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# EQIP

## Environmental Quality Incentive Program

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### Program Guidance - 2006 New Jersey EQIP Program

Agricultural producers can apply for cost-sharing payment assistance for any practice listed in this document that is or will be included in the approved Conservation Plan for the farm. Each practice installed must meet the applicable FOTG Section IV Standard and Specification in order to receive the cost-share payment.

Producers must meet all application and eligibility requirements, including completion of the planning worksheets included in the workbook "*Applying for Financial Assistance for Land Stewardship and Conservation*", or have a recent Conservation Plan for the operation already approved. Producers must also meet all Highly Erodible Land and Adjusted Gross Income provisions, and update all farm and persons records with the Farm Service Agency before NRCS will process their application.

NRCS cost share rates are paid using one of three methods: FR (flat rate), AC (Average Cost), or AM (Actual Cost up to a Maximum). Contract participants will receive:

- FR - 100% of the cost rate, regardless of actual cost. Practices are generally related to crop management and must be newly established on the land under contract. Flat Rates are paid for a maximum of three years.
- AC - the specified percent of the component cost rate<sup>1</sup>, regardless of actual cost.
- AM - the specified percent of the component cost rate<sup>1</sup>, based on the actual cost of implementation, up a set maximum.

Limited Resource and/or Beginning Farmers and Ranchers will be eligible for cost share rates 30% higher than what is listed. (Example: systems listed below at 45% cost share will receive 75% for limited resource or beginning farmers; systems listed below at 60% cost share will receive 90%).

<sup>1</sup> Component cost rates are set on an annual basis, and are found in the *2006 Schedule of EQIP Program Costs* on the NJ EQIP web page ([www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/eqip/index.html](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/eqip/index.html))

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Conservation practices eligible for cost-share under the NJ-EQIP program in 2006 are listed alphabetically under the following groups:

**Cropland Practices, Irrigation Systems, Pasture or Grazing Land, Animal Waste Management, and Stormwater Runoff Control.**

More information about conservation practices can be found in the electronic Field Office Technical Guide ([www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/efotg](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/efotg)).

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## **CROPLAND PRACTICES:**

Practices normally associated with production agriculture, such as reduction of sheet and rill erosion, control of gullies, management and handling of nutrients and pesticides, management of soil organic matter, protection of surface and ground water resources, transition to organic production, control of airborne particulates, and installation of conservation buffers.

### **Agrichemical Handling Facility (45% AC)**

Install a permanent structure with an impervious surface to provide an environmentally safe area for the handling of on-farm agrichemicals, such as pesticides and fertilizers, which are used on agricultural lands.

### **Alley Cropping (FR)**

Plant trees or shrubs in a set or series of single or multiple rows with agronomic, horticultural crops or forages produced in the alleys between the rows.

### **Brush Management (45% AC)**

The removal of non-herbaceous plants in order to restore desired vegetative cover to protect soils, control erosion, reduce sediment, improve water quality and maintain or enhance wildlife habitat.

### **Conservation Cover (45% AC)**

Establish new permanent vegetative cover on cropland to protect soil and water resources.

### **Conservation Crop Rotation (FR)**

Establish a *new* crop rotation system, including the introduction of new, higher residue crops, in order to reduce or control sheet and rill erosion to the soil "T" level.

### **Contour Farming (FR)**

Establish a permanent system on cropland to till, plant, and perform other farming operations on or near the contour of the field slope to protect soil and water resources.

### **Contour Buffer Strips (FR)**

Establish narrow strips of permanent, herbaceous vegetation across the slope and alternate with wider cropped strips to reduce sheet and rill erosion, reduce transport of sediment and other contaminants, or to enhance wildlife habitat. Cost share is paid on the buffer strip portion of the field only.

### **Cover Crop (FR)**

Annually establish grasses or legumes for seasonal cover to reduce sheet and rill erosion, sequester carbon in plant biomass and soils, increase soil organic matter, capture and recycle excess nutrients, promote biological nitrogen fixation, or reduce particulate emissions into the atmosphere.

