

## 2022 AgCWIP RFP - Questions and Answers

### **Is the \$3m total funds available for two years or for four years?**

VAAFMM has allocated these funds over the next two years to support this funding opportunity, and additional funds may be available to support longer term proposals. As funding appropriations occur annually, the state may cancel an agreement if appropriations are not sufficient to support agreements that extend into more than one fiscal year.

### **Does geographic scope matter in the application?**

Yes, the geographic scope of needs in relation to water quality is relevant for application. Priority will be given to projects based on the geographic area being served. Priority will first be given based on the overall percentage of the project's focus occurring in priority watersheds in the following order: Lake Champlain, Lake Memphremagog, Connecticut River, and Hudson River. Secondly, projects will be ranked based on geographic priorities, as described and justified in the Grantee's project proposal, and how the proposed work will be available to that geographic area. Applicants are encouraged to use Total Maximum Daily Load and Tactical Basin Planning priority watersheds as they develop their proposals.

### **How are Water Quality education credits related to AgCWIP and what do they entail?**

The Agency encourages applications that include educational efforts that are likely to qualify for [water quality educational credits](#). The Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) require Certified Small Farm Operations, Medium Farm Operations, Large Farm Operations, and Custom Applicators obtain water quality educational credits.

### **What does implementation of a new practice look like?**

A new conservation practice would be considered a practice the farm has not tried before (e.g. manure injection), a change in a practice they are currently implementing (e.g. single species to multi species cover crop), or expansion of a practice (e.g. increase in reduced till planting from 30 to 150 acres) and the project has been **fully implemented**. This practice may or may not be cost shared through a State, Federal, or Private cost share program.

### **Can AgCWIP funds support speakers and pay host farmers?**

Yes, those would be eligible costs for educational and outreach activities.

**What types of students are included in outreach projects/events?** While students are not the primary target audience for this funding, educational programs that incorporate the next generation of farmers and landowners would be eligible, this includes students at any age.

### **Since technical support providers can provide trainings to both farmers and providers, can they both be covered under AgCWIP?**

Yes, an event or educational initiative may provide a credit opportunity for one or multiple target audiences via a single event or event series. Events targeting farmers or agricultural service providers would be eligible for AgCWIP funding. An example of this would be a specific event for custom manure applicators or certified technical service providers.

### **Can manure sampling technical assistance be covered under AgCWIP?**

Soil sampling and manure sampling costs are an eligible expense. The AgCWIP funds are competitive and encompass a wide variety of eligible activities. Applicants are advised to include relevant budget details

and justifications in your proposal, to provide details on the top priorities for your organization, how those connect to the States priorities, and how it will impact water quality.

**Is goCrop subsidization an eligible expense under AgCWIP?**

Yes, nutrient management software fees are an eligible expense. The AgCWIP funds are competitive and encompass a wide variety of eligible activities. Applicants are advised to include relevant budget details and justifications in your proposal, to provide details on the top priorities for your organization, how those connect to the States priorities, and how it will impact water quality.

**How should we consider cost of staffing? Should all personnel costs be under organizational capacity?**

In general, we recommend for the budget that staff time be accounted for per the activity area the staff will be working in. The narrative portions of the proposal can break down existing staff/positions either in the organizational capacity development section and/or in the activity area. If there is a new position being requested, we strongly encourage that be described in the organizational capacity development category. Regardless of where you describe the staff and activities that you are proposing through AgCWIP, we are asking for an organizational chart of staff roles within the AgCWIP program (this is described in the organizational capacity development sections of the RFP). The important piece to present clearly for any staff that will be supported through AgCWIP is who is doing what activities and how much of that activity.

An example of this recommended format would be: If your proposal included funds for a new 20 hr/week (0.5 FTE) that would be spending 50% of their time on organizing educational events and 50% of their time providing on-site technical assistance to farms, you would describe the new position in the Organizational Capacity Development category, reference the position and detail its scope of work in the education and outreach and technical assistance categories, and include the budget for the positions scope of work in the associated activity area budgets. Please note that activities such as attending staff trainings about agricultural water quality work are considered to be organizational capacity activities.

**Would hiring an administrative assistant be covered within Organizational Capacity?**

Yes, this could be an eligible activity so long as the scope of work is directly related to the goals of the AgCWIP program

**Where are the quality questions [performance measures] from previous reporting/tracking templates?**

These were removed since they were difficult for grantees to universally report on. This grant opportunity will focus on quantitative measures for larger scale reporting and ease for both AAFM and grantees. The list of performance measurements in the RFP are the final, universal measures that will be required, as applicable, for all selected projects. Although it is difficult to track and report qualitative measures (i.e. behavior and social change), applicants are highly encouraged to develop additional results based accounting measures to evaluate and improve water quality program efforts.

**Will we need to report on quantity/quality for every activity per the evaluation and reporting application template? *[question referencing a quantity/quality quadrant used as an example under the "Additional Activities" section of the Application Template]***

The quantity/quality quadrant in the Application Template is not required for every activity. This is only for activities that don't already have outlined performance measures described in the RFP.

**Will reporting be assessed by activity area in the same way as the initial budget proposal?**

Reporting and invoicing will be primarily based off deliverables by activity area rather than expenditure. In the proposal, we want to see how the activities and budget are broken down, but reporting will primarily be focused on progress towards achieving outcomes and outputs. However, the Agency may require expenditure as part of reporting requirements. This may be discussed during the development of grant agreements for proposals that are selected for funding.

**Is there a penalty for applying individually?**

No.

**In previous years, the agency asked us to complete a budget spreadsheet in a specific format. We didn't hear this mentioned during the informational webinar, and we see the table in the application template that looks like a much simpler version, so we just wanted to check in to confirm that we only need to do the table in the application template. Is that the case?**

The application template and proposal requirements do not require the detailed budget spreadsheet as part of the application. However, applicants selected for funding will likely be required to submit a detailed budget spreadsheet during the negotiation and development of the agreements. Please reach out to the program administrator if you would like to receive a copy of this budget spreadsheet.