



WLEB Program Snapshot

Who is eligible?

Enrollment is **currently open** through August 15 for producers in Crawford, Erie, Huron, Marion, Ottawa, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, and Wyandot counties. H2Ohio is a statewide program, and producers in all 88 counties can learn more through their local SWCD.

Requirements:

A voluntary nutrient management plan (VNMP) is **required** for all cropland enrolled in H2Ohio.

Helpful Tips:

- Use spring to your advantage. Any soil test older than 2022 must be updated before enrollment.
- Ensure you have a functional email address and the ability to check and respond to messages.

1

Where do I sign up?

Your local SWCD. Find yours by visiting bit.ly/findmyswcd or scan this code:



2

What do I need to enroll?

- Soils tests 2022 or newer
- Shapefiles of field boundaries
- Crop Rotations with yield goals
- N, P, K fertility plan follows 2020 Tri-State
- Email address

3

When will I receive payments?

Crop year 2026-27 payments will be made spring/summer 2026.



Best Management Practice	Incentives
Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan Implementation	\$10/Ac. - Basic \$15/Ac. - Precision
Subsurface Phosphorus Placement	\$20/Ac.
Manure Incorporation and Utilization	\$35/Ac. - Poultry litter & solid manure \$60/Ac. - Liquid manure
Overwintering Cover	\$40/Ac.

H2Ohio is Governor Mike DeWine's comprehensive, data-driven water quality plan to reduce harmful algal blooms, improve wastewater infrastructure, and prevent lead contamination. ODA is leading the efforts to minimize agricultural loss of nutrients from farm fields.



**Department of
Agriculture**

Producer/Entity Name: _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Soil & Water Conservation District: _____

Technical Assistance Provider: _____

Please indicate if you are one of the following:

SWCD Staff ☐ SWCD Board Member ☐ ODA Staff ☐ Not Applicable ☐

This application is for the development of an H2Ohio Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan ("VNMP") or Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan ("CNMP") in the Western Lake Erie Basin project area.

By signing this program application, the undersigned producer/entity agrees that by initiating this VNMP/CNMP within MyFarms does not obligate the Soil & Water Conservation District ("SWCD") or the Ohio Department of Agriculture ("ODA") to provide any funds for the completion of a VNMP/CNMP. At any point if the producer does not wish to continue the development of the VNMP/CNMP, they can contact the SWCD and request the removal all information associated with this plan from MyFarms.

By signing this Program Application, the undersigned producer/entity agrees to the following and shall:

1. Acknowledge that registration with the Ohio Agricultural Conservation Initiative ("OACI") and completion of the OACI certification scoring platform must be completed prior to signing any H2Ohio contract.
2. Acknowledge that no H2Ohio program payments will be offered until a VNMP/CNMP has been submitted and approved for the cropland included in this application.
3. Certify that the acreage under this application is not enrolled in or benefiting from any other incentive program(s) (e.g., USDA Farm Bill programs such as CSP, EQIP, MWCD, existing H2Ohio Contract or similar state or regional funded programs).
4. VNMP may be developed by a technical assistance provider or producer.
5. Plans will be reviewed and approved by the local SWCD Board of Supervisors or director's designee.
6. Average yield goals will be used to determine nutrient application limits in accordance with the 590 standard.
7. Representative soil test results not older than four years old are required.
8. Allow representative(s) of the local SWCD and ODA to access and inspect the property and certify that practice(s) were implemented in accordance with the required establishment and maintenance technical specifications set forth in the criteria specified in the attached exhibits.
9. Notify the SWCD and request approval of any proposed changes to practice implementation.

The SWCD or ODA shall:

1. Maintain producer(s) a copy of this application
2. Verify the VNMP/CNMP meets the required technical specifications set forth in the criteria specified in the attached exhibits.
3. Representative(s) of the SWCD and ODA shall have the right of ingress and egress to the land enrolled in this program.
4. Review and verify requests for practice(s) implementation changes submitted by producer(s) are proper and reasonable if applicable.

I (We) understand that failure to implement all the components of the practice(s) or follow the design criteria for practice(s) establishment and maintenance determined by the SWCD may nullify this application, in whole or in part, and any associated cost-share commitment to the producer/entity as determined by the ODA.

I (We) understand this application is not effective until signed by all parties.

I hereby state that I have read this application and understand the terms and conditions contained herein and I have the authority to sign this application in my individual capacity as a producer, or on behalf of the entity, if applicable.