### **Critical Area Planting (60% AC)**

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of erosion control measures, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

### **Diversion (60% AC)**

A channel constructed across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side, constructed to interrupt water flow on long slopes, reduce runoff damages, or divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas.

### **Field Border (45% AC)**

Establish a strip of permanent vegetation at the edge or around the perimeter of a field to reduce erosion from wind and water, manage insect populations, or provide wildlife food and cover.

### **Filter Strip (45% AC)**

Establish herbaceous vegetation in a strip between cropland and sensitive areas to reduce sediment, organics and dissolved contaminant loadings in runoff, serve as Zone 3 of a Riparian Forest Buffer, or create herbaceous habitat for beneficial insects.

### **Grade Stabilization Structure (60% AC)**

A structure installed to control the grade and head cutting in natural or artificial channels as part of an approved erosion control system.

### **Grassed Waterway (60% AC)**

Construction of a graded channel stabilized with suitable vegetation to convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations or to control gully erosion.

### **Hedgerow Planting (45% AC)**

Establish dense vegetation in a linear design to provide food, cover and corridors for terrestrial wildlife, living fences, contour guidelines, or screens and barriers to noise and dust.

### **Lined Waterway or Outlet (60% AC)**

A waterway or outlet with an erosion resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic fabrics or other permanent material, installed to provide for safe conveyance of runoff from conservation structures or water concentrations, or to treat existing gully erosion.

### **Mulching (60% AC)**

Apply plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface to conserve soil moisture, moderate soil temperature, provide erosion control, suppress weed growth, establish vegetative cover, improve soil condition and increase soil fertility, as part of an erosion control or organic farming system.

### **Nutrient Management (FR)**

A management system that controls the amount, source, placement, form and timing of nutrient applications at either a basic or advanced level (two payment rates are offered). The basic practice involves a nutrient budget and application record keeping system. The advanced practice involves more frequent monitoring of the soil system. Both practices include the proper use of manure or organic byproducts as a plant nutrient source, and improvement in the physical, chemical and biological condition of soil.

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## Cropland Practices, continued...

### **Obstruction Removal** (60% AC)

Removal and disposal of unwanted or hazardous buildings, structures, vegetation, landscape features, and other materials in order to facilitate the installation of new erosion control measures.

### **Pest Management** (FR)

A management system that uses environmentally sensitive prevention, avoidance, monitoring and suppression strategies to manage weeds, insects, and diseases at either a basic or advanced level (two payment rates are offered). The basic practice involves crop scouting, economic threshold evaluations and application record keeping. The advanced practice involves more intensive use of tools, including computer programs, to reduce impacts further.

### **Residue Management, Mulch-Till** (FR)

Establish a *new* tillage system that manages the amount, orientation and distribution of crop and other plant residues on the soil surface until just prior to planting in order to reduce sheet and rill erosion to the soil "T" level. Residues must provide a minimum 30% soil surface coverage until time of planting.

### **Residue Management, No-Till /Direct Seed** (FR)

Establish a *new* tillage system that manages the amount, orientation and distribution of crop and other plant residues on the soil surface year-round, while growing crops in narrow slots or residue-free strips in soil previously untilled by full-width inversion implements, in order to reduce or control sheet and rill erosion to the soil "T" level.

### **Riparian Herbaceous Cover** (45% AC)

Establish grasses and forbs that are tolerant of intermittent flooding or saturated soils in riparian areas to provide food and shelter for wildlife, to reduce the amount of sediment and other pollutants, to help stabilize stream bank and shorelines, or to increase net carbon storage in the biomass and soil.

### **Riparian Forest Buffer** (45% AC)

Establish an area of trees and/or shrubs adjacent to water bodies to lower water temperatures, improve habitat for aquatic organisms, provide a source of detritus and large woody debris for aquatic organisms, reduce excess amounts of sediment, organic material, nutrients, and pesticides in surface runoff and reduce excess nutrients and other chemicals in shallow ground water flow.

