



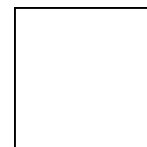
What are Best Management Practices?

Best Management Practices, or BMPs, are practices designed to decrease the amount of pollutants entering a stream or other waterbody. Cropland BMPs reduce sediment and nutrients running off the land, thus improving water quality.

Cropland BMPs improve soil by allowing the soil to stay in place, building organic matter, and decreasing problems associated with compaction. Also, BMPs increase water infiltration, thus slowing storm water and reducing damage from flood events.



Headwaters SWCD
P.O. Box 70
Verona, VA 24482



We work with the people who work the land.

Best Management Practices for Virginia Agriculture



Agronomic Practices

What are the Benefits of BMP's to Farmers?

• Decreased Erosion

- When soil is eroded, crops do not grow to their highest capability. By allowing the soil to stay in place, crops have the necessary medium to grow, thus improving crop yields.

• Increased Soil Organic Matter

- Organic matter in the soil improves water infiltration and water holding capacity, therefore your crops can use this "extra" water during periods of dry weather.

- Organic matter increases the availability of nutrients in the soil to the plant.

- Also, organic matter is a natural defense against soil compaction.

- Soil-testing for organic matter helps determine the productivity of your soil. Three percent is a good goal.

• More Efficient Use of Nutrients

- A nutrient management plan gives you guidance on the optimum amount of fertilizer to put on your crops. Therefore, money is not wasted on fertilizer you don't need.

- Additionally, a legume cover crop adds nitrogen to your soil, saving money on fertilizer costs.

• Bottom Line: Cropland BMP's increase profit!

Available Cost-Share Programs

Permanent Grassland Conversion

- Cost-share assistance for planting an annual crop field into pasture or hay land
- 75% cost-share **plus** \$25 per acre incentive
- 5 year lifespan, but cost-share only authorized once per field

Winter Cover Crops

- Non-harvested small grain = \$25 to \$50 per acre
- Harvested small grain = \$25 OR tax credit
- Legume cover crop = \$35 per acre + tax credit
- Plant/Harvest/Kill dates & bonus varieties apply,, also tax credit possible. Ask your conservation planner

Continuous No-till

- \$50 per acre plus saves trips across field
- 5 year lifespan

Nutrient Management Plan Writing

- \$2 to \$3 per acre to have Nutrient Management Plan written by a private planner

Grassed Waterways

- 75% cost-share for site preparation, grading, establishing cover, etc.

Please ask about other agronomic practices including strip crops, grass filter strips, and others available through federal cost-share programs.



For more information on Cropland BMP's contact:

Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation District

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