Producer Signature

Print Name: _____

Producer/Entity signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

SWCD Approval

By signing this Application, I _____, on behalf of the _____ SWCD, state that I have reviewed the Application, that the acreage under this Application is eligible for H2Ohio funding, that the Board of Supervisors agrees to the terms herein, and that I have authority to sign on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.

Board Chairperson or designee signature*

***SWCD shall not sign this application if signing would be contrary to the Ohio Ethics Commission January 31, 2020, February 4, 2020, and February 7, 2020 Staff Opinions provided to the Office of Chief Legal Counsel at ODA.**

Grower and SWCD Identification:

Farm Company Name: _____

Grower Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

SWCD: _____

The grower identified above ☐ is (or) ☒ is not a member of the above identified SWCD Staff or Board.

	2026		2027	
Practice	Total Ac.	Amount \$	Total Ac.	Amount \$
Basic VNMP - \$10.00/Ac.				
Basic CNMP - \$10.00/Ac.				
Precision VNMP - \$15.00/Ac.				
Precision CNMP - \$15.00/Ac.				
P Placement - \$20.00/Ac.				
Manure (liquid) - \$60.00/Ac.				
Manure (solid) - \$35.00/Ac.				
Low STP - \$15.00/Ac.				
Overwinter Cover - \$40.00/Ac.				
Grand Total				

This H2Ohio Contract provides funding for applicable acres and years up to the Grand Total amount listed above for H2Ohio Best Management Practices (“BMPs”) initiated after the effective date in the Soil and Water Conservation District (“SWCD”) identified above.

Incentives paid for H2Ohio Practices will be based on the actual acres included in the VNMP developed by the grower or a designated Technical Assistance Provider (“TAP”) and

approved by the SWCD or the Ohio Department of Agriculture (“ODA”), if applicable, up to the maximum number of acres at the rate specified above, unless a Contract Modification form is submitted by the grower or TAP and is approved by the SWCD Board of Supervisors, and/or, if applicable, by ODA.

By signing this H2Ohio Contract, the undersigned grower agrees to the following and shall:

1. Acknowledge that registration with the Ohio Agricultural Conservation Initiative (“OACI”) and completion of the OACI certification scoring platform must be completed prior to certifying any H2Ohio practices included in this contract.
2. Acknowledge that H2Ohio program payments will be made for practices that are first included in a VNMP previously approved and digitally signed by the SWCD, or ODA, for the cropland included in this contract.
3. Acknowledge that no H2Ohio program payments will be made except for acres and practices that were successfully implemented according to the practice standards in Exhibit A, certified by the grower (by the dates listed below and in Exhibit B), and then subsequently verified by the SWCD or ODA. The options available to certify each practice are detailed in Exhibit B. Failure to complete certification by the dates below may result in practice payment forfeiture:
 - a. Overwintering Cover by January 15 of the enrolled Crop Year
 - b. VNMP Implementation and Subsurface Placement by June 30 of the enrolled Crop Year
 - c. Manure Incorporation & Utilization by September 30 of the enrolled Crop Year
4. Certify that the acreage under this Contract is not enrolled in or benefiting from a similar incentive facilitated by other public program(s) (e.g., USDA Farm Bill programs such as CSP, EQIP, MWCD, existing H2Ohio Contract or similar state or regional funded programs).
5. Implement indicated practice(s) in accordance with the required establishment and maintenance technical specifications set forth in the conservation practice standards attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference as if fully rewritten.
6. Follow the H2Ohio Practice Work Plans in Exhibit B. Crop Year is defined as the year in which the crop is harvested (e.g., Wheat harvested in July 2026 would be crop year 2026,). Any activity after the harvest of the previous crop is planned for the next crop year.
7. Incentive payments are limited to the practices and quantities of each practice described in this Contract unless a completed program modification form has been submitted by the producer and digitally signed by the SWCD board of supervisors.
8. Violations of the agricultural pollution abatement rules (OAC Chapter 901:13-1) or nutrient application rules and laws (ORC Sections 939.08 and 905.326) may result in forfeiture of payment for specified practices on enrolled acres or cancellation of the current H2Ohio Contract.
9. Producers with a permit from the Division of Livestock Environmental Permitting must be in compliance with ORC Chapter 903 and OAC Chapter 901:10.
10. Allow representative(s) of the local SWCD and ODA to access and inspect the property and certify that practice(s) were implemented in accordance with the

required establishment and maintenance technical specifications set forth in the criteria specified in the attached exhibits.