### **Spoil Spreading** (60% AC)

Proper disposal of surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved erosion control practices.

### **Streambank and Shoreline Protection** (45% AC)

Structural or bio-engineered treatments used to stabilize banks of streams or shorelines, reduce the offsite or downstream effects of sediment or to improve the stream corridor for fish and wildlife habitat.

### **Strip Cropping** (FR)

Establish *new* equal width strips of forages or small grains across a field with an alternating pattern of row crops to reduce sheet and rill erosion and the transport of sediment and other water-borne contaminants. Cost share is limited to the acres of narrow seeded crops on fields where soil loss is reduced to the soil "T" value.

### **Structure for Water Control** (60% AC)

A structure required as part of an erosion control system to control the direction or rate of water flow or maintain a desired water surface elevation.

### **Subsurface Drain** (45% AC)

Corrugated plastic tubing installed beneath the ground surface to control the water table in fields where a documented phytophthora problem is preventing implementation of a nutrient management system.

### **Terrace** (60% AC)

An earth embankment or a combination ridge and channel constructed across the field slope to reduce soil erosion or retain runoff for moisture conservation.

### **Underground Outlet** (60% AC)

A conduit installed beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water from terraces, diversions, surface drains or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

### **Vegetated Barriers** (45% AC)

Permanent strips of stiff, dense vegetation along the general contour of slopes or across concentrated flow area installed to reduce sheet and rill erosion, reduce ephemeral gully erosion, manage water flow, stabilize steep slopes, or trap sediment.

### **Windbreak or Shelterbelt Establishment** (45% AC)

Linear plantings of single or multiple rows of trees or shrubs established to provide shelter for livestock, living barriers to reduce airborne odors, particulates and chemical drift, or enhance wildlife habitat.

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## IRRIGATION SYSTEMS:

Land must have been irrigated at least 2 of the past 5 years to be eligible. In addition, all cost-shared irrigation systems must have an efficiency rating of at least 80%.

### **Critical Area Planting** (45% AC)

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of tailwater recovery systems, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

### **Grade Stabilization Structure** (45% AC)

A structure installed to control the grade and head cutting in natural or artificial channels installed as part of a tailwater recovery system.

### **Irrigation Water Conveyance** (45% AC)

Install permanent underground high-pressure pipeline and appurtenances as part of an approved irrigation system.

### **Irrigation System, Microirrigation** (45% AC)

An irrigation system for distribution of water directly to the plant root zone by means of surface or subsurface applicators, installed to uniformly apply irrigation water and maintain soil moisture for optimum plant growth, effectively apply agricultural chemicals, or reduce particulate matter emissions.

### **Irrigation System, Sprinkler** (45% AC)

An irrigation system installed to efficiently apply water by means of nozzles operated under pressure, uniformly apply irrigation water and maintain adequate soil water for optimum plant growth, effectively apply agricultural chemicals, or reduce particulate matter emissions.

### **Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery** (45% AC)

An irrigation system in which all facilities for the collection, storage, and transportation of irrigation tailwater have been installed to conserve irrigation water supplies and improve offsite water quality.

### **Irrigation Water Management (IWM)** (FR) *Required for all contracts with irrigation systems installed.*

A management system that controls the volume, frequency and application rate of irrigation water in a planned, efficient manner to match the crop need at various growth stages, the soil infiltration rate and soil water holding capacities. This practice requires the development of an IWM plan, soil moisture monitoring, and water application record keeping.

### **Irrigation Water Management Hardware** (45% AC)

Install meters, monitors, and other appurtenances that aid in the process of implementing an approved irrigation water management plan.

### **Lined Waterway or Outlet** (45% AC)

A waterway or outlet with an erosion resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic turf reinforcement fabrics or other permanent material, installed to provide for safe conveyance of runoff from tailwater recovery structures or water concentration areas.

