

Sussex Conservation District Cover Crop Referral Program – Pilot

Purpose of the Pilot Program is to reach farmers that do not currently plant cover crops as part of their operation, and to provide them with an incentive to try planting cover crops to help Delaware meet its water quality goals of 240,000 acres of cover crops statewide. To reach that goal, we need to reach those farmers that do not plant cover crops as part of their operation and do not typically participate in our programs.

Eligibility: Farmers that have not planted cover crops or received funding from any program to plant cover crops in the past. Any farmer that refers a new applicant to the SCD program will be eligible for payment.

Cost-Share Component: Provide current cover crop participants a referral payment of \$500 to bring a farmer to SCD to enroll in SCD's cover crop program. If the new farmer enrolls in the program, they will also receive an incentive payment of \$500 once they complete the program. Completing the program means they have certified in writing the planting and destruction of the cover crops.

Payment: The new farmer must plant and destroy the cover crops to be eligible for the payment. Once the destruction certification has been submitted and verified, SCD will pay the new farmer \$500 and the referring farmer \$500. Full payments will be made in the spring once destruction certifications have been completed.

There is no limit to the number of referrals a farmer can make.

Program Rules:

- Payments will be made to both the new participant and the referring producer after the new participant satisfies all program requirements in the spring.
- A minimum of 10 new acres must be enrolled, planted, and destroyed to qualify both parties for the incentive payment.
- Family members are not eligible for the referral program. (i.e., father refers child or siblings). Some exceptions may apply and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- Past participants cannot sign-up new tracts/fields even if they have never had cover crops planted on those tracts/fields.