

AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program was re-authorized through the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) to construct or improve watershed management structures or irrigation structures, plant trees to form windbreaks or to improve water quality, and mitigate financial risk through production or marketing diversification or the implementation of resource conservation practices including soil erosion control, integrated pest management and / or the transition to organic farming.

In Vermont the AMA program focuses on water conservation by offering irrigation practices for new irrigation systems or to enhance an existing irrigation system. The program also focuses on soil erosion control by offering practices that can help in reducing soil loss on fields.

Payments paid per participant in AMA are limited to \$50,000 per year. This payment limitation includes funds provided to producers through the Risk Management Agency (RMA) or the Agricultural Marketing Service (RMS). By signing the AMA contract appendix, a participant is agreeing that they are not receiving additional funds from RMA or RMS that exceed the payment limitation.

Application Process:

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis. If you're interested in being considered for the next round of funding, you'll need to submit an application to your local NRCS field office.

Initially, you'll need to complete and sign application form NRCS-CPA-1200. This form can be found online at: <http://www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/>

[programs/AMA/](#) and click on the application form.

This application can also be requested by you at your local field office. You'll also need to review the appendix to this application. The appendix contains the 'rules' for the contract and implications for not following these rules.

Once you've completed these forms, contact your local NRCS field office to make an appointment to submit your application and complete the eligibility process. After this process is completed and you and your land are determined eligible for the program, NRCS field staff will work closely with you to create a resource inventory of all the soil, water, air, plant, and animal (both domestic and wildlife) resource concerns on your land. Using this inventory, field staff will work with you to develop a list of practices that you could include in your contract to address identified resource concerns. In some cases more than one practice could be used to address a specific resource concern. You can make the choice as to what practice



Practices supporting new irrigation systems can be cost shared through AMA

AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

best fits your operation and management style, but the cost of the least cost alternative practice will be used for contracting. Your application will be ranked with all other Vermont eligible applications. Those applications that are achieving the greatest resource benefit at the least cost are ranked the highest.

Eligibility Process:

There are two parts to this process. Person eligibility and land eligibility. For AMA, you must meet both of these requirements to be eligible for the program

You must be an individual, legal entity, or joint operation and be engaged in livestock or agricultural production. The land being offered in the program must be in agriculture, livestock or forestry production, on which crops or livestock are produced, where risk may be mitigated through operation diversification or change in resource conservation practices. To be considered an agricultural producer you must also have an annual minimum of \$1,000 of agricultural products produced and/or sold from your operation.

Producers of nonindustrial private forestland or land capable of growing trees are exempt from this income requirement, however, they must still meet other eligibility requirements mentioned above and below.

All agricultural producers must also have an interest in the land being offered in the application, have control of this land for the life of the contract, be in compliance with the provisions for protecting the interests of tenants, and be in compliance with Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) requirements.

Program Timeline:

To be considered for the next round of funding, applications may need to be submitted as early as August 1, 2010. Those applications that are accepted by this date are then reviewed and ranked from October through December. Applications are then selected for funding around February and contracts are signed by April. Participants can begin implementing the practices in their contracts as soon as they're signed. Work completed prior to signing a contract will not be eligible for funding.

Vermont NRCS Field Offices

Addison County

802-388-6748

Caledonia & Essex Counties

802-748-2641

Chittenden County

802-865-7895

Orange & Washington Counties

802-828-4493

Franklin & Grand Isle Counties

802-527-1296

Lamoille County

802-888-4935

Orleans County

802-334-6090

Bennington & Rutland Counties

802-775-8034

Windham County

802-254-9766

Windsor County

802-295-7942

**For more information
about NRCS program in
Vermont log onto:
www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov**