

Boost your bottom line with

Grazing Land Management



The benefit to your farm:

Your local Soil and Water Conservation District can help you qualify for funds that decrease the cost of implementing grazing land management, which can boost your bottom line by:

- Increasing forage production.
- Lowering feed costs.
- Reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers.
- Increasing drought resilience.

Money comes from the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program, which is carried out by conservation districts and administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

How it works:

Enhanced management of grazing systems reduces overgrazing, improves the quantity, quality, and utilization of forage, and ensures manure is evenly distributed across pastures. Livestock rotations are managed to maintain minimum forage height and rest periods, and a minimum 60% cover is maintained on pastures. Nutrient and pH levels are monitored with soil testing to improve or maintain desired forage species. Annual evaluation using the Pasture Condition Score tracks pasture conditions and progress. A written Grazing Management Plan and Operation and Maintenance Plan must be prepared and followed for all acres in the grazing system.

The payoff:

In State Program Year 2027, the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program reimbursement rate is a one-time incentive payment of \$75 per acre.

Avoiding overgrazing reduces erosion, increases water infiltration, and cuts runoff to nearby streams and ponds—protecting water quality. More even distribution of manure can lower synthetic fertilizer needs and build active, carbon-rich soils. Improved forage quality and quantity boosts your bottom line by decreasing the need for baled hay while providing healthier forage by giving paddocks time to rest and recover after the last feeding.

Next steps.

Conservation begins with your local Soil and Water Conservation District, which can help you apply for cost-share funding programs to help you implement grazing land management best management practices. District staff also can identify other conservation programs for which you might qualify.

Who may apply?

Applicants must meet basic program eligibility requirements. All fields that receive cost-share under this practice must be perennial pasture and have had all livestock previously excluded from all surface waters and sink-holes. Any field that is part of a rotational grazing system is eligible.



Interested?

Contact your Soil and Water Conservation District.
Find your district at www.dcr.virginia.gov/districts

