

CENTRAL FLORIDA SPRINGS REGION AGRICULTURAL BMP COST SHARE PROGRAM

75% REIMBURSEMENT UP TO \$15,000*



Applicant Handbook

July 2014 - June 2015

***Up to \$50,000 for some approved practices**

CENTRAL FLORIDA SPRINGS REGION BMP COST SHARE PRAGRAM

Administered by

Marion Soil and Water Conservation District

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1.0 Introduction

This handbook provides guidance to applicants wishing to obtain funding under the Central Florida Springs Region Best Management Practices (BMP) Cost Share Program. An application and procedures for filing it are included in this handbook. Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) have been authorized to provide program funds on behalf of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).

2.0 Program Purpose

The Central Florida Springs Region BMP Cost Share Program was established to promote BMPs that provide overall water resource benefits. Through the program, FDACS will reimburse producers, through the Marion SWCD, for selected agricultural practices that have potential sediment control, water conservation and/or water quality improvement benefits. It is anticipated the program will provide farm managers and owners with economic incentives to facilitate implementation of FDACS-adopted BMPs. FDACS funding levels may vary year-to-year, dependent upon the State of Florida program allocations.

3.0 BMP Benefits

BMP measures are not regulatory in nature. However, producers who choose to participate in BMPs are required by FDACS to maintain records and provide documentation regarding BMP implementation, as provided in the relevant BMP manual. Benefits of BMP implementation include:

- Improved animal health
- Improved land and water resource protection
- Presumption of compliance with state water quality standards
- Reduced environmental impacts
- Opportunity to receive cost share reimbursements
- Opportunity for industry self-regulation.

4.0 Qualification Requirements

- To be eligible to request cost-share payments under this contract, the participant must own or lease a farming operation within the Central Florida Springs Region; this includes all of Marion County and portions of Levy, Lake and Alachua Counties.
- Qualifying sites must be in regulatory compliance to receive reimbursement. Program funding may not be used to purchase equipment necessary to satisfy regulatory requirements or permitting conditions.
- Applicants must enroll in one of the FDACS adopted BMP manuals that apply to their operation, by submitting a "Notice of Intent" (NOI) to implement BMPs along with the BMP checklist. **The applicant must provide a copy of this NOI with his/her application.** Visit <http://freshfromflorida.com/water/bmp/> for enrollment information.

Partial or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. However, program staff will make every effort to assist applicants in completing their application. In addition, a simple budget that corresponds with each BMP must be included on the application form (see *Appendix A*).

A producer with an approved application must sign a Cost Share Agreement in order to be reimbursed. Work begun and any expenditure made prior to the execution of the Cost Share Agreement will not be reimbursed.

5.0 Cost Share Rates and Eligible Practices

Payments will be made based upon the receipt of invoices with appropriate documentation attached. (See *Appendix D* for more information).

Cost share funds are available through this program for each of the practices listed below. The program cost share rate represents the percentage of the total BMP cost to be paid through the program. Cost share reimbursement is capped at **75%** of receipt-verified cost of eligible items, with a maximum payout of **\$15,000*** per farm.

*For certain approved BMPs, the payout may be as high as \$50,000.

Table 5.0 Eligible Cost Share Practices and Maintenance Periods

Irrigation Management	Maintenance Period
Irrigation system retrofits	3 years
Backflow prevention devices	3 years
Soil moisture measuring probes	3 years
Weather station and associated equipment	3 years
Water table observation wells	3 years
Nutrient-Reduction Projects and Practices	
Soil and/or tissue testing to determine fertilizer recommendations	3 years
Petiole sap tests/equipment	3 years
EC/salinity measuring devices or equivalent technologies	3 years
Nurse tank and injection pump for fertigation	3 years
Automated fertigation and irrigation controllers for drip systems	3 years
Variable rate and section control technology	3 years
SPAD meter or other similar equipment	3 years
Cardy meters or other similar proven equipment	3 years
Global Positioning System (GPS) units	3 years
One year of manure testing	NA
Compost bins/facilities	3 years
Pasture Management/Erosion Control	
Cross fencing for rotational grazing	3 years
Fencing for exclusion from watercourses, lakes, wetlands, drinking water wells, sinkholes, riparian areas, and springs	3 years
Pasture seeding for denuded areas	2 years
Replacement soil to fill eroded areas, and divert water (terraces, swales or berms) prior to seeding or sprigging	3 years
Mobile hay/feed bins	3 years
Pasture management equipment	3 years
Conservation tillage equipment	3 years