### **Mulching** (45% AC)

Application of plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface to provide erosion control, suppress weed growth, or establish vegetative cover, required as part of a tailwater recovery system installation.

### **Obstruction Removal** (45% AC)

Removal and disposal of unwanted or hazardous buildings, structures, vegetation, landscape features, and other materials in order to facilitate the installation of new tailwater recovery practices.

### **Pond Sealing or Lining** (45% AC)

As part of a tailwater recovery basin, a manufactured hydraulic barrier consisting of a functionally continuous sheet of synthetic or partially synthetic, flexible material is installed to control seepage.

### **Precision Land Forming** (45% AC)

Re-grade the surface of the land to allow the implementation of other planned measures under an approved tailwater recovery system.

### **Pumping Plant** (45% AC)

A small pump installed to provide a dependable water source for irrigation. Cost share is limited to pumps of less than 5 HP permanently installed for micro-irrigation systems, or pumps required to move water through a tailwater recovery system.

### **Roof Runoff Structure** (45% AC)

Structures that collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs, installed as part of a tailwater recovery system.

### **Spoil Spreading** (45% AC)

Disposing of surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved tailwater recovery practices.

### **Structure for Water Control** (45% AC)

A structure required as part of a tailwater recovery system that controls the direction or rate of flow or maintains a desired water surface elevation.

### **Underground Outlet** (45% AC)

A conduit installed beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water from surface drains, lined waterways or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

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**PASTURE OR GRAZING LAND:** Practices normally associated with pasture based livestock operations, such as management of grass and water resources, protection of surface and ground water, reduction in soil compaction and erosion, and implementation of conservation buffers. Cost share is limited to practices designed for the number of animal units on the operation at the time of program application. Consideration will be given for variations in animal numbers normal for the operation. Waivers to this provision can be requested in writing to the state Program Manager.

**Air Resources Management (60% AC)**

Use solar energy to pump water to the livestock watering system. Includes solar pump with panel, controller, and back-up battery.

**Animal Trails and Walkways (60% AC)**

Establish travel ways that facilitate animal movement as per the approved Prescribed Grazing plan to provide or improve access to forage, water, and/or shelter, or to improve grazing efficiency and distribution.

**Brush Management (60% AC)**

Remove non-herbaceous plants to restore natural plant community balance, manage noxious woody plants, or improve forage accessibility, quality and quantity for livestock.

**Fence (60% AC)**

Used to divide an area of land with suitable, permanent fencing in order to improve distribution and timing of livestock grazing as part of establishing a Prescribed Grazing System.

**Filter Strip (45% AC)**

A strip or area of herbaceous vegetation established between grazing land and environmentally sensitive areas to reduce sediment, particulate organics and dissolved contaminant loadings in runoff, serve as Zone 3 of a Riparian Forest Buffer, or create herbaceous habitat for wildlife and beneficial insects.

**Heavy Use Area Protection (45% AC)**

The stabilization of areas with vegetative cover or other suitable materials to reduce soil erosion, improve air and water quality, or improve livestock health. Cost share is limited to areas surrounding livestock watering facilities treated with gravel, vegetation, or mulch.

**Pasture and Hayland Planting (60% AC)**

Plant adapted native or introduced forage species as part of a Prescribed Grazing system to improve livestock nutrition and/or health or extend the length of the grazing season. Cost share is limited to one planting per pasture area during the life of the contract.

**Pipeline (60% AC)**

Install permanent underground pipeline having an inside diameter of 8 inches or less to convey water from a supply source to points of use for livestock.

**Prescribed Grazing (FR)**

A management system that actively controls the harvest of vegetation with grazing animals in order to improve the health and vigor of forage plants, maintain a stable and desired plant community, improve animal health and productivity, improve water quality and quantity, reduce accelerated soil erosion, and improve soil condition.