11. Notify the SWCD and request approval of any proposed changes to practice implementation.

The SWCD identified above, and / or ODA shall:

1. Provide the undersigned grower with a fully executed copy of this Contract and maintain the original in MyFarms.
2. Verify the number of acres included in the approved VNMP and BMPs comply with the practice standards set forth in Exhibit A.
3. Confirm the undersigned grower has completed OACI registration and scoring prior to completing any H2Ohio program payments.
4. Have the right to access and inspect the property and certify that practice(s) were implemented in accordance with the practice standards set forth in Exhibit A.
5. Send H2Ohio program payment to the undersigned grower according to the terms outlined herein.

I understand that failure to follow the Practice Standards described in Exhibit A may nullify this Contract, in whole or in part, and any associated cost-share commitment to the grower as determined by ODA, in its sole discretion.

Authorization Signatures:

I understand this H2Ohio Contract is not effective until electronically signed by representatives of the following three parties.

Grower Approval

By signing below, I state that I have reviewed this document, that I understand the terms and conditions set forth herein, and that I have the authority to legally bind the Farm Company identified above by the terms of this H2Ohio Contract.

Grower Signature

SWCD Approval

By signing this Contract on behalf of the SWCD identified above, I state that I have reviewed it, that the acreage under this Contract is eligible for H2Ohio funding, that the Board of Supervisors agrees to the terms herein, and that I have authority to sign on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.

Board Chairperson or Designee Signature*

*SWCD shall not sign this Contract if signing would be contrary to the Ohio Ethics Commission January 31, 2020, February 4, 2020, and February 7, 2020 Staff Opinions provided to the Office of Chief Legal Counsel at ODA.

ODA Approval

On behalf of the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil & Water Conservation, I state that I have reviewed the Contract, that the acreage under this Contract is eligible for H2Ohio funding, and that H2Ohio Funds have been obligated to this Contract as stated.

ODA-Division of Soil & Water Representative

See Exhibit A & B

Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan (VNMP) and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) Development & Implementation

Purpose

- To increase producer collection and use of soil test results to develop nutrient recommendations
- To properly utilize commercial fertilizer, manure and/or organic by-products as a plant nutrient source or soil amendment
- To reduce agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface water and groundwater resources

Applicability

VNMPs and CNMPs apply to cropland acres in the program area. Acres receiving payment under any other county, state, or federal program (EQIP, H2Ohio, MWCD etc.), are not eligible. Cropland enrolled in CSP and receiving payment for NRCS Practices 590 are not eligible.

Specifications

1. VNMPs and CNMPs will be developed in the MyFarms application.
2. VNMPs and CNMPs will be written to the current NRCS 590 Nutrient Management Standard.
3. Nitrogen and Phosphorus rates will follow 2020 Tri-State Fertilizer Recommendations (Ohio State Extension - Bulletin 974).
4. Phosphorus application rates shall not exceed a two-year recommendation, per the Tri-State Fertilizer Recommendations.
5. VNMPs and CNMPs may be developed by an ag retailer, independent crop consultant, or producer.
6. VNMPs and CNMPs must be reviewed and approved by the local SWCD Board of Supervisors or director's designee.
7. Average yield goals shall be used for fertilizer recommendations.
8. VNMPs and CNMPs developed through H2Ohio must meet the minimum requirements set forth in ORC 905.31(DD).
 - a. Soil tests must be compliant with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field office technical guide and not older than four years.
 - b. Basic soil samples for soil tests must represent 25 acres or less for a basic VNMP or CNMP. Soil test results must be uploaded or entered in the soil test result form in MyFarms.
 - c. Precision VNMPs and CNMPs, one soil sample must represent no more than six acres for grid sampling and no more than 12 acres for a zone management system. All soil test results must be uploaded into MyFarms in shapefile format.
 - d. Documentation of the method and seasonal time of utilization and application of nutrients.
 - e. Identification of all nutrients applied, including manure, fertilizer, sewage sludge, and biodigester residue.
 - f. Field information regarding land subject to the plan, including the location, spreadable acreage, crops grown, and actual and projected yields.
9. Implementation will be verified by comparing planned nutrient application records to actual application records for the crop year within the VNMP and CNMP in the MyFarms application.
10. VNMPs and CNMPs implemented through this program must meet the minimum requirements set forth in ORC 905.31(DD).

Additional Considerations for VNMPs and CNMPs

- Producers will be allowed to place up to 20 pounds of P₂O₅ as starter fertilizer.

Basic VNMP Implementation

- Basic VNMP and CNMP Implementation is any nutrient application for the crop year that is a flat rate application of phosphorus (subsurface application or broadcast application).
- If the Basic VNMP and CNMP has a recommendation for a phosphorus application and the producer elects not to apply or apply less than the recommendation of phosphorus this would also constitute a Basic VNMP Implementation payment.

