

Delaware

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Delaware are partners in implementing a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to enroll up to 10,000 acres of agricultural land in Kent, New Castle, and Sussex counties. The purpose of the Delaware CREP is to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, reduce the amount of sediment, phosphorus, and other pollutants entering waterbodies, improve wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands in the Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay, and Delaware Inland Bays basin.

Background

CREP is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish permanent, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance.

With CREP, high-priority conservation goals are identified by the state, and then federal funds are supplemented with non-federal funds to achieve those goals.

Through the Delaware CREP, federal and state resources are made available to program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP 10-15 year contracts. Participants remove environmentally sensitive or marginal agricultural land from agricultural production

and convert the land to grasses, trees, or other approved vegetation. To be eligible to be enrolled in Delaware CREP, at least 80 percent of the eligible land offered must be physically located within the Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay, or Delaware Inland Bays basin within the State. The remaining eligible land offered, not to exceed 20 percent of the total eligible land offered, must meet both of the following to be eligible to be enrolled in this CREP:

1. Be contiguous to the eligible land offered that is physically located within the Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay or Delaware Inland Bays basin; and
2. Be enrolled at the same time and under the same CRP contract as the eligible land physically located within the Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay or Delaware Inland Bays basin. This will improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrients, nitrogen, and other pollutants from entering streams and rivers, and enhance wildlife habitat in the area.

For More Info

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply.

For more information, contact your local service center and USDA Farm Service Agency office: farmers.gov/service-locator.

Delaware State Farm Service Agency

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Goals

The goals of the Delaware CREP include:

- Reduce nutrient and sediment loadings in impaired streams
- Restore and protect wetlands
- Improve water temperature and levels of dissolved oxygen, which are necessary to support biology and wildlife
- Increase upland wildlife habitat and create wildlife corridors

Eligible Conservation Practices

The following specific CRP conservation practices are available:

- CP3A, Hardwood Tree Planting
- CP4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat
- CP9, Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife
- CP21, Filter Strips
- CP22, Riparian Buffer
- CP23, Wetland Restoration
- CP23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain

Enrollment and Eligibility Requirements

Enrollment in CRP through the Delaware CREP is on a continuous basis. To be eligible, land must be located in Delaware. Land must be either cropland or marginal pastureland. Cropland must meet cropping history criteria and be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Marginal pastureland is also eligible for enrollment provided it is suitable for use as an eligible riparian buffer.

Payments

Under the Delaware CREP, eligible participants may receive the following payments:

- A one-time signing incentive payment (SIP) is paid as follows:
 - ◊ \$100 per acre for CP21 and CP22
 - ◊ \$150 per acre for CP23 and CP23A
- A one-time practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40 percent of eligible reimbursable costs incurred for installation of CP9, CP21, CP22, CP23, and CP23A.

- An annual rental payment consisting of:
 - ◊ A base soil rental rate, determined by the soils of the land offered
 - ◊ An incentive payment except for land enrolled or re-enrolled under infeasible-to-farm provisions, based on the practice and county as follows:
 - For practices CP3A, CP22, CP23 and CP23A, the per-acre incentive payment will be up to:
 - \$89 in Kent County
 - \$101 in New Castle County
 - \$82 in Sussex County
 - For practices CP4D, CP9 and CP21, the per-acre incentive payment will be up to:
 - \$30 in Kent County
 - \$34 in New Castle County
 - \$28 in Sussex County
- A maintenance incentive payment for practice CP22 in accordance with FSA National CRP Directives.
- A cost-share payment of up to 50 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.



Payments

- A one-time Chesapeake Bay incentive payment, for practice CP22, in an amount equal to (1) for land not previously enrolled in CRP, \$160 per acre times the number of acres enrolled times the number of full years of the CRP contract length; or (2) for land previously enrolled in CRP, \$80 per acre times the number of acres enrolled times the number of full years of the CRP contract length. This one-time payment is available only for practice CP22 and only for land located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

In addition, the State of Delaware provides the following payments to eligible participants:

- A per-acre per-year incentive payment in an amount equal to:

For practices CP3A, CP22, CP23 and CP23A, up to:

\$33 in Kent County

\$37 in New Castle County

\$30 in Sussex County

For practices CP4D, CP9 and CP21, up to:

\$17 in Kent County

\$19 in New Castle County

\$15 in Sussex County

Note: The State of Delaware's per-acre per-year incentive payment will be provided as a one-time lump sum payment within the first year of the approved contract and after practice installation.

- A cost-share payment of 37.5 percent of the eligible cost to install the approved practice.
- A one-time Chesapeake Bay incentive payment, for practice CP22, in an amount equal to (1) for land not previously enrolled in CRP, \$40 per acre times the number of acres enrolled times the number of full years of the CRP contract length; or (2) for land previously enrolled in CRP, \$20 per acre times the number of acres enrolled times the number of full years of the CRP contract length. This one-time payment is available only for practice CP22 and only for land located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Note: The per-acre annual rental payment, including the per-acre incentive payment provided by the State of Delaware, shall not exceed \$225 for practices CP3A, CP22, CP23 and CP23A; or \$165 for practices CP4D, CP9 and CP21

Enrollment Options

CREP is another option under CRP that farmers and ranchers may select to enhance their land. Eligible producers may still enroll land in CRP through general or continuous signup; however, the Delaware CREP provides additional benefits not available through general and/or continuous signup. Under the Delaware CREP, producers receive higher incentive payments and longer contract lengths that increase the total amount of rental payments received.

Haying and Grazing

Contact your local FSA office for more information about authorized haying and grazing activities.