**Pumping Plant for Water Control (60% AC)**

Install a pump to transfer water and provide a dependable livestock water source.

**Riparian Herbaceous Cover (45% AC)**

Establish grasses and forbs tolerant of intermittent flooding or saturated soils in riparian areas to provide food and shelter for wildlife, reduce the amount of sediment and other pollutants, help stabilize stream bank and shorelines, and increase net carbon storage in the biomass and soil.

**Riparian Forest Buffer (45% AC)**

Establish trees and/or shrubs adjacent to water bodies to lower water temperatures, improve habitat for aquatic organisms, reduce excess amounts of sediment, and organic material, nutrients, and pesticides in surface runoff.

**Spring Development (60% AC)**

Utilize available springs and seeps to provide water for livestock under a prescribed grazing system.

**Stream Crossing (60% AC)**

Construct a stabilized area across a stream to provide a travel way for livestock as required under an approved Prescribed Grazing system in order to reduce sediment, nutrient, and organic loading of the stream.

**Streambank and Shoreline Protection (45% AC)**

Structural or bio-engineered treatments used to stabilize banks of streams or shorelines, reduce the offsite or downstream effects of sediment or to improve the stream corridor for fish and wildlife habitat.

**Use Exclusion (60% AC)**

As part of establishing a Prescribed Grazing System, control livestock access to surface water areas through the use of fencing, including gates where necessary.

**Watering Facility (60% AC)**

A tank, trough, or other watertight container permanently installed to provide animal access to water and facilitate proper distribution of grazing, or to protect streams, ponds and water supplies from contamination.

**Water Well (60% AC)**

Install a *new* well, less than 6" in diameter, for the purpose of providing a livestock water source in order to facilitate the implementation of an approved Prescribed Grazing System.

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**ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT:** Practices related to the handling, transfer, and storage of animal waste products, and practices that separate clean water sources from contaminated water in areas where livestock congregate. Cost share is limited to practices designed for the number of animal units on the operation at the time of program application. Consideration will be given for variations in animal numbers normal for the operation. Waivers to this provision can be requested in writing to the state Program Manager.

**Note:** a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) is required for any contract that includes the storage of animal wastes produced on the farm. The CNMP will be developed by Rutgers with input from the producer, and approved by NRCS within 12 months of contract signing. All portions of the operation where waste is generated or applied, whether under the EQIP contract or not, must be included in the CNMP plan.

**Anaerobic Digester (60% AC)**

A waste treatment impoundment used to biologically treat waste and produce and capture biogas for energy, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Closure of Waste Impoundment (60% AC)**

The closure of waste lagoons and waste storage ponds, no longer used for their intended purpose, in an environmentally safe manner as part of an overall waste management system.

**Composting Facility (60% AC)**

A permanent facility to process raw manure into biologically stable organic material to reduce the pollution potential of organic agricultural wastes to surface and ground water.

**Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) (FR)**

Implement the record keeping and management elements of the approved CNMP. Payments will commence after all contracted conservation practices have been successfully implemented. The payment can be based on either the number of animal units that generate the waste, or the number of acres where the waste is utilized on the farm.

**Constructed Wetland (60% AC)**

A constructed shallow water ecosystem designed to simulate natural wetlands, installed to reduce the pollution potential of wastewater from agricultural lands.

**Critical Area Planting (60% AC)**

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of animal waste facilities, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

**Diversion (60% AC)**

A channel constructed across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side, constructed to divert water away from farmsteads or agricultural waste systems, reduce runoff damages from upland runoff, or divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas.

**Heavy Use Area Protection (45% AC)**

Stabilize areas suitable materials to reduce soil erosion, improve air and water quality, or improve livestock health. Cost share is limited to areas intensively used by animals during periods when pastures are not available, with the size based on the number of animal units that the available pasture normally supports during the growing season. Pavilion roofs will be cost shared only when other runoff control options are not feasible due to slope or soil limitations.

