



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[View online](#)

Tax Credits Available to Help Farmers Add Conservation Practices, Improve Water Quality

2017 marks 10th anniversary of Resource Enhancement and Protection Program

Harrisburg, PA – Pennsylvania farmers who want to implement best management practices (BMPs) or purchase on-farm conservation equipment should apply for 2017-18 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program tax credits.

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.

"Ten years ago, we developed REAP in partnership with the General Assembly, as a new way to encourage and improve conservation efforts on Pennsylvania farms," said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. "Since then, farmers have implemented more than 4,800 projects, with impressive results. Their efforts have kept nearly 12 million pounds of nitrogen, nearly 800,000 pounds of phosphorus, and more than 700,000 tons of sediment where they belong: in our fields, where they contribute to agricultural productivity, rather than threatening our waterways and the species that call them home."

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.

"There's still a lot of work ahead," Redding said, noting that the agriculture industry is expected to make 75 percent of Pennsylvania's total nutrient load reductions. REAP is an important mechanism to improve the viability of our farms and the health of our waterways – which benefits Pennsylvanians and everyone downstream."

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](#) or by contacting Joel Semke at 717-705-4032 or jsemke@pa.gov. For more information about the Chesapeake Bay strategy, visit the department's [website](#).

MEDIA CONTACT: Will Nichols – 717.787.5085