

**Agricultural NPS Abatement and Control Grant Program
Round 14
Question and Answers**

Q. The RFP talks about the NRCS Cost estimate tool. I don't see anywhere on the checklist requiring the submission of the actual cost estimate....how is the NYS SWCC going to require that the tool be used?

A. The use of the NRCS BMP Cost Estimate Tool is not required. The use of the tool to gather estimates on the cost of BMPs is recommended. If the tool is used, please note in the project narrative. If you have any questions or need a copy of the software, please contact Ron Young, AEM Engineer 315-430-7686.

Q. Are the Screening Tool and test pit required for a 7 day manure storage that will consist of a concrete pad with 3 to 4 foot walls adjacent to a heifer and dry cow barn?

A. If the standard does not require site specific soil data for the proposed type of structure, then a test pit may not be required. Please refer to the applicable NRCS Standard and consult with an NRCS Engineer to determine whether a test pit is required for your proposed type of waste storage. If the proposed project falls under NRCS Standard 313, Waste Storage Facility, the Screening Tool must still be completed and attached, but question number 14 can be marked with an N/A if the test pit is not required for the specific type of structure.

Q. Regarding the PWL drainage basins updates. One of the drainage basins in our county is scheduled to have an update done in Fall 2007. Right now the update is not out. So what happens if the update comes out prior to the November 5th deadline? Which one do I use?

A. There are two Drainage Basin Reports that are scheduled for update in Fall 2007. If available before November 5, 2007, Districts are encouraged to use the updated reports. Districts may use the current reports listed on page 18 of the RFP whether or not the updates are released by the proposal submission deadline. The most current PWL Drainage Basin reports may be available online at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/36730.html>.

Q. What is the Operation and Maintenance lifespan for Petroleum Product Storage, Spill Prevention and Containment?

A. 25 years.

Q. Does the actual Tier 3A plan need to be submitted with the application?

A. The proposal does not need to have the actual plan attached. The District is certifying that the planning requirements are met by answering "yes" on Part F, Question #4. The SW1 asks the highest level of Tier 3 planning per farm and the month and year completed. Any other pertinent planning details should be included in the project narrative.

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Q. If the District received a grant to install mulching for a vineyard operation in a previous Round, can the District develop a grant proposal to install mulching in the same rows of grapes on the same vineyard under this round?

A. No, mulching cannot be cost-shared through this program in the same area on the same farm twice. The cost-share assistance provided through this grant program for mulching is intended for one year or growing season only. The program's goal for cost-sharing this type of project once is to demonstrate the effectiveness in preventing erosion, controlling runoff and protecting soil health with the expectation that the farmer will continue past the first year.

Q. I'm writing a grant proposal for Petroleum Product Storage and Containment. Shipping charges for one tank can be as high as \$500. Would that be considered an eligible cost? Also there are permitting and registering fees which are part of the requirements to comply with County Health Codes... Would they be eligible?

A. The costs you describe could be eligible for cost-share assistance. These costs may also be considered as a portion of the matching contribution.

Q. There was talk of increasing the contract term for completing a contract under Round 14 from a two year contract to a three year contract? Is this correct?

A. This is correct for implementation projects. See page # 7 under Contracts, "the standard term for implementation projects will be three full construction seasons plus three months for project administration and completion of the report".

Q. The Morrisville College horse farm has requested that we look for grant funds to address some of the issues at their operation. My question is, are they eligible for funds through the EPF? The property is owned by the Morrisville College Foundation INC and the individuals running the operation are state employees. Any guidance would be appreciated.

A. The objective of this program is to fund plans or projects that will reduce and/or prevent the nonpoint source contribution from privately owned agricultural land. The Morrisville College horse farm does not qualify as agricultural land for the purposes of this program.

Q. Are Districts required to follow the procurement guidelines provided on 10/01/07 for engineering? Is there an exemption in writing that can be referenced?

A. The procurement guidelines provided on 10/1/07 do not include provisions for engineering services. However, Districts must follow theirs or their county's procurement policies for procuring services or commodities.

Q. What components of an Anaerobic Digester are eligible for EPF cost-share through the Ag NPS Program?

A. Only those stand alone component practices of an Anaerobic Digester that have a direct connection to water quality improvement. Examples of such components include equipment and installation of manure handling and treatment systems, such as the actual digester vessel, manure collection, transfer and conveyance systems, manure holding/storage/containment, solid separators, separated solids storage areas, manure mixers/agitators.

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Q. If EQIP projects are used as match, does the NRCS planning process that takes place meet the requirement of having a tier 3 plan for Round 14?

A. Yes, if NRCS has completed the plan that meets EQIP requirements prior to proposal submission, this satisfies the Tier 3 planning requirement for Round 14.

Q. Can Round 14 cover the cost of a fabric truss to cover compost from a manure separation/composting system?

A. If the standard and site specific design calls for a fabric truss as an integral component of the composting system, the cost may be considered for cost-share assistance.

Q. Can before and after photographs of past projects be included in a proposal to demonstrate the effectiveness of a practice?

A. Yes, photographs may be included as supporting documentation.

Q. Could you please give some guidance on where to put NYSERDA funds on the SW-2 budget form for Districts submitting methane digester proposals that need these additional state dollars to be viable?

A. NYSERDA funds cannot be used as a match for EPF funds under the Ag NPS Program. These funds can be noted on the application form to show that the proposal is viable. However, NYSERDA funds cannot be included as a part of the Ag NPS proposal budget.

Q. A dairy farm in the county bottles its own milk. The bottling facility waste and the milkhouse parlor waste are a part of the same waste stream. Can the grant cost-share a Milkhouse Waste Treatment and Disposal System that will treat the waste from both the Milkhouse and the bottling facility?

A. The Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program funds plans, and projects that will reduce and/or prevent the nonpoint source contribution from agricultural activities. The Program can fund the portion directly attributable to the milkhouse waste. Milk processing waste is considered a regulated point source. Therefore, treating and disposing of waste from the processing and bottling facility is not eligible for funding under this program.

Q. Can the cost which would have incurred for an item donated to a farmer for the completion of a best management practice, be used as landowner In-kind matching funds?

A. Yes, the cost that would have been incurred if it were not donated may be considered when calculating landowner match.

Q. If the CNMP already exists, what must be included with the application for an agricultural waste storage system?

A. The Tier 3A, Screening Tool checklist must be completed and submitted with each proposal to verify that the items have been reviewed with the farmer. The screening tool addresses items not already in the CNMP, including conducting test pits for certain types of storages. If the grant is awarded, the costs of updating the CNMP so that it reflects the management of the stored waste may be used as a component of the landowner's match.

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Q. Is the Screening Tool required for an uncertified existing storage that needs to be evaluated by an engineer and properly expanded?

A. Yes, the Screening Tool would still need to be completed prior to submitting a proposal to expand an existing manure storage.

Q. Can grant funds be used to pay for site prep that includes demolition of existing structures?

A. Site prep is an eligible expense for the grant. It can also be used as a landowner contribution.

Q. Can grant funds be used to pay for roof structures where a consultant engineer will not allow/approve a wastewater treatment strip?

A. Grant funds may be used to cost-share a roof structure if the project engineer documents that the roof is needed to meet the water quality objectives of the planned best management practice.

Q. Can an applicant mix recommended and actual salary rates for District staff?

A. No. Applicants can assign either recommended or actual rates for District staff but cannot mix the two.