes cover crops and promotes good pasture management.

No-till involves planting the seed directly into the soil without plowing, tilling or disking. Advantages of no-till practices include: reducing operator's time and expenses; promoting healthier soils through building soil structure and adding organic matter; feeding beneficial microorganisms; reducing soil loss from erosion and increasing infiltration and yields due to optimal soil conditions.

In addition to pasture sizes and slopes, farmers should consider equipment sizes and transportation as well. A 50hp or larger tractor is needed for the 2-ton spreader while the 4½-ton spreader requires a 75hp or larger tractor. Both spreaders may be towed on roads at moderate speeds (approximately 45mph). The no-till drill requires 55hp or larger tractor and a heavy-duty truck is required for transport.

All three of these implements are available for rent from Conservation District on a first-come, first-served basis. A deposit of \$50 for either spreader and \$100 for the no-till drill is required to schedule a three-day rental. For more details, please contact the Greene County Conservation District at gccd@co.greene.pa.us or 724-852-5278.

2024 GRASSLAND EVALUATION CONTEST CARMICHAEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL PLACED THIRD PLACE

Team members competed individually with a exam in four areas, Grassland Condition, Wildlife Habitat, Soil Evaluation, and Plant Identification. Team members include: Allie Miller, Emma Bates, Hayden Yeager and Isiah Currey. The team received a banner for the third-place finish.

The Grassland Evaluation contest is hosted by Southwest Project Grass. Since 2023, Southwest Project Grass has been sponsoring this education contest for high school students to learn practical and profitable ways to graze livestock. Over \$41,000 in scholarships have been awarded to date.

Team members include (**Shown in photo R to L**): Blake Conard-team assistant coach, Isiah Currey, Hayden Yeager, Allie Miller, Emma Bates, and Kevin Willis-team coach.



BE WISE WHEN YOU FERTILIZE!

Preventing fertilizer loss keeps your lawn healthy, saves you money, and protects our waterways.

It is important to properly assess your lawn's nutrient needs prior to selecting and applying fertilizer.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is working with homeowners and businesses to promote best practices and educational opportunities for understanding how to best meet our shared goals.

Fertilizer Law

On July 11, 2022, Pennsylvania enacted a new fertilizer law that updated requirements for both manufacturers and applicators of fertilizer.

- label modifications
- fee updates
- turf nutrient limitations
- application restrictions

Who is a Fertilizer Applicator?

The term "applicator" refers to anyone who applies fertilizer, including lawn care professionals, farmers, and homeowners.

Calibrate

Follow the directions on the fertilizer label and use a fertilizer spreader that is properly calibrated.

Know The Rate

Select a fertilizer that is appropriate for the lawn's needs.

Phosphorus cannot be applied unless: establishing or repairing turf OR a soil test indicates a phosphorus deficiency.

Nitrogen is limited to:

- 0.7 pounds available N per 1000 ft² per application
- 0.9 pounds total N per 1000 ft² per application

Environmental Conditions

- Do not apply near water, storm drains, or drainage ditches.
- Maintain a 15-foot buffer from waterways.
- Do not apply if heavy rain is expected.
- Do not apply if ground is snow-covered or frozen.
- Apply product using a properly calibrated fertilizer spreader.
- Apply only to intended application site.
- Fertilizer that lands on an impervious surface (like roads, sidewalks, driveways) must be swept back onto turf.

Follow the 4Rs of Nutrient Management:

*Right Source, Right Rate,
Right Time, Right Place.*

10/23/20



Scan the QR Code
to learn more!

TIPS FOR FALL FORAGE MANAGEMENT Justin Brackenrich-Penn State Extension

This fall, cool-season forages like alfalfa and orchardgrass will continue growing as long as the weather maintains a warm during the day and cooler at night trend. Should we capitalize on this additional tonnage and cut it? Let's graze it or stockpile it for later feeding. What we do now can impact our forages in the spring, so it is essential to think long-term when managing forages. These fall management tips can help maximize fall tonnage and usage while ensuring our forages are in the best position for success in the spring.

