

Agricultural Management Assistance Program

2010 New Jersey FACT SHEET

The Agricultural Management Assistance program (AMA) is a voluntary program only available in sixteen states. In New Jersey, the program specifically targets beginning and limited resource farmers, small farms, and producers who have had limited participation in other USDA financial assistance programs.

Applicants must have current crop and producer records on file with USDA's Farm Service Agency. They must own or control the land, agree to implement specific eligible conservation practices according to the contract schedule, and qualify for farmland assessment. In addition, applicants who meet at least 3 or more of the 6 criteria listed below automatically receive consideration for funding as a medium (3 criteria) or high (4 or more criteria) priority application.



The criteria for AMA are:

1. Average annual gross farm sales \$70,000 or less for the last three years
2. Total farm acreage of less than 50 of specialty/vegetable crops/pasture OR less than 200 of any other crops
3. USDA program payments less than \$10,000 (total) over the last five years
4. Production income more than 75% of the total household income (for the previous tax year)
5. Farm Operating Loan (private or government) used to support the beginning farm operation within the last 10 years
6. Rented acreage totals more than 50% of the total production acreage of the farm

What are the Payment Rates and Terms?

There is a statutory annual program payment limitation of \$50,000 per person per year. However, New Jersey has capped the total amount awarded in a contract in 2010 to \$50,000, due to limited program funding.

Individual practice payment rates are calculated at between 50% and 75% of the typical cost of implementing the practice in New Jersey. If the applicant is a beginning farmer, socially disadvantaged or limited resource producer, the rates are 25% higher, up to a maximum of 90%.

Payments are made after conservation practices are implemented to the standards agreed to in advance. Projected payments in the approved conservation program contract are based on practice extent and not cost. Payments are made after conservation practices are fully implemented.

Producers may contribute to the cost of a practice through in-kind sources, including personal or donated labor and use of personal equipment, as long as the value of the contribution is documented.

For More Information or to Sign Up, Contact Your Local USDA Service Center:

Burlington, Camden and Ocean counties

Columbus Service Center (1971 Jacksonville-Jobstown Rd)

Telephone: (609) 267-1639

Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties

Frenchtown Service Center (687 Pittstown Rd Suite 2)

Telephone: (908) 782-4614

Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties

Vineland Service Center (1317 South Main Rd. Bldg 3)

Telephone: (856) 205-1225

Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth counties

Freehold Service Center (4000 Kozloski Road)

Telephone: (732) 462-0075

Bergen, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties

Hackettstown Service Center (Bldg #1, 101 Bilby Road)

Telephone: (908) 852-2576

Gloucester and Salem counties

Woodstown Service Center (51 Cheney Road, Suite 2)

Telephone: (856) 769-1126

What Practices Can Receive Funding?

New Jersey has developed program categories around the five national priority areas for the AMA program. Practices may address more than one national priority.

Category	Eligible Practices on Cropland	Eligible Practices on Grazing Land
Reduction in non-point source pollutants	Cover Crop, Field Border, Filter Strip, Nutrient Management, Pest Management, Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat	Stream Crossing, Access Control, Livestock Watering System, Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat Supporting practices: Fence, Pipeline, Well
Irrigation water use efficiency	Irrigation Systems (Micro-irrigation or Sprinkler), Irrigation Water Management Supporting practices: Irrigation Water Pipe	
Reduction in particulate or ozone precursor emissions	Cover Crop, Nutrient Management, Pest Management, Windbreak Establishment	Renewable power source for Livestock Watering System, Prescribed Grazing, Windbreak Establishment
Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation	Cover Crop, Nutrient Management, Residue Management (No Till)	Animal Trails and Walkways, Pasture Planting, Prescribed Grazing
Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation	Conservation Cover, Field Border, Filter Strip, Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat, Windbreak Establishment	Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat, Windbreak Establishment



Filter strips and field borders capture sediment and provide habitat for pollinators



Nutrient management can reduce energy use on the farm, saving time and money



Permanent covers protect the land from erosion and reduce evapotranspiration

How Does Signup for AMA Work?

Interested applicants can review the program information available at www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ama, and should request a new or updated conservation plan for their farm. A signed application can be filed with the local NRCS office at any time.

Applications are grouped for ranking normally once a year. A contract offer is developed based on the conservation plan, and is ranked on how well the proposed practices meet national, state, and local environmental objectives, as well as their cost-efficiency.

The state objectives of the AMA program in NJ include environmental risk factors of the applicant land area, such as distance to bodies of water and pollution potential from nutrients leaching into groundwater.

There are two ranking areas in New Jersey. Applications from Sussex, Warren, Morris, Passaic, Bergen, Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties are grouped into one area for ranking. The rest of the state is grouped into a second area. The funds awarded to each area are determined by the State Technical Committee on an annual basis.

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