Stormwater Management	Maintenance Period
Gutters	3 years
French drain pipe/boxes	3 years
Detention/retention systems	3 years
Water control structures	3 years
Aggregate or impervious surfaces for high-intensity areas and crossings – materials, associated hauling and spreading cost	2 years
Joint or regional water management projects	3 years
Sediment traps	3 years
Culverts - costs associated with pipes, fill materials, hauling, spreading and compacting	3 years
Installation of vegetative buffers	2 years
Alternative Water Sources	
Well construction	3 years
Electric or solar pump	3 years
Concrete collar for wells	3 years
Automatic shut-off devices	3 years
Pipe and fittings	3 years
Trough and trough stabilization materials	3 years
Closed-pipeline water delivery/tailwater recovery	3 years
Other approved projects, must demonstrate water quality/conservation benefits	

6.0 Application and Reimbursement Procedure

- Step 1: The applicant should schedule a pre-application meeting with FDACS (*see Section 8.0, "Primary Contacts" below*).
- Step 2: Complete the cost share application (*Appendix A*), indicate the BMPs to be implemented, and include an itemized budget (example *Appendix B*).
- Step 3: Provide a copy of your "Notice of Intent" (NOI) to implement BMPs or contact FDACS staff to arrange for enrollment.
- Step 4: Following successful qualification and Marion SWCD approval, a Cost Share Agreement (*example Appendix C*) will be signed by the applicant and executed by the Cost Share Administrator. Execution of the Agreement serves as authorization to proceed with implementation of the approved practice(s) or project(s).
- Step 5: Applicant will notify program staff upon completion and schedule an inspection of the implemented practices or projects performed, according to his/her Cost Share Agreement. A "Request for Cost Share Payment" form (*Appendix D*) will be completed and signed by the applicant at the time of inspection. Program staff will provide this form to the Cost Share Administrator for payment with copies of all applicable receipts and proof of payment.
- Step 6: Program staff may periodically conduct site visits to verify BMPs are being maintained. Applicants will be required to reimburse the State on a pro-rated basis for cost share funding received for any practice that is improperly maintained, removed, and/or destroyed before the end of the maintenance period.

7.0 Key Participating Agencies and Organizations

- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)
- Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- University of Florida / Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS)

8.0 Primary Contacts/ Program Staff

FDACS, Office of Agricultural Water Policy

Carol Johnson, Environmental Specialist II

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Marion SWCD

Ann Bishop, Administrator

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APPENDIX A

Cost-Share Agreement for the Implementation of Water Quality and/or Conservation Best Management Practices

This Agreement is between the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and

Producer (legal business name): _____ FEIN or SS# _____ County: _____ NOI#: _____ Producer Address: _____ _____
Location/Parcel ID#s: _____
Producer's Project Manager: _____ Address: _____ Telephone No: _____ (office) _____ (cell) Fax No: _____ Email: _____
SWCD Representative: _____ Address: _____ Telephone No: _____ (office) _____ (cell) Fax No: _____ Email: _____ Submit Invoice Originals and Copies to: _____ FDACS Contact: _____ Telephone No: _____ (office) _____ (cell) Fax No: _____

In consideration of the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that provide for proper management of nutrients and irrigation as identified in the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) manual, *Water Quality/Quantity Best Management Practices for* _____ or Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Plan, the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (hereinafter referred to as "SWCD") agrees to provide cost-share to _____ (hereinafter referred to as "PRODUCER") for BMPs/materials/equipment as listed in this Agreement for that acreage. PRODUCER agrees to manage according to the BMP Manual or site-specific NRCS Conservation Plan.

PRODUCER warrants that:

1. I have control, for the duration of this Agreement, of the property for which the specified BMPs/materials/equipment will be funded under this Agreement. *Note: If property is leased, provide beginning and ending years of the lease agreement:* _____

2. I have submitted a Notice of Intent to implement the applicable practices in the FDACS _____ manual.
3. I agree to periodic BMP Implementation Assurance Reviews by FDACS staff or representatives, including a review of any record keeping.
4. Any practices installed under this Agreement will be in compliance with the applicable FDACS BMP manual or NRCS conservation plan and the laws of the State of Florida. Practices will be maintained for a period of at least three (3) years after their installation.
5. I have provided to FDACS at least 2 formal estimates from my suppliers/service providers of the costs of the eligible BMPs/materials/equipment for which I have requested funding, prior to their purchase or implementation.
6. FDACS staff shall have reasonable access to the property where the practices will be implemented, before, during, and after implementation.
7. In the event it is determined that I have violated the terms of this Agreement, I agree to reimburse the amount received under this Agreement related to the specific items to which the violation pertains.

