

Name of Practice: BUFFER STRIPCROPPING
VACS Program Specifications for No. SL-3B

This document specifies terms and conditions for the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program's Stripcropping best management practice which are applicable to all contracts entered into with respect to that practice.

A. Description and Purpose

Buffer stripcropping includes a series of narrow permanent protective strips of sod alternating with wider strips of row or close growing crops implemented to reduce erosion and surface runoff and improve surface water quality.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. 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).
2. Cost-share and tax credit are authorized for the establishment and planting of vegetated buffer strips on existing cropland fields. Tax credit is based on the cost of establishing the buffer strips.
3. Cost-share and tax credit are not authorized for repeating or adding any approved measures under this practice with the same person on the same acreage. This is a one-time incentive.
4. Cost-share and tax credit cannot be authorized for SL-3 and this SL-3B on the same acreage or for WQ-1 Grass Filter Strip.
5. Soil loss rates must be computed for all applications for use in establishing priority considerations.
6. This practice is subject to NRCS Standard 332 Contour Buffer Strips.
7. All practice components implemented must be maintained for a minimum of five years following the calendar year of installation. The lifespan begins on Jan. 1 of the calendar year following the year of certification of completion. By accepting either a cost-share payment or a state tax credit for this practice, the participant

agrees to maintain all practice components for the specified lifespan. This practice is subject to spot check by the District throughout the lifespan of the practice and failure to maintain the practice may result in reimbursement of cost-share and/or tax credits.

C. Rate(s)

1. A VACS payment rate of \$15 per acre has been established for this practice for all field area within the buffer strip system. Payment is made on a per acre basis to cover a portion of the cost and to serve as an incentive to establish a buffer strip system. Acreage for cost-share assistance (incentive) is the field acreage or that portion of the field served by the establishment of a series of buffer strips.
2. 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.
3. If a participant receives cost-share, only the participant's eligible out-of-pocket share of the project cost is used to determine the tax credit.

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.

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