

Approval of Language for Inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2023 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) BMP Manual

§ 10.1-505. Duties of Board.

In addition to other duties and powers conferred upon the Board, it shall have the following duties and powers:

3. To oversee the programs of the districts.

§ 10.1-546.1. Delivery of Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program.

Districts shall locally deliver the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program described under §10.1-2128.1, under the direction of the Board, as a means of promoting voluntary adoption of conservation management practices by farmers and land managers in support of the Department's nonpoint source pollution management program.

Recommended Motion:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (Board) approves the following language for inclusion in the Guidelines Section of the 2023 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) BMP Manual. Additionally, Districts are authorized to immediately enter into partnerships with non-profit conservation organizations to provide additional reimbursement opportunities to producers in accordance with the approved language, the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) BMP Manual, and any additional guidance provided by either this Board or the Department.

Districts ~~and, federal agencies or other conservation organizations~~ may choose to combine resources to fund mutually high priority practices up to a maximum state and federal cost-share rate as listed in the VACS BMP specifications. Other sources of funding, including funding from local sources, ~~and private sources~~, and non-profit conservation organizations, may provide additional reimbursement opportunities in addition to the rates listed in the VACS BMP specifications, up to 100% cost-share or greater. Experience has shown that a contribution towards implementing the practice by the participant encourages the long-term maintenance of the practice. Districts are encouraged to meet with local conservation workgroups to discuss funding options, priorities, and program administration. In addition, Districts may use locally-approved current commercial rates (e.g. seed, lime, fertilizer, machinery, and labor), District approved unit cost, or statewide average costs to establish estimates for eligible practice components.