Precision VNMP Implementation

- When a Precision VNMP or CNMP is developed based on zones, soil fertility, soil types, cropping history, and crop management practices should be considered when delineating the zones.
- For Precision VNMP and CNMP implementation, one soil sample must represent no more than six acres for grid sampling and no more than 12 acres for a zone management system.
- Precision VNMP and CNMP Implementation payments will be made for each year if the phosphorus applications are at or below the nutrient recommendations of all grids or zones in a field, or no application was certified.

Livestock Producers

Livestock producers who produce a significant amount of manure in their operations will be required to develop a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP).

- Operations producing less than 350 tons, or 100,000 gallons of manure annually must be assessed to determine the need for a CNMP. Current soil tests and livestock production facilities will be used to determine if a CNMP is needed for these operations.
- Operations that produce more than 350 tons of manure, or more than 100,000 gallons of liquid manure annually are required to develop a CNMP.
- A livestock production facility site visit and Inventory and Evaluation by the SWCD or ODA, may be required.
- Producers are eligible to participate and receive incentives under all the remaining practices offered through H2Ohio.
- Producers will work directly with the SWCD or ODA to determine if a CNMP is needed.

Participant Payments

- Producers will receive \$10/ac/yr upon approval and implementation of Basic VNMP and CNMP Implementation from the SWCD.
- Producers will receive \$15/ac/yr upon approval and implementation of Precision VNMP and CNMP Implementation from the SWCD.

Purpose

- To encourage agriculture producers to establish crops that provide overwintering cover
- To reduce sheet, rill, and wind erosion
- To reduce water quality degradation due to excess nutrients
- To increase cropping system diversity

Applicability

Overwintering Cover applies to cropland acres in the H2Ohio program area. Acres receiving payment under any other county, state, or federal program (EQIP, H2Ohio, MWCD, etc.) are not eligible. Cropland enrolled in CSP and receiving payment for NRCS Practices 328 or 340 are not eligible.

Specifications

1. Establish any of these crops that provide overwintering cover according to NRCS Appendix A.
2. The completed practice must meet the criteria for planting dates, seeding, establishment, and maintenance per NRCS Appendix A; including seed quality and testing requirements:
 - a. Winter Annuals – Appendix A – Cover Crops (Minimum)
 - b. Perennial Forage - Appendix A - Forages
 - c. Overwintering Cover Crops – Appendix A – Cover Crops
3. Cover crops seed mix must include a minimum of 50% of full rate of an overwintering species.
4. Overwintering Cover must be maintained until March 15 of the contracted crop year.
5. Manure may not be applied from November 1 to March 15:
 - a. Manure shall not be applied on frozen, snow-covered, or saturated soils or applied when the local weather forecast for the application area contains greater than a 50% chance of precipitation exceeding one-half inch in a 24-hour period.
 - b. If a field is used for an emergency manure application, regardless of application date it will be ineligible.
6. Fertilizer shall not be applied on frozen, snow-covered, or saturated soils or applied when the local weather forecast for the application area contains greater than a 50% chance of precipitation exceeding one inch in a 12-hour period.
7. Limited field tile installation may occur if Overwintering Cover is maintained.

Participant Payments

- Enrolled participants will receive \$40/ac/yr for completion of this practice, after verification that all program requirements are met.

Subsurface Phosphorus Placement

Purpose

- To encourage agricultural producers to utilize nutrient application equipment that places phosphorus below the soil surface.
- To reduce risk of agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface water and groundwater resources.

Applicability

Subsurface Phosphorus Placement applies to cropland acres in the H2Ohio program area. Acres enrolled in the Manure Utilization practice are not eligible for the Subsurface Phosphorus Placement practice in the same crop year. Acres receiving payment for in-field practices under any other county, state, or federal program (EQIP, H2Ohio, MWCD, etc.) are not eligible. Cropland enrolled in CSP and receiving payment for NRCS Practices 590 are not eligible.