The items to be cost shared under this Agreement are:

Funding Source: _____

Items to be Cost Shared under this Agreement	Estimated Project Cost	Estimated Payment to Producer*

*Payment will be based on estimated cost.

In consideration of the foregoing, **subject to the availability of funds, and on a first-come, first-served basis**, SWCD will reimburse PRODUCER up to 75% of the total cost for BMP/project materials and construction, with a maximum payment as listed in **Attachment A** unless approved in writing by the FDCAS Project Manager. This percentage shall be calculated in combination with other cost-share sources, and payment shall not exceed this percentage or maximum amount per producer, unless approved in writing by FDACS. Payment will be made within forty-five (45) days with receipt of an executed FDACS BMP Certification/Request for Cost-Share Payment form and adequate supporting documentation. PRODUCER will be responsible for the remaining costs of purchase and implementation. If funds become unavailable within the fiscal year that eligible costs are invoiced, payment may be made in the subsequent fiscal year, provided that the funds are available and the terms of this Agreement are met.

This Agreement is executed as of the last date of the required signatures, and shall remain in effect for three (3) years from the date of certification of final BMP installation and/or equipment delivery.

I have read the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and accept and agree to them.

PRODUCER NAME (print): _____

d/b/a: _____

PRODUCER SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

ACCEPTED BY: Marion Soil and Water Conservation District

NAME/TITLE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Date of final BMP installation and/or equipment delivery certification:

FDACS Employee (Print)

Signature

Date

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE ITEMIZED BUDGETS

VigorGro Nursery

Item Description	Number	Cost/Unit	Cost
1" Poly tube white stripe 660'	48 coils	\$86.00	\$4,128.00
Aquamaster 2005 micro sprklr	1,600	\$1.78	\$2,848.00
1" Lesco insert couplings	100	\$0.65	\$65.00
1" Lesco tee	50	\$1.28	\$64.00
1" Crimps	2	\$13.50	\$27.00
Estimated Total Cost			\$7,132.00
Estimated Cost-Share Reimbursement at 75%*			\$5,349.00
Estimated Producer Cost			\$1,783.00

Sure Foot Farm, Inc.

CROSS FENCE AND FOUR-BIN COMPOST FACILITY WITH ROOF

Item Description	Number	Cost/Unit	Cost
No-climb fence	1,000 linear feet	\$ 1.35 per foot	\$1,350.00
Fence posts	125	\$11.99	\$1,498.75
Staples	1 tub	\$36.99	\$36.99
12' gate	2	\$145.00	\$290.00
12'X4'X4' post	6	\$14.97	\$89.82
14'X4'X4' post	6	\$17.50	\$105.00
12'X2'X6' board	24	\$7.57	\$181.68
12' gutter	4	6.28	\$25.12
Down spout and hardware			\$38.57
Corrugated roof panels	16	\$15.72	\$251.52
Nails	2 boxes	\$19.97	\$39.94
Hurricane straps	16	\$1.68	\$26.88
Landscape timber	140	\$3.57	\$499.80
5/16"X 5 1/2" lag screws	12 boxes	\$1.83	\$21.96
Concrete	1.58 yards	\$75.00	\$118.50
Estimated Total Cost			\$4,574.53
Estimated Cost Share Reimbursement at 75%*			\$3,430.90
Estimated Producer Cost			\$1,143.63

*PAYMENT WILL BE BASED ON ESTIMATED COST

APPENDIX C

BMP CERTIFICATION AND REQUEST FOR COST-SHARE PAYMENT							
MARION SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT							
<u>Landowner/Operator Information</u> Name: Operation Name: Mailing Address:				FDACS Contract #			
				Producer Project #			
				Payment #:			
				SWCD Check #:			
				Date Paid:			
				FDACS Evaluator:			
BMP Name	Item Description	Total Cost	Payment@ 75%	Or Maximum \$ Amount Allowed	Amount Reimbursed		Verification Method
				Total	\$		
VERIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE I certify that the BMPs or equipment, or portions thereof, as indicated on this form, have been implemented on the property described herein and payment made by me. _____ Landowner/Operator Signature _____ Date				I certify that the BMPs or equipment, or portions thereof, as indicated on this form, have been implemented/ received on the property described herein. _____ Evaluator Signature _____ Date			