

## Farmstead Best Management Practices (BMP) Program and Agricultural Engineering Services



### EQIP-Assist Program

- Applications accepted on a rolling basis
- Apply when a farmer has ranked out for an EQIP contract

Financial assistance available for farmers implementing a project with the USDA NRCS EQIP Program, to provide payment on up to 90% of eligible costs, not to exceed \$200,000, nor exceed the sum of the federal contribution on state BMP eligible practices.

For example, if a federal contract is providing 45% of project costs, the state cannot pay any more than 45% of eligible project costs even if it is under the \$200,000 cap.

### Technical Assistance Program

- Applications accepted on a rolling basis
- Highly recommend farmers apply for technical assistance as soon as they are aware of a water quality issue

Technical assistance available to Vermont farmers for a variety of engineering services, often in preparation for implementation of structural water quality improvements.

1. Engineering Consultations
2. Design Services for a Farmstead BMP Project
3. Water Quality Compliance Consultation
4. State Permitting Consultation
5. State Variance Consultation

### Farmstead Best Management Practices (BMP) Program

- April 1st deadline for assistance
- Preliminary design and cost estimate must be completed by a qualified designer or engineering professional prior to application

Financial assistance, up to \$100,000, is available for Vermont farmers who are ready to implement a water quality improvement project.

Examples of conservation practices eligible for cost share through the Farmstead BMP Program:

- Laneway development & stream crossings
- Exclusion fencing & watering facilities
- Milk house waste collection & treatment
- Silage leachate collection & treatment
- Manure storage
- Composting stack pad
- Barnyard runoff collection
- Gutter / ditch clean water diversion



**Eligibility:**

Farms required to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices are eligible to apply.

Please note the following information about this grant program:

- BMP projects are only eligible for State cost share dollars if they meet the design standards and specifications established by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or are designed and certified by a professional engineer licensed in the State of Vermont and are equivalent to the federal performance standards and specifications.
- All practices are eligible to receive up to 90% cost share.
- Cost share rates vary based on proposed plan for practice implementation.
- Application does not ensure an award.
- Grant agreements must be in place prior to the start of construction.
- Farmer receives reimbursement upon certified project completion and is responsible for the cost of the project during construction.
- Final payment is determined by actual project costs as documented by itemized invoices.
- Farmer's equipment and labor costs are eligible for reimbursement.

**Applications can be found online at [Agriculture.vermont.gov/bmp](https://agriculture.vermont.gov/bmp) or by contacting the Water Quality Division at (802) 828-2431.**