**Manure Transfer (60% AC)**

A conveyance system of structures or conduits to transfer animal manure (including bedding, spilled feed, wash water, and other residues) through a hopper or reception pit, conduit, and/or hauling equipment to a manure storage/treatment facility, loading area, or to agricultural land for final utilization.

**Pumping Plant (60% AC)**

A pump installed to transfer wastewater from source to storage areas and/or from storage areas to disposal sites.

**Roof Runoff Structure (60% AC)**

Structures that collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs, installed to prevent runoff contamination by animal wastes, improve water quality or reduce soil erosion.

**Spoil Spreading (45% AC)**

Disposing of surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved animal waste management practices.

**Solid/Liquid Separation Facility (60% AC)**

A filtration or screening device, settling tank, or settling basin used to separate a portion of solids from the liquid waste stream in order to better manage the associated nutrients.

**Underground Outlet (60% AC)**

A conduit installed underground to collect surface water from surface drains or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

**Waste Facility Cover (60% AM)**

A fabricated rigid, semi-rigid, or flexible membrane over a waste treatment or storage facility used for water quality improvement, air quality improvement, or capture of biogas for energy production.

**Waste Storage Facility (60% AC)**

A structure, embankment, or pit used to temporarily store wastes such as manure, wastewater, and contaminated runoff prior to its utilization on land or other proper disposal.

**Wastewater Treatment Strip (60% AC)**

A component of an agricultural waste management system; a strip or area of herbaceous vegetation installed to reduce the loading of nutrients, organics, pathogens, and other contaminants associated with animal manure.

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**STORM WATER MANAGEMENT:** Practices associated with meeting the requirements of NJ Stormwater regulations. Cost share is authorized for treating impervious surfaces that were in existence on the effective date of the NJ Stormwater Management Rules only (February 2, 2004).

**Constructed Wetland (45% AC)**

A constructed shallow water ecosystem designed to simulate natural wetlands, installed to reduce the pollution potential of runoff from agricultural lands.

**Critical Area Planting (60% AC)**

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of runoff management practices, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

**Grade Stabilization Structure (45% AC)**

A structure installed to control the grade and head cutting in natural or artificial channels.

**Lined Waterway or Outlet (45% AC)**

A waterway or outlet with an erosion resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic turf reinforcement fabrics or other permanent material, installed to provide for safe conveyance of runoff from stormwater management structures or water concentration areas.

**Mulching (45% AC)**

Application of plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface to provide erosion control, suppress weed growth, or establish vegetative cover.

**Obstruction Removal (45% AC)**

Removal and disposal of unwanted or hazardous buildings, structures, vegetation, landscape features, and other materials in order to facilitate the installation of new storm water management practices.

**Pond Sealing or Lining (45% AC)**

Install a manufactured hydraulic barrier consisting of a functionally continuous sheet of synthetic or partially synthetic, flexible material as part of a water and sediment control basin to control seepage.

**Precision Land Forming (45% AC)**

Re-grade the surface of the land to allow the implementation of other planned measures under an approved stormwater runoff management system.

**Roof Runoff Structure (45% AC)**

Structures that collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs, installed to reduce soil erosion, increase infiltration, or increase water quantity.

**Runoff Management System (45% AM)**

Implementation of non-typical components of a runoff management system installed to meet NJ storm water management regulations.

**Spoil Spreading (45% AC)**

Disposing of surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved stormwater runoff management practices.

**Structure for Water Control (45% AC)**

A structure required as part of a tailwater recovery or storm water management system that conveys water, controls the direction or rate of flow, or maintains a desired water surface elevation.

**Underground Outlet (45% AC)**

A conduit installed beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water from surface drains, lined waterways, or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

**Water and Sediment Control Basin (45% AC)**

Used as part of a Storm Water Runoff Management System, when needed, to collect and store excess runoff water from an agricultural operation.

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