

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE VOLUNTARY REPORTING PROGRAM (VRP)

Overview

The goal of the Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) Voluntary Reporting Program (VRP) is to encourage voluntary installation and/or data reporting of BMPs that address Virginia's non-point source pollution water quality objectives. Eligible BMP are those installed without public funding assistance or are out of contract lifespan and meet the minimum specifications found in the Voluntary BMP Specifications section. Participation in Virginia's Agricultural Voluntary Reporting and/or Resource Management Plan (RMP) program does not convey the public's right to access the participant's property. Furthermore, participation in the Voluntary Reporting and/or Resource Management Plan (RMP) program provides protection from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

The applicable Code of Virginia Section as amended follows:

§ [2.2-220.3](#). *Development of strategies to collect land use and conservation information.*

§ [10.1-104.7](#). *Resource management plans; effect of implementation; exclusions.*

As used in this section, "agricultural best management practice" means a practice approved by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (VSWCB) which will provide a significant improvement to water quality in the state's streams and rivers and the Chesapeake Bay that is consistent with other state and federal programs that address agricultural, non-point source pollution management. Eligible practices shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Livestock waste and poultry waste management;
2. Soil erosion control;
3. Nutrient and sediment filtration and detention;
4. Nutrient management; and
5. Pest management.

A detailed list of the standards and criteria for practices eligible for credit shall be found in the most recently approved "Virginia Agricultural BMP Manual," published annually prior to July 1 by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Documentation

For any practice receiving a credit, the District will require a signed landowner/operator assessment form (Form DCR # 199-206) or a signed landowner/operator RMP signature page,

and the data must be entered into DCR's AgBMP Tracking Module or RMP Module. Authorizing personnel will examine supporting data to determine eligible components.

Data Reporting

In order to adequately track program effectiveness and to utilize implementation analysis for program management decisions, it is vital that all data requested be entered into the AgBMP Tracking Module. The DCR Central Office staff maintains and updates the AgBMP Tracking Module to reflect changes in program data reporting for each program year. The AgBMP Tracking Module is used to track and report data associated with BMP implementation to the Chesapeake Bay Model or other end uses. Analysis of completed BMP data provides valuable insight into program effectiveness. Therefore, it is important that data entry be as accurate and consistently input as possible.

Data entry into the AgBMP Tracking Module for voluntary practices is similar to that for cost-share practices with a few differences mainly on the General tab. There are only four available statuses for a project:

- **Under Construction:** The BMP is currently being constructed and will be certified Complete at a later date.
- **Inactive:** The BMP components are still present but the BMP is not currently being used as designed.
- **Inactive – Destroyed:** Components of the BMP have been removed/destroyed and the BMP is no longer functional.
- **Complete:** The BMP has been installed and meets specifications.

The dates captured on the General tab are also different:

- **Reported Practice Installation Date:** Date the original BMP was installed/certified. Districts can use the Actual Completion Date from the original BMP if it is known.
- **Practice Verification Date:** Date the District recertified the BMP was meeting the voluntary BMP specifications.
- **Practice Closed Date:** Date the BMP became inactive or was destroyed if the date was before the end of the lifespan. When documenting a voluntary BMP, this date will likely be left blank.
- **BMP Assessment Date:** Date the participant signed the Assessment Authorization Form.

Also note that Districts should not be using the "Does Not Meet Specifications" checkbox on the General tab. If the voluntary BMP does not meet the specifications, then it should not be reported under this program.

Inspections and Verifications

All approved VRP BMPs are subject to inspection for program compliance during the lifespan of the practice. Technical inspection and certification are the responsibility of designated technically responsible personnel (NRCS, District, DOF, and DCR). Random verifications will be conducted

annually by the District Conservation Specialist/Technician under the guidance of the Conservation District Coordinator to determine that the individual practice is still viable. A random 5% sample of each practice type will be checked. Practices to be verified will be identified and inspected based upon Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) approved verification procedures. Verification report forms should be retained by the District and filed by program year.

Questions

Questions concerning any aspect of the VRP program that are not addressed in this Manual should be directed to the Agricultural Incentives Program Manager or Resource Management Program Coordinator.