

# NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL COST SHARE PROGRAM



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For Information Contact:

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# North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program

*"A voluntary program designed to encourage the use of BMP's or Best Management Practices."*

## **EROSION CONTROL BMP'S**

Cost share funds are available to Guilford County landowners and farmers at a rate of 75% (on most practices) for existing operations with current water quality or erosion problems. There is a \$25,000 per year limit.

Applications and contracts must be approved by the Guilford District Board and by the Cost Share Staff in Raleigh before work can be started. Practices must meet NRCS and District specifications before payment is made. The District board makes priority determinations based on water quality needs.

### **Cropland Conversion:**

This practice is to establish a permanent conservation crop of perennial grasses, trees or permanent wildlife plantings on eroding or excessively eroding *cropland*. The conservation cover must be left for ten years. Cost share is based on 75% of the average cost of establishing fescue, including lime, fertilizer, seed, and seedbed preparation. Grass may be mowed for hay or grazed as long as the grass stand is not jeopardized. This is a one time payment.

**Payment: 75% of \$300.00 = \$225/ac.**

#### **Requirements to receive cost share:**

1. Must be converting cropland (row cropped) fields to grass or conservation cover.
2. Fields must have been in crops a minimum of three years prior to date of request for assistance.
3. Must maintain grass or other cost shared vegetation for ten years.
4. Follow soil test results for establishment and maintenance fertilizer requirements.

### **Sod Based Rotation:**

This is the practice of establishing perennial grasses, legumes or mixture of the two on excessively eroding cropland and maintaining the grass for 2 to 4 years before the next row crop is planted. Grass may be mowed for hay or grazed as long as the grass stand is not jeopardized. A one time incentive payment will be made at the time of grass establishment. Cap of \$25,000

**Payment:**

17 months in grass:	\$75.00/acre
29 months in grass:	\$130.00/acre
41 months in grass:	\$175.00/acre

#### **Requirements to receive cost share:**

1. Must be cropland fields.
2. Must maintain grass or legumes for specified time (17, 29 or 41 months).
3. Follow soil test requirements.

### **Grassed Waterways, Diversions and Field Borders:**

These practices are the structural BMP's that are included in a planned conservation system to slow runoff, filter sediment and nutrients leaving cropland fields in order to improve water quality.

**Payment:** Approximately 75% of the average cost for grading (\$1200/ac), seedbed preparation (\$30-50/ac), vegetation establishment (\$276/ac) and mulch (\$550/ac) **Total = 75% of \$2,076/ac (\$1,557/ac)**

### **Strip Cropping:**

These practices are tillage practices included in a conservation system to improve soil tilth and water holding capabilities while reducing erosion. Strip-cropping is the use of crop rotation within a field - planting alternating strips of grass and crops across the slope of a field. Conservation tillage is the practice of planting directly into the previous crops' residue instead of plowing and disking.

**Payment:** Strip-cropping - 75% of \$150/ac **Total = \$112.50/ac**

**Conservation Tillage / No-Till:**

Conservation Tillage is the practice of planting crops in a manner that leaves 60% or more cover on the soil surface. The benefits are reduced erosion and resulting sedimentation and pollution entering surface waters. Conservation tillage improves soil texture and water holding capacity. There are now several options for receiving cost share assistance on Conservation Tillage:

- **Three Year No-Till Conventional Crops:** Incentive payment is \$60 /ac. (for small grain, corn, soybeans, & cotton). This practice requires 60% groundcover at the time of planting and must be maintained for three consecutive years.
- **Three Year No-Till For Specialty Crops:**  
This practice also requires 60% groundcover. The specialty crop must be planted at least once out of the three years and maintain at least 60% groundcover for three consecutive years. Guilford SWCD set a county limit for 5 acres/\$2500 per farmer.

Incentives will be paid according to crop, as follows:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Peanuts                             | \$250/acre |
| 2. Sweet Corn                          | \$125/acre |
| 3. Tobacco                             | \$500/acre |
| 4. Vegetables (other than sweet corn)* | \$250/acre |

- **Long Term No-Till:** The incentive payment is \$125/ac. This incentive is for conventional no-till crops, such as corn and soybeans, but **80%** groundcover must be maintained for five consecutive years. Guilford County limit per farmer per year is 120 acres or \$15,000. Lifetime cap is \$25,000 for all no-till combined in all counties.

*Sign up during the signup period (July 1 through August 10) for assistance for these and the other Best Management Practices available for your farm. Signing up at other times may depend on availability of funds. Contact the District office for further information.*

***Each cooperator is limited to a \$25,000 lifetime cap for 3-year Conventional Crop No-Till, 3 Year Specialty Crop No-Till, and Long Term No-Till regardless of whether practices are used individually or alone.***

**\*Vegetables:**

tomato	cucumber	watermelon
cantaloupe	squash	pumpkin
eggplant	beans	pea
okra	pepper	broccoli
cabbage	onion	Irish potato
sweet potato	muskmelon	strawberries
brussel sprouts	collards	

### **Stream Protection BMP's:**

Although it may seem logical to use your streams and ponds to water livestock, for the best water quality benefits and for the best health of your animals it is best to place fences so that animal do not have access to streams or ponds. Studies have shown that cattle will go to a spring fed water trough 92% of the time rather than drinking from the stream. In fact, cattle use of the stream for all activities was reduced by 51% when an off stream water source was made available. Stream bank erosion can be reduced as much as 77% when removing cattle from streams. The program can assist with funding for alternative water sources, stream crossings and spring development.

**Note:** Must fence out streams to receive Cost Share for the following practices.

### **Livestock Exclusion:**

This practice involves using permanent fencing to keep livestock out of an area such as a pond, stream, etc. It can be used in conjunction with animal waste management systems, stream crossings, stream bank protection and other areas as needed to protect water quality. Fences must be 10' minimum from the top of the stream bank; Gates are included in Average Cost.

**Payment:** 75% of Average Costs for: Fence 3 strand Permanent, electric, (\$2.20/lin. foot), 4+ strand permanent, electric, (\$2.40/foot), Permanent, non-electric, (\$2.55/foot), Streamside Fencing in Flood Plain, 1 or 2 strands – (\$1.20/foot)

### **Livestock Watering Facility:**

This practice provides watering facilities at selected locations to reduce or eliminate the need for livestock to be in stream. This practice will reduce health hazards for livestock, and reduce livestock waste going into streams. Cost share will include necessary components of pipe, fittings, tanks, wells and spring development, as well as a small heavy use area around tank.

**Payment:** Will vary, depending on your water source:

**Tanks** - 75% of Actual Cost not to exceed **\$1000**

**Pumps** - 75% of Actual Cost NTE **\$1850**

**Well** – 75% (\$13/ft.)

### **Stock Trails and Walkways:**

This practice provides the animal a controlled, firm, and protected area to walk from barn to pasture or from one pasture to another. The properly designed stock walkway controls sediment and animal wastes from entering water bodies.

**Payment:** 75% of Average Cost for Grading a new Trail (\$2/linear foot), geotextile fabric (\$2.25/sq.yd), stone (\$22/ton) fencing, incl. gates (\$2.55/ft.)

**(Total Average Cost = \$2,384 Payment (75%) = \$1,788 (for a 100'x15' walkway)**

### **Stream Crossings:**

This practice allows animals to cross streams when needed to get to a pasture or barn. When the entire stream has been fenced to exclude animals, this crossing is installed where limited access is necessary. The crossing can be a ford or a culvert type crossing.

**Payment:** (Ford type crossing) 75% of Average Cost for: moderate grading (\$1000), geotextiles (\$2.25/sq. yd.), anchoring Pins (\$2 each), gravel (\$22/ton), fencing, incl. gates (\$2.55/ft.)

**Total Cost: \$3,967 Payment = \$2,975 (for a 100' x 15' Stream Crossing)**

### **Heavy Use Area Protection:**

This practice is used to stabilize areas of high livestock concentration and to reduce the stream loading of sediment and or animal waste. This is to be used in conjunction with livestock exclusion from streams.

**Payment:** 75% of Average Costs for Grading (\$275/ ¼ac), Geotextiles (\$2.25/sq. yd) and Gravel (\$22/ton)

**Total Cost of \$3,344: Payment (75%) = \$2,508 (for a 50' x 50' area)**

## **Manure Management BMP's**

A very important part of any animal operation, whether there are 2 horses or 150 beef cows is your ability to store and manage the manure that is produced on your operation. If the manure cannot be properly stored, it is either being spread on fields during all kinds of weather, all through the year or it is being carried downstream by rainwater if left uncovered and exposed. Even if the manure is being hauled away, if it is not hauled daily, it is your responsibility to keep the manure from entering surface waters. If it does enter surface waters, you are in violation of state laws.

NOTE: Cost Sharing Funds are available to Guilford County land owners at a rate of 75% (on most practices) for existing operations with current water quality problems. For most operations there is a \$25,000 per year limit on cost share funds received. There is a \$75,000 per year limit for operations requiring a general permit (confined operations with 75 horses, 100 cattle or more.)

### **Composter/ Waste Storage Structure**

A Compost - Storage Structure is a facility for the biological treatment, stabilization and environmentally safe storage of organic waste material to produce a material that can be recycled as a soil amendment and fertilizer substitute. In cost sharing on any composter or waste storage structure, a waste management plan is needed. **Payment:** Cost sharing is based on the size required by the number of animals and waste disposal method. In most cases, the cost share will reimburse you for up to 75% of the actual cost of the structure not to exceed \$25,000.

### **Storm Water Management:**

This is a system of collection and diversion practices (guttering, collection boxes, grass swales or diversions) to prevent unpolluted storm water from flowing across concentrated waste areas on animal operations.

Gutters can only be cost shared on existing structures that were built prior to May 31, 1992 or on new roof structures that are being cost-shared in the plan.

**Payment:** 75% of Average Cost (\$4/ft for 5"seamless gutters, \$6/ft for 6" seamless gutters), collection boxes are cost shared at 75% of actual cost, NTE \$1000) and grass swales and diversions (\$1/ft for construction plus seeding and mulch at \$726/acre)

### **Heavy Use Area Protection:**

This practice is used to stabilize areas of high livestock concentration and to reduce the stream loading of sediment and or animal waste. This is to be used in conjunction with livestock exclusion from streams.

**Payment:** 75% of Average Costs for Grading (\$275/ ¼ac), Geotextiles (\$2.25/sq. yd) and Gravel (\$22/ton)

**Total Cost of \$3,344: Payment (75%) = \$2,508 (for a 50' x 50' area)**

### **Lagoon / Holding Pond Closure:**

This practice is used for the safe removal of waste and waste water from a lagoon or holding pond that is no longer being used and properly apply the waste on land in an environmentally safe manner. The lagoon or holding pond is not eligible to receive payment for the closure if NC Agriculture Cost Share Funds were used to install the structure. **The payment is 75% of the actual cost not to exceed a total charge of \$75,000 to the NC-ACSP.**