

COVER CROP **plus**

A SPECIAL GRANT PROGRAM FOR SOIL HEALTH FARMERS

FARMERS...

How would you like to earn higher incentives to plant cover crops in your fields to improve soil health?

Cover Crop Plus+ offers higher incentive payments to farmers who use enhanced cover crop practices to encourage greater biodiversity and increased residue management to improve soil health.

HOW IT WORKS

- You agree to plant cover crops on the same fields for 3 consecutive years.
- Cover crops must be planted within 10 days of harvesting or terminating the previous crop or planted "green" into a standing crop to maintain near year-round living roots in the soil. The planting deadline is **October 15**.
- You must plant multispecies cover crops, with cereal grain or ryegrass making up at least 50% of the mix and a legume making up at least 25%.
- Only no-till or conservation tillage may be used throughout the 3-year contract. (30% residue)
- To qualify for payment, optional add-ons must be new practices not used in the previous 3 years on an enrolled field. After 3 years, you may re-enroll in the optional practices.

COVER CROP PLUS+ RATE CHART WITH ADD-ON PRACTICES

PRACTICE	PAYMENT RATE
Base Rate Cover Crop Plus+ with Conservation Tillage (30% residue).	\$125/acre (per year)
Option 1: Integrate Livestock into Cropland Graze a well-established cover crop.	\$15/acre
Option 2: PSNT (Pre-Sidedress Soil Nitrate Test) Use the PSNT to determine nutrient applications and timing for corn fields that have received organic nitrogen sources.	\$15/acre
Option 3: Plant a Cover Crop After Harvesting Commodity Wheat or Barley Plant a multispecies cover crop immediately following the harvest of wheat or barley. Must maintain a viable cover crop throughout the summer, fall, and winter, until the next spring.	\$25/acre
Maximum Payment	\$180/acre

HOW TO APPLY COVER CROP PLUS+

- Visit mda.maryland.gov/conservation to download the application from the website.
- Apply for this grant through your local soil conservation district from **June 21 through July 17, 2024**.
- District staff will guide you through enrollment and help you plan your soil health practices.



Maryland
Department of Agriculture

Office of Resource Conservation

50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
mda.maryland.gov/conservation
410-841-5864

Apply at your
soil conservation
district
by July 17