Specifications

1. The producer has an approved Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan (VNMP) or Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) with the local SWCD.
2. Eligible acres must have a phosphorus recommendation in the approved VNMP, and the amount of phosphorus fertilizer applied must be equal to or less than the recommendation.
3. Phosphorus may be placed in multiple applications in one crop year if the total amount does not exceed the phosphorus recommendation in the approved VNMP, and all applications meet the requirements of this standard.
4. The producer must provide a detailed plan of fertilizer source and method to be used to achieve program requirements. Subsurface placement equipment must use the “Injected” application method and equipment types include, but are not limited to; planter, side-dress, strip-till, or nutrient placement toolbars.
5. All phosphorus applied must be injected. Fields that receive broadcast applications of phosphorus fertilizer are not eligible for this practice until the broadcast nutrients are utilized through crop removal. Approved phosphorus fertilizer application options include:
 - a. Direct Subsurface Placement: phosphorus fertilizer shall be placed a minimum of two inches below the soil surface for each applied acre.
 - b. No Application: phosphorus fertilizer is not applied, even though phosphorus is recommended.
6. All phosphorus applications must comply with Ohio Revised Code Section 905.326.

Participant Payments

- Producers will receive \$20/ac/yr on all eligible acres, for up to two years, after completion of all practice requirements. Only one payment will be made for this practice in a single crop year, regardless of the number of phosphorus applications. If a 2-year rate application is made that complies with this standard, the producer will receive a payment each year, if the recommendation is not exceeded, and no surface broadcast applications are made in the two crop years.

Manure Incorporation and Utilization

Purpose

- To encourage the application and incorporation of manure into a growing crop
- To shift timing of manure application to better utilize nitrogen and phosphorus
- To reduce the risk of manure and nutrient runoff

Applicability

Manure Incorporation and Utilization applies to cropland acres in the project area. The producer is only eligible for one manure payment per field annually. Acres receiving payment under any other county, state, or federal program for Nutrient Management (EQIP, H2Ohio, MWCD, etc.) are not eligible. Cropland enrolled in CSP and receiving payment for NRCS Practices 590 are not eligible. Any documented discharge of manure may result in an automatic forfeiture of payment or dismissal from the H2Ohio program.

Specifications

1. Producer must have an approved Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan (VNMP), Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP).
 - a. Fields enrolled in this BMP, that use a fixed application rate, must have an average Mehlich-III soil test phosphorus level of 50 ppm or less. Fields enrolled in this BMP, that use a variable application rate, must have a Mehlich-III soil test phosphorus level of 50 ppm or less at the grid or zone level.
 - b. Plant available nitrogen applied through the manure shall not exceed the nitrogen recommendations for the current crop or the next planned crop, whichever is applicable. If the following crop is a legume, nitrogen can be applied at the nitrogen removal rate for the legume crop up to a maximum of 150 pounds of plant available nitrogen at the time of application.
2. Manure cannot be surface applied to frozen, snow-covered, or saturated soils.
3. Manure cannot be surface applied if there is a greater than 50% chance of precipitation exceeding ½" in the next 24 hours.
4. A cover crop is required for manure applications completed after June 30 and where a growing crop is not present.
5. Manure is animal excreta
6. **All manure applications must be completed by October 31.**

Manure application must be accomplished in a manner consistent with one of the following methods and timing

Incorporated or Injected Applications

- All manure will be injected or incorporated to a minimum of 2 inches below the surface. Surface applied manure must be incorporated using a full-width disturbance tillage tool to mix the manure with the soil.
- Manure shall be applied after April 1 and before crop emergence and must be incorporated within 24 hours of application.
- Manure is applied via side dress injection to a growing corn crop after emergence.
- Manure may be applied to wheat or overwintering cover crop with a grassland applicator or comparable equipment after green-up.

- Manure is injected directly into the soil in an established covers with minimal surface disruption.
- Manure is surface applied after the harvest of a crop and incorporated within 24 hours of application.

In-season Applications

- Manure may be irrigated from June 1 to August 30 on a growing crop.
- Manure may be applied to a perennial forage immediately after harvest of the perennial forage.
- Pen pack or dry manure (cannot be pumped through a dragline) applied after April 1 and before June 30 does not have to be incorporated if there is 75% crop residue at the time of application.
- Pen pack or dry manure (cannot be pumped through a dragline) applied after harvest of a small grain and before August 30 on an established cover crop does not have to be incorporated if there is 75% living cover.

Participant Payments

- Participants will receive \$35/ac/yr for dry manure (cannot be pumped through a dragline) utilization, and \$60/ac/yr for all other manure utilization.
- A \$15/ac/yr. Bonus payment will be made to fields that have a field average of less than 25 ppm Mehlich-III.
- Payment will be made on acres where manure application was completed. Payments will be made annually after all requirements have been verified.
- If a 2-year manure application is made, only one payment will be made in that 2-year period. Also, no more nutrients may be applied until those nutrients are utilized.
- Only one manure utilization payment will be made per field annually regardless of how many applications are made.