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## **Farmers Encouraged to Add Conservation Practices, Improve Water Quality with REAP Tax Credits**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Funding is still available to offset the costs of implementing best management practices (BMPs) or purchasing on-farm conservation equipment by using 2017-18 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program tax credits. Producers should apply by June 1.

REAP is a Pennsylvania tax credit program for agricultural producers who install BMPs or make equipment purchases that reduce nutrient and sediment runoff, which improves Pennsylvania's streams and watersheds. The program is administered by Pennsylvania's [State Conservation Commission](#), which provides support and oversight to the state's 66 county conservation districts.

"Agriculture producers are facing tremendous market volatility and uncertainty today, yet also being called on to make significant contributions to water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. "REAP is a way for farmers to make upgrades and improvements that increase their farms' bottom lines and clean up our waterways at the same time. With little more than a month to apply, now is the time to decide how this program can work for your operation."

Farmers may receive tax credits of up to \$150,000 per agricultural operation for 50 to 75 percent of the project's cost. The most commonly approved projects are for no-till planting and precision ag equipment, waste storage facilities, Conservation Plans, [Nutrient Management Plans](#), and protecting barnyards and other areas with animals. Cover crops and riparian stream buffers are also popular REAP-eligible practices. REAP can be used in conjunction with other funding sources, such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) or the Chesapeake Bay Program to help install BMPs.

REAP applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, up to the June 1 deadline for this year's funds.

"Governor Wolf and the Pennsylvania legislature have made a commitment to continuing to fund the REAP program," Redding added. "They see its value for our farms and waterways, and hear firsthand from farmers who advocate on its behalf. I thank everyone who has a hand in this program's success."

Private investors may act as project sponsors by providing capital in exchange for tax credits. Any individual or business subject to taxation through personal income tax, corporate net income tax, the bank shares tax or others is eligible to participate in REAP.

Since the program began in 2007, REAP has awarded tax credits to more than 4,800 projects totaling more than \$68 million. Public and private investments in REAP have contributed to the conservation projects, worth more than \$165 million.

The 2017-18 REAP application packet, as well as other information about REAP, is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's website, [agriculture.pa.gov](http://agriculture.pa.gov), or by contacting Joel Semke at 717-705-4032 or [jsemke@pa.gov](mailto:jsemke@pa.gov). Learn more information about WIP3, Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay strategy by visiting the [WIP3 webpage](#).

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Will Nichols – 717.787.5085

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