

Name of Practice: LATE WINTER SPLIT APPLICATION OF NITROGEN ON
SMALL GRAINS
VACS Program Specifications for No. NM-4

This document specifies terms and conditions for the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program's Late Winter Split Application of Nitrogen on Small Grains practice which are applicable to all contracts entered into with respect to that practice.

A. Description and Purpose

Late winter split application of nitrogen on small grain consists of applying nitrogen during the late winter in two increments based on the progression of growth of the small grain crop. Applying nitrogen based on the progression of growth of the small grain crop in the late winter minimizes the amount lost through leaching and runoff.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. Eligibility

- i. Eligibility for this practice is limited to the length of the plan recommending the split nitrogen application.
- ii. The producer must provide a written verification (such as a work order or bill) to the District within two weeks of the second application when the application has been contracted out.
- iii. The total number of small grain acres specified by the Nutrient Management Plan to receive split nitrogen applications will determine the maximum acres to qualify, with payment being made only to those acres which actually receive split nitrogen applications.
- iv. In order to be eligible for cost-share or tax credit, producers must be fully implementing a current Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) on all agricultural production acreage contained within the field on which this practice will be implemented. The NMP must comply with all requirements set forth in the Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations, (4VAC50-85 et seq.) and the Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria (revised July 2014); must be prepared and certified by a Virginia certified nutrient management planner; and must be on file with the local District before any cost-share payment is made to the participant. Plans shall also contain any specific production management criteria designated in the BMP practice (4VACV50-85-130G).
- v. District staff should utilize the NMP maps, nutrient balance sheets, and summary sheets to confirm practice implementation. A comparison between crop recommendations and in-field conditions shall be used when certifying conservation practice compliance.

2. The total number of small grain acres specified by the Nutrient Management Plan that have organic sources of nitrogen applied during the crop year, or in previous years, or if high residual nitrogen levels are suspected from a previous

crop, fall nitrogen rates should be determined by a nitrate test. Cost-share payment for soil nitrate test laboratory analysis will be made only for those soil nitrate tests that are submitted for laboratory analysis.

- i. The soil nitrate test must be done prior to small grain planting.
 - ii. Soil nitrate test samples should represent a minimum of 7 acres on average and a maximum of 20 acres on average.
 - iii. For late winter split application of nitrogen, the two applications must be at least 30 days apart, with the first application no earlier than growth stage 25, with nitrogen rates determined based on tiller counts and tissues tests as explained in the *Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria revised July, 2014*.
 - iv. In lieu of tiller counts and tissue tests, as listed in the *Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria, revised July, 2014*, late winter split application of nitrogen must not exceed 40 pounds of nitrogen for the first application and must not exceed 50 pounds of nitrogen for the second application.
3. Checks to ensure compliance with this practice may be conducted by the District or appropriate agency personnel and failure to comply may result in forfeiture of cost-share funds.
 4. The producer must sign up prior to February 1 and provide written verification (such as a work order or bill) of contracted sidedress application cost (including the soil nitrate test results) to the District within two weeks of the second application and prior to cost-share payment.
 5. A minimum of 20 lbs of inorganic nitrogen per acre must be applied to be considered a split application for the management of nitrogen.
 6. The amount of late winter nitrogen to be applied to the small grain field must be consistent with the Nutrient Management Plan or determined by using a soil nitrate test consistent with procedures contained in the *Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria, revised July, 2014*.
 7. Acres enrolled in the NM-4 practice are ineligible receive payment for an SL-8H on the same acres.
 8. This is an annual practice.

C. Rate(s)

1. As set forth by Virginia Code, the Commonwealth currently provides a tax credit for implementation of certain agricultural best management practices as discussed in the Tax Credit Guidelines of the VACS Manual. Participants may receive either a cost-share payment or a tax credit for implementation of this practice but not both on the same acre.

2. A VACS payment rate of \$6.00 per acre for the second application in the late winter shall be paid based upon the contracted second application acreage. Producers applying their own second application will receive \$6.00 per acre applied. If only one late winter application is made, no reimbursement is to be provided.
3. Costs for soil nitrate test sample collection and analysis by a commercial laboratory that may be used to implement this practice will be reimbursed at a flat rate of \$12.00 per sample. The reimbursement flat rate can only be utilized once per sample, samples should represent a minimum of 7 acres on average and a maximum of 20 acres on average.

D. Technical Responsibility

Technical and administrative responsibility is assigned to qualified technical DCR and District staff in consultation, where appropriate and based on the controlling standard, with DCR, Virginia Certified Nutrient Management Planner(s), NRCS, DOF, and VCE. Individuals certifying technical need and technical practice installation shall have appropriate certifications as identified above and/or Engineering Job Approval Authority (EJAA) for the designed and installed component(s). All practices are subject to spot check procedures and any other quality control measures.

Revised April 2024