

Farm Agronomic Practice (FAP) Program



The Farm Agronomic Practice (FAP) grant program provides financial incentives to Vermont farms to implement soil-based agronomic practices that improve soil quality, increase crop production, and reduce erosion and agricultural waste discharges.

The FAP program also provides education and instructional activity grants to support outreach regarding the impacts of agricultural practices on water quality and current state agricultural water quality regulations.



Eligibility:

Vermont farms required to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices are eligible to apply for practice assistance.

Organizations and businesses providing educational events for Vermont farms are eligible to apply for educational or instructional activity assistance.

Program Information:

- Grants are limited to a maximum of \$10,000 per farm operation, per calendar year.
- Funding rates may change due to program demand and funding availability.
- Applications are due **June 15** for Rotational Grazing, **August 1** for cover cropping and fall manure injection, or **April 15** for spring practices.
- Please submit one application for all practices planned from January 1 to December 31.
- Claim Forms, including corresponding shapefiles or maps of the location of implemented practices, are required within 30 days of completing practice implementation or you may not be eligible for payment.
- Farms must be in good standing with the State of Vermont to be eligible for Water Quality Technical and Financial Assistance, as defined in 6 V.S.A. § 4802.
- Please note that submitting an application does not guarantee funding.

Eligible Practices:

- **Cover Crop**
- **Crop to Hay**
- **Rotational Grazing**
- **Conservation Tillage (No-Till)**
- **No-Till Pasture and Hayland Renovation**
- **Manure Injection**

Did you know that the FAP program can also support funding for educational events on agricultural water quality? [Check our website for more information!](#)

Applications can be found online at Agriculture.vermont.gov/fap or by contacting the Water Quality Division at (802) 828-2431.

Practice Requirements and Payment Rates:

Cover Cropping (\$30 per acre for broadcast or inter-seeded, and \$45 per acre for drilled or otherwise incorporated)

All cover crops must be seeded at highest recommended rate to provide effective soil coverage and must be in place during the non-growing season. Broadcast or inter-seeded seeding is expected to be completed by October 1st. Drilled and otherwise incorporated cover crops are expected to be completed by October 10th. If a farm applies for drilled cover crop and ends up broadcasting it, the state will pay at the broadcast rate. If a farm applies for broadcast cover crop and ends up drilling or incorporating it, the state will still pay at the broadcast rate.

Crop to Hay (\$35 per acre \$45 per acre with a nurse crop)

Land is eligible for a one-time payment only at the period of the rotation where annual crop land is seeded down into perennial forages for pasture, hay or biomass production. This practice does not apply to the establishment of annually planted and harvested food, fiber, or oilseed crops. Nurse crops such as oats, barley, or peas are intentionally planted alongside perennials to quickly establish soil cover and protect the crop during the early stages of establishment. Planting method and seeding rate must be appropriate for the seed type and provide full soil coverage.

Rotational Grazing (\$30 per acre)

Perennial pastures supporting ruminant livestock are eligible for payments on an annual basis if livestock are rotated at least twice per week and excluded from surface water, and if at least three inches residual vegetation is maintained after grazing. Livestock access to surface water at well-managed discrete watering areas and livestock crossings are allowable under this program only when no other available options exist. Grazing plans, grazing maps, and records that indicate livestock are rotated at least twice per week to adequately rested pastures are required. Land planted to annual crops within the past year or land cleared of forest within the last five years are not eligible.

No Till Crop Planting (\$15 per acre)

This program is limited to the planting of annual crops in a no-till system. A minimum of 30 percent of the soil surface must be covered by uniformly distributed plant residue after planting. There must not be any full-width soil disturbance performed from the time immediately following harvest or termination of one cash crop through harvest or termination of the next cash crop in the rotation, regardless of the depth of the tillage operation. Full-width harrowing, chisel plowing, field cultivating, tandem disking, or vertical tillage is not allowable under this practice. Cover crop planting must be drilled or broadcast, not otherwise incorporated. Manure injection with soil surface closure at time of injection is allowable under this practice.

No-Till Pasture and Hayland Renovation (\$30 per acre)

This program is limited to the use of no-till drill equipment and/or frost seeding to improve pastures and/or hayland without the use of tillage. Planting method should provide reasonable expectation of seed to soil contact. Seeding rates must provide full soil coverage and be adequate to accomplish improvement of forage/stands in pasture and hayland. Frost seeding must occur on non-snow-covered ground in March or April and include legumes in seed mix.

Manure Injection (\$25 per acre)

This program is limited to subsurface injection including disk, shank, and grassland manure injection, injected below soil surface simultaneously with a single implement. Chisel plowing or disk harrowing fields within two weeks of practice installation is not allowable. All manure injection must follow manure application standards of the Vermont Required Agricultural Practices rule including application of nutrients within agronomic recommendations.