

Improve your Soil. Protect the Bay.  
**GROW COVER CROPS**

**Maryland's 2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-up**

*June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices*

**2015-2016 COVER CROP PROGRAM FEATURES**

- 🚜 Farmers can receive up to \$90/acre to grow cover crops on their fields this fall
  - 🚜 Harvested cover crops qualify for up to \$35/acre
- new** Legume cover crop mixes are now eligible for grants

Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program  
 2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-Up

*June 24 through July 15 at  
 soil conservation district offices*



MACS



**Maryland Department of Agriculture**

*Office of Resource Conservation*

Conservation Grants Program  
 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
 Annapolis, MD 21401



Larry Hogan  
 Governor

Boyd Rutherford  
 Lt. Governor

Joseph Bartenfelder  
 Secretary

Mary Ellen Setting  
 Deputy Secretary

**SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

<b>Allegany</b>	<b>301-777-1747, ext. 3</b>	<b>Harford</b>	<b>410-838-6181, ext. 3</b>
<b>Anne Arundel</b>	<b>410-571-6757</b>	<b>Howard</b>	<b>410-313-0680</b>
<b>Baltimore County</b>	<b>410-527-5920, ext. 3</b>	<b>Kent</b>	<b>410-778-5150, ext. 3</b>
<b>Calvert</b>	<b>410-535-1521, ext. 3</b>	<b>Montgomery</b>	<b>301-590-2855</b>
<b>Caroline</b>	<b>410-479-1202, ext. 3</b>	<b>Prince George's</b>	<b>301-574-5162, ext. 3</b>
<b>Carroll</b>	<b>410-848-8200, ext. 3</b>	<b>Queen Anne's</b>	<b>410-758-3136, ext. 3</b>
<b>Catoctin</b>	<b>301-695-2803, ext. 3</b>	<b>St. Mary's</b>	<b>301-475-8402, ext. 3</b>
<b>Cecil</b>	<b>410-398-4411, ext. 3</b>	<b>Somerset</b>	<b>410-651-1575, ext. 3</b>
<b>Charles</b>	<b>301-934-9588, ext. 3</b>	<b>Talbot</b>	<b>410-822-1577, ext. 3</b>
<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>410-228-5640, ext. 3</b>	<b>Washington County</b>	<b>301-797-6821, ext. 3</b>
<b>Frederick</b>	<b>301-695-2803, ext. 3</b>	<b>Wicomico</b>	<b>410-546-4777, ext. 3</b>
<b>Garrett</b>	<b>301-334-6950, ext. 3</b>	<b>Worcester</b>	<b>410-632-5439, ext. 3</b>

THE MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAM

**COVER CROPS**





# Improve Your Soil. Protect the Bay. Maryland's 2015-2016 Cover Crop Sign-up

Open enrollment runs June 24 through July 15 at soil conservation district offices

## BENEFITS

Don't let your fields sit idle this fall and winter. Growing cover crops after the summer harvest can help improve your soil, protect local waterways and bolster your fields' productivity. Cover crops protect water quality by recycling unused plant nutrients remaining in the soil from the previous summer crop. They work all winter to protect fields against wind and water erosion. Better still, they improve the soil for next year's crop by adding organic matter, suppressing weeds, and providing habitat for beneficial insects.

## GRANTS FOR FARMERS

The Maryland Agricultural Water-Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program provides grants to help farmers offset seed, labor and equipment costs associated with planting cover crops in the fall. Maryland has earmarked approximately \$22 million this year's program.

## SIGN-UP DATES

June 24 – July 15, 2015 at soil conservation district offices statewide.

## ELIGIBLE COVER CROP SPECIES

- 🔧 **Cereal Grains:** Wheat/speltz, rye, barley, triticale, spring oats, ryegrass and canola/rape (brassica)
- 🔧 **Forage Radish**
- 🔧 **Legumes:** Crimson clover, Australian winter peas and hairy vetch

## PLANTING REQUIREMENTS

- 🔧 Plant cereal grains by November 5, 2015. Early planting incentives are offered.
- 🔧 To create diversity, any two cover crop species may be mixed at a rate of 60 percent cereal grains and 40 percent legumes or radish.
- 🔧 Mixes containing rye do not qualify for the \$10/acre rye incentive.
- 🔧 Mixes containing forage radish must be planted by September 15, 2015.
- 🔧 Mixes containing legumes must be planted by October 1, 2015.

## GUIDELINES AND CONDITIONS

- 🔧 Plant cover crops after corn, soybeans, sorghum, tobacco or vegetables are harvested.
- 🔧 Five acre minimum; no acreage caps.
- 🔧 All seed purchased must be tested and labeled following Maryland Seed Law and Regulations.
- 🔧 Seed must be free of prohibited noxious weed seeds, have a minimum germination rate of 80 percent and have no more than 16 restricted noxious weeds per pound.
- 🔧 Homegrown seed must be tested for germination and noxious weeds by the Maryland State Seed Laboratory before planting.
- 🔧 Cost-share is available for seed testing. The current year's seed tag for all purchased seed must be attached to the fall certification.
- 🔧 Applicants must be in good standing with MACS and in compliance with the Maryland Nutrient Management Program.
- 🔧 Call or visit your local soil conservation district for full program details.

# Traditional

## TRADITIONAL COVER CROPS

Traditional cover crops may not be harvested, but may be grazed or chopped for on-farm livestock forage after becoming well established. These cover crops qualify for incentive payments when highly valued planting practices are used. Manure may be applied in the fall following Maryland's nutrient management requirements, however, no incentives are offered. Certify with the local soil conservation district within one week of planting and no later than November 12, 2015. Killdown/suppression must take place between March 1 and June 1, 2016.

TRADITIONAL COVER CROPS PAYMENT OPTIONS*	NO-TILL	CONVENTIONAL	BROADCAST WITH LIGHT, MINIMUM OR VERTICAL TILLAGE	AERIAL	BROADCAST STALK CHOP/ AERIAL GROUND
Base payment:	\$45/acre	\$45/acre	\$45/acre	\$50/acre	\$45/acre
Plant by October 1, <b>add:</b> or Plant by October 15, <b>add:</b>	\$20/acre \$10/acre	\$10/acre \$5/acre	\$10/acre \$5/acre	\$0/acre \$0/acre	\$0/acre \$0/acre
Plant fields where manure was used in spring, <b>add:</b>	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre
Plant in field with previous corn, tobacco or vegetable crop, <b>add:</b>	\$5/acre	\$5/acre	\$5/acre	\$5/acre	\$5/acre
Plant rye (no mixes), <b>add:</b>	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre	\$10/acre
Maximum Payment Amount:	\$90/acre	\$80/acre	\$80/acre	\$75/acre	\$70/acre

\*Legume mixes receive base rate only. They do not qualify for incentive payments.

# Harvest

## HARVESTED COVER CROPS

This program option is available to farmers who want to harvest their cover crops. Farmers should provide their best estimate of acres they plan to harvest on their applications.

- 🔧 **Payment:** \$25/acre
- 🔧 **Bonus Payment:** \$10/acre if rye is planted as the cover crop
- 🔧 **Acreage Cap:** None.
- 🔧 **Fertilizer Use:** After March 1, 2016. Early fertilization at green up is prohibited.
- 🔧 **Certification with local soil conservation district:** Within one week of planting and no later than November 12, 2015.

The 2015-2016 Cover Crop Program is administered by the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program and funded by the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and the Chesapeake Bay 2010 Trust Fund.