



ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Agricultural Conservation Project Financial Assistance Inquiry, January, 2023

Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District periodically has opportunities to request funding, usually from the State of New York, for agricultural conservation projects. Potential applicants should keep the following guidance in mind.

In most cases, to be eligible for funding assistance we must be able to show a water quality benefit resulting from the project.

Our primary opportunity for ag project funding requires applications to be submitted by watershed. Projects in the Walkkill River watershed are more likely to be included in funding requests. The preparation of grant proposals for other watersheds in the County will depend on number and nature of project requests from that watershed and availability of staff resources. Project proposals from Orange County for NYS funding will be ranked against other NYS county proposals and will be competing for limited Statewide funding.

For most funding opportunities, the applicant must have an Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) plan in place before we submit the funding request to NYS. Interested applicants who do not have an AEM plan need to contact us well in advance of funding opportunity deadlines to allow time for AEM plan preparation. Contact our office if you don't know the status of AEM planning on your farm.

Eligible applicants generally need to be commercial farmers or owners of commercial farmland.

Applications for funding assistance may be ranked and prioritized based on water quality benefit and other criteria established by the Conservation District Board of Directors.

This is not a complete list of eligibility requirements.

Contact our office at any time to discuss whether your proposed project appears to fit within eligibility requirements of funding opportunities available to us.

Typical Projects Which May Be Eligible for Funding Assistance

- Cover Crops
- Other Cultural Conservation Practices for Row Crop Lands – Conservation Tillage, Residue Management, Contour/Strip Cropping
- Structural Cropland Erosion Control Systems/Measures (diversions, grassed waterways, underground outlets, etc.)
- Barnyard Runoff Control Measures (heavy use area protection, clean water exclusion, roof runoff collection, etc.)
- Streambank Stabilization

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- Stream Crossings
- Livestock Watering Systems (where system replaces watering practices that may threaten water quality)
- Grazing Systems (including INTERIOR paddock fencing but not perimeter fencing, improved travelways and watering systems)
- Agri-chemical Mixing Facilities
- Petroleum Bulk Storage Secondary Containment Systems
- Composting Systems
- Other Projects Where a Water Quality Benefit can be demonstrated

-Flat land drainage projects are generally NOT eligible for funding, they are considered primarily a production practice. Drainage on sloping land that reduces erosion may be eligible.

-New drainage systems, or modification of existing drainage systems, on ORGANIC soils that include measures to allow for managing the water table to slow subsidence and carbon release may be eligible for funding assistance. Interested farmers are encouraged to contact our office to discuss organic soil water table management projects.

-Limited funding opportunities are available for projects that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and/or provide resilience against climate change.

Funding is typically capped at 75% of total project costs with the participant required to provide matching funds or contributions (labor, machine time) equaling 25% of eligible project costs. In some cases, the participant contribution may be more or less than 25%.

Applications for funding received by February 20, 2023 will be evaluated for potential inclusion in grant funding proposals anticipated to be submitted by our office in early 2023. Applications received after this date will be reviewed and held for consideration in future funding opportunities.

Applicants for projects should complete the following form to initiate an eligibility review and be considered for funding opportunities.

Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____

Date of Request _____

Brief Project Description:

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Project Description (continued)

You may submit this form by mail (USPS), email (see top of application form) or by calling our office and providing the requested information verbally. If you do not receive a call or other form of follow up from our office within a week of your submission of this form, please call the office and ask to speak with Kevin.

This form is available on our website.