HARVEST AND HEIGHTS

Adjustments must be made in the fall to ensure winter-hardy and spring-ready stands. If alfalfa is typically mowed at 2"- 2.5" during the spring/summer, adjust those to 3"- 4" in the fall. If grass is the predominant species, maintain a 4" minimum height to promote faster regrowth. The same rules apply to grazing management in pastures. Overgrazing can inhibit the growth and development of the forages for spring, so implementing a managed grazing system can improve your ability to monitor plant heights.

Timing is also important. After mowing or grazing, there must be enough time for the plant to regenerate vegetative material before a "killing frost." A general rule is 4-6 weeks. For alfalfa, different varieties exist with improved weather hardiness and will allow for later cuttings. Stand survivability, however, can depend largely on this fall regrowth, so be cautious when trying to harvest late. In short, allow enough time for some fall regrowth and lift the mower to leave behind more vegetation.



It is important to cut at the proper height so the forage has time to regrow before a killing frost. Image Credit: L. Dupstadt, Penn State Extension.

FIELD ASSESSMENT AND AWARENESS

Fall is a great time to get out and see what is happening. Ideally, scouting is a year-long job, but take advantage of the slowdown in the fall. Another benefit to looking at things in the fall is that you will have a better view of damage that may have been done this year during the heat and drought. It may be too late to overseed, but it can give you an idea on where efforts are best spent in the spring. Noticing a lack of vegetation, uneven stands, and weed infestations can indicate fertility issues.

FERTILITY ADJUSTMENTS

Fall is an ideal time to get out in the field and correct soil fertility, ensuring your spring regrowth has what it needs to succeed. Taking a soil test now and continuing a 3-year fall schedule keeps timing and results consistent by testing at the same time of the year. After all forages have been removed for the year, sampling will be easier and result in more accurate lab recommendations. If pH or Mg adjustments are required, lime additions in the fall will have adequate time to begin neutralizing acidity and help improve nutrient availability. Applying phosphorus can help stands improve root growth and tillering in the spring, while potassium will aid in winterhardiness.

WEED CONTROL NOW

Not only is it one less job in spring or summer, but for some species, fall is the optimum time for weed control applications while they are still green and growing. Some of our perennial weeds, such as common milkweed and Canada thistle, remain active into the fall. Bramble species and multiflora rose are also actively growing and can be controlled with fall applications. Buttercup and dandelion are beginning to grow and can be controlled in their rosette forms. The same can be said for biennials like common burdock and wild carrot, which are easier to manage in the rosette stage.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT

If you specifically consider pastures, now is an excellent time to think about mowing and/or dragging. Mowing can be a helpful weed control measure but will also reduce some overgrown areas and aid in dethatching. Cutting down uneven and standing material promotes decomposition during wither snow and rains, reducing dead plant matter in the field by spring. Dragging this time of year can get manure nutrients to different areas of the paddock and help it decompose faster. If paddocks are small enough, this isn't necessary, but it can be helpful in some situations.



Clipping fields can help reduce weeds and incorporate standing plants into the field as residue over the winter. Image Credit: L. Dupstadt, Penn State Extension.

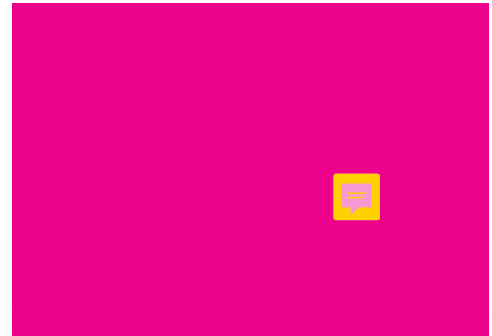
LOCAL STUDENT WINS FIRST PLACE IN STATE POSTER CONTEST ON FORESTS

Waynesburg, PA -- The Greene County Conservation District holds an annual poster contest for students in grades K-8 that is open to all Greene County students. The top three winners in each category receive a check, and the first-place winner in each category is then submitted to the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) for the statewide poster contest.

