

Conservation Programs

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in partnership with the Charles Soil Conservation District and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has several programs to assist with the installation of best management practices on agricultural lands.

Conservation planning is the first step when considering installing best management practices. Charles SCD staff will work with you to identify your resources and suggest solutions to your resource concerns. In some situations you may wish to participate in either the NRCS or State of Maryland cost share programs.

Many of the same best management practices are offered under several programs. Our staff can help you to determine the best option for your operation.

NRCS programs that might be of interest to you are:

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP): the objects of WHIP are the restoration and management of upland and wetland habitats. Practices include but are not limited to:

- Plantings of grasses, trees
- restoration of wetland habitats

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): the objectives of EQIP provide assistance to install and maintain conservation practices that enhance soil, water and related resources (including grazing lands, wetland and wildlife habitats). Practices include:

- Animal waste storage
- Pasture plantings
- Livestock watering systems
- Wind break/shelter belts
- Residue and tillage management, no-till
- Enhanced nutrient management
- Transition to organic production

Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost – Share Program (MACS): the objective of the MACS program is to control and reduce agriculturally related water pollution from erosion, animal wastes and nutrients. Practices include but are not limited to:

- Grass waterways
- Filter strips
- Roof runoff
- Heavy use areas
- Fencing animals out of streams and ponds

Advance planning for your farm operation is vital to assuring that you can achieve the greatest benefit from these cost share programs. So come in or call if you have a question or wish technical assistance from our staff.