



Check out our
Cover Crop Grants

WHY COVER CROPS?



Cover crops are important to the health of the Chesapeake Bay and the productivity of Maryland's farmland...



We offer cost-share grants to help farmers plant cold-hardy cereal grains, legumes, and other fall cover crops following the harvest of summer crops.



As cover crops grow, they recycle unused plant nutrients, prevent erosion, and improve the soil for spring crops. Cover crops also help remove carbon dioxide—a greenhouse gas—from the air and protect farm fields from too much or too little rain.

What You Need to Know:

- Our cost-share grants help pay for seed and planting costs for many types of fall cover crops.
- You can apply for our grants at your local soil conservation district during the annual enrollment window. This usually takes place in late June and early July.
- Cost-share rates vary from year to year—in recent years, farmers have received up to \$100 per acre with incentives to plant cover crops.



Eligible Cover Crop Species

- **Cereal Grains:** Wheat/Spelt, Rye, Barley, Triticale, Oats, and Ryegrass
- **Brassicas:** Forage Radish and Canola/Rape
- **Legumes:** Clover, Austrian winter peas, and hairy vetch (must be planted as part of a cereal grain mix)



Helpful Guidelines

- Plant cover crops after corn, soybeans, sorghum, tobacco, vegetables, hemp, or millet.
- You can use the following planting methods: no-till, conventional till, broadcast/light tillage, broadcast/stalk chopping and aerial seeding.
- No acreage caps, but there is a 10-acre minimum.
- Follow Maryland Seed Law and Regulations if you plan to use homegrown seed.
- Cost-share is available for seed testing.
- You must be in good standing with the Conservation Grants and Nutrient Management programs.
- Additional conditions may apply.



Planting Deadlines and Incentives

You'll need to get your cover crop planted by early November to qualify for payment and ensure success. Additional incentives are available if you plant your cover crop by October 10 and terminate it after May 1.



Fall Management Options

Cover crops may be grazed or chopped for on-farm livestock forage after becoming well-established. You may apply manure in the fall following Maryland's nutrient management regulations and cover crop program guidelines.



Certification Requirement

You'll need to certify planted acres with your local soil conservation district within one week of planting and after kill down or suppression.



Contractor Planting Directory

Our website has a directory of contractors that you can hire to plant cover crops for you.

Scan the QR code
with your mobile device for
the latest sign-up details.



mda.maryland.gov/conservation



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

Cover Crop Program

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