To promote the importance of clean water, students entered posters conveying their thoughts through original artwork. The theme for the 2024 contest was "May the Forest Be with You Always".

The Greene County Conservation District was pleased to announce that in the Kindergarten through First Grade division, Kaelyn Duncan of Clarksville, won first place at the statewide contest. Ten Conservation Districts from across the state submitted posters for the State contest.

Representatives of the County Conservation District Board presented Kaelyn with a check from PDCD. Kaelyn's poster will be submitted for judging in the upcoming national competition this winter. The National Association of Conservation Districts sponsors the national contest. Visit <https://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/stewardship-and-education-materials/contests/> for more information.



Pictured L to R: Commissioner Jared Edgreen, Conservation Board Chairman Jim Cowell, Kaelyn Duncan, and Board Member Rebecca Trigger

IMPORTANT NOTICE

to Pennsylvania conventional oil and gas well operators regarding the Methane Emissions Reduction Program



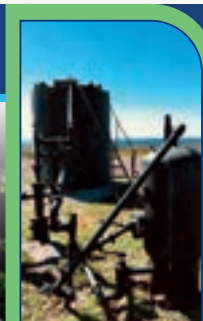
This is an important notice to Pennsylvania conventional oil and gas well operators regarding the availability of federal funding to plug marginal wells. The federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides new authorities under Section 136 of the Clean Air Act to reduce methane emissions from the petroleum and natural gas sector through the creation of the Methane Emissions Reduction Program (MERP). Nationwide, MERP will provide more than \$1 billion in financial funding for grants and other activities to reduce methane.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be receiving more than \$44 million of this funding. Part of Pennsylvania's funding will be used to provide grants to conventional well operators to plug marginal conventional wells in their inventory. A marginal conventional well (MCW) is defined as a conventional vertical or slightly deviated oil and/or natural gas well with a known operator, producing less than or equal to 15 barrels of oil equivalent per day (BOED) and/or 90 thousand cubic feet (Mcf) gas per day (1 BOE = 6 Mcf) over the prior 12 month period. Most conventional wells, for which production data has been reported to the DEP, meet the definition of an MCW.

To be eligible for this funding, an operator must be in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, including those related to the submission of well production, waste, and mechanical integrity assessment reports to DEP. Additionally, failure to submit these reports subject operators to enforcement by DEP that includes civil penalty liability. If you are interested in obtaining this funding and are currently not in compliance with these requirements, you should submit this information to DEP as soon as possible.

Operators can find information regarding the production, waste, and mechanical integrity assessment report submission process and requirements on DEP's website ([Electronic Submission Guides \(pa.gov\)](#)). Home use well operators can satisfy all three reporting requirements through the submission of a single form for each well ([8000-FM-OOGM0001](#)).

Additional information regarding the MERP grant funding process can also be found on DEP's [MERP webpage](#). Please note that development of the MERP grant funding process is ongoing and additional information will be added to the MERP webpage as it becomes available. Operators should check this webpage often to obtain the latest information. Grant funding will be limited, so operators interested in taking advantage of this opportunity should submit their applications as soon as possible when the process opens.



[MERP at a Glance:](#)

Federal Legislation:
IRA

PA Grant:
\$44M

Goal:
Plug Marginal
Conventional Wells

Result:
Reduce
Methane Emissions

Eligibility:
In Compliance

[MERP webpage](#)





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OUR MISSION

It is the mission of the District to commit to protection, stewardship, and conservation of the County's natural resources to ensure a wise balance between the protection of the environment and the benefit of the landowners of the County.

It is the District's belief that conservation works best when people living and working in the local area work together to manage their natural resources collectively. Valuable partnerships are formed when diversity is brought into the conversation and decision-making process. Our office is a conservation-oriented organization that offers a wide variety of expertise and knowledge. The District staff can assist with questions related to permitting, offer guidance on planning for farming, and assist landowners with various natural resource related topics.

22 West High Street, Suite 204 • Waynesburg, PA 15370 • 724-852-5278
gccd@co.greene.pa.us • www.co.greene.pa.us