



Conservation Cost-Share for Farmers and Ranchers

STATE PROGRAMS

The State of Florida has programs specially designed to help farmers and ranchers protect and improve the health of their land. These programs are administered through Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FLDEP).

FDACS Agricultural Best Management Practices

FDACS Agricultural Best Management Practices program, often called the “Ag BMP” program assists producers in three ways:

- Provides a detailed manual of cost-effective actions to conserve water and reduce the amount of nutrients (fertilizers and animal waste) and other pollutants entering waterways. Each category of agriculture has its own industry-specific manual.
- Cost-shares – this program helps farmers and ranchers with the cost of implementing these best practices. FDACS works with multiple partners, including the NRCS, FLDEP, water management districts, and soil and water conservation districts to provide cost share funding for producers.
- Implementing and maintaining FDACS-adopted BMPs provides a “presumption of compliance” with state water quality standards for the pollutants addressed by the BMP and may satisfy some water management district permitting requirements.

Additional benefits

Parts of Florida have highly environmentally sensitive waterways. In these highly sensitive parts of the state, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is developing Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs). These specialized plans help to meet adopted water quality targets. In BMAP areas that include agricultural land, producers must

Farmers and ranchers love their land.

Anyone who has ever made their living from the land knows that the health of your land affects the productivity of your land. And at the end of the day, productivity is what makes or breaks a business.

Anyone who has ever made a living from the land also knows that making improvements to your land often comes with a hefty price tag.

If you are interested in learning how to improve the health and productivity of your land without breaking the bank, this series will help you do it.

There are federal, state, local, and independent programs specially designed to help farmers and ranchers protect and improve the health of their land.

The majority of the programs are federally funded and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

either implement Ag BMPs or conduct monitoring (paid for by the producer) to show they are not violating water quality standards.

To see a map of BMAP regions of Florida:

<https://floridadep.gov/dear/water-quality-restoration/content/impaired-waters-tmdls-and-basin-management-action-plans>

Even in counties that do not have BMAP areas, large numbers of farmers and ranchers enroll in the FDACS Ag BMP program. For example, Sarasota County currently has no BMAP areas, but half of all agricultural land in the county is enrolled. Producers recognize that making equipment and systems upgrades to conserve water and decrease nutrient losses is good for their bottom line.

To see a map of land enrolled in FDACS Ag BMP

program: <https://www.fdacs.gov/ezs3download/download/78962/2320452/Media/Files/Agricultural-Water-Policy-Files/Maps/Statewide-Enrollment-Map/BMP-Enrollment-Statewide-%28online-map%29.pdf>

To learn more about FDACS Ag BMP program:

- Email AgBMPHelp@FDACS.gov or Visit: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Water/Agricultural-Best-Management-Practices>
- To learn more about the Ag BMP program specific to the type of farming or ranching you do, visit <https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Water/Agricultural-Best-Management-Practices> and read and/or download the brochures and/or manuals. Brochures for each commodity are about two pages long. The manual for each commodity is about 100 pages long. When you enroll in the program, FDACS will provide you with a paper copy of the manual.

Programs include:

- Citrus
- Cow/Calf
- Dairy
- Equine
- Nurseries
- Poultry
- Sod
- Specialty Fruit and Nut
- Vegetable and Agronomic
- Wildlife

Interesting facts about FDACS Ag BMP program:

- Nearly 4 million acres of agricultural land is already enrolled in FDACS Ag BMP program. Florida is home to 9.7 million acres of agricultural land. That means that approximately two out of every five acres of agricultural land in Florida is enrolled.
- The top commodities enrolled in the program are cow/calf operations (1.5 million acres), row and field crops (1 million acres), and citrus (just under half a million acres)

