

**APPENDIX A
CONSERVATION PRACTICES PROGRAM (CPP)
NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Nutrient Management Plan conservation practice, eligible under the CPP, is to assist agricultural landowners/operators in optimizing the application of nutrients for plant production, while minimizing offsite impacts to the environment and protecting water quality.

PRACTICE STANDARD

To be eligible for a CPP incentive payment, a Nutrient Management Plan must follow the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation practice standard for either Nutrient Management (Code 590) or Waste Utilization (Code 633). NRCS conservation practice standards for nutrient management plans include the University of Illinois, Illinois Agronomy Handbook recommendations for rate, timing and placement of nutrients and procedures for soil sampling and calculating yield potential.

LAND ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to agricultural land within a watershed approved by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. All cropland and pastureland that is actively used for producing an agricultural commodity or plant material is eligible for the Nutrient Management Plan conservation practice provided other eligibility and selection criteria are met. There is no limit on the number of acres that may be planned or receive an incentive payment.

LANDOWNER/OPERATOR ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to agricultural producers who own or operate agriculture land within high priority watersheds designated by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Landowners/operators who meet program eligibility and selection criteria may receive a Nutrient Management Plan incentive payment one time only on the same farm, operating unit or acreage.

INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

An incentive payment of \$5 per acre will be made by the SWCD to eligible and approved landowners/operators who develop and implement a Nutrient Management Plan. An additional \$2 per acre will be paid by the SWCD to the approved plan preparer.

Landowners/operators with a reduced tillage system on cropland who are approved for development of a Nutrient Management Plan may receive a supplemental \$2 per acre for performing a soil test for phosphorus in the upper 2 inches of the soil profile. All incentive payments will be made on a per acre basis. The number of acres that qualify for an incentive payment is based on the number of acres that directly benefit from the plan, and for which soil testing and other nutrient management information is prepared.

APPLICATION

Landowners/operators who are interested in the Nutrient Management Plan conservation practice may apply at the SWCD office in the county where the agricultural land is located. Form CPP-1 (Application/Contract/Payment Form), will be used to request the Nutrient Management Plan practice, along with other eligible conservation practices. If the conservation practice(s) is approved, Form CPP-1A (Agreement Terms and Conditions) will also be used.

PRIORITIZATION

Requests from landowners/operators for the Nutrient Management Plan conservation practice should be prioritized prior to selection and approval of financial incentives by the SWCD. Prioritization will ensure that the requests approved for funding will result in the most efficient use of state dollars for protecting water quality.

The Phosphorus Assessment Procedure, found as an appendix in the NRCS Nutrient Management and Waste Utilization practice standards, should be used as a guideline in comparing the relative water quality benefits of requests for the Nutrient Management Plan conservation practice. Risk assessments that indicate a “high” or “medium” potential for the five site characteristic criteria, should have a higher potential for protecting water quality than one with a “low” assessment potential. Therefore, Nutrient Management Plan requests should be approved, first, for land that has a “high” risk potential.

LANDOWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon approval and signing of CPP/NMP-1, CPP/NMP-2 and CPP-1A forms, the landowner/operator may proceed with making arrangements for preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan. The landowner/ operator is responsible for providing the necessary information for the plan regarding field and cropping history, previous fertility programs and crop yields. Following preparation of the Nutrient Management Plan, the landowners/operator is also responsible for fully implementing the plan.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN PREPARER QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Qualified Nutrient Management Plan preparers must be individuals who hold one or more of the following certifications:

- Certified Crop Advisor
- Certified Crop Scientist
- Certified Professional Crop Consultant
- Certified Professional Agronomist
- Certified Professional Soil Scientist

Qualified plan preparers must be certified by the USDA-NRCS as a “Third Party Vendor” for the development of nutrient management plans.

Nutrient Management Plan preparers are responsible for preparing a plan that follows the NRCS conservation practice standards for Nutrient Management (Code 590) or Waste Utilization (Code 633), and contains all the information outlined in the “Plan Contents” section below. The

“Nutrient Management Plan” form (attached) must be fully completed and submitted to the SWCD for certification, before the landowner/operator may implement the plan.

Following the implementation of the Nutrient Management Plan by the landowner/operator, the plan preparer must certify that the plan was implemented, as planned, by completing the “Nutrient Management Plan Implementation Report” (attached). A copy of the Nutrient Management Plan Implementation Report must be submitted to the SWCD.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTENTS

Nutrient management plans will include:

- Aerial site photographs or maps and a soils map.
- Soil test results. Plans will be based on soil tests no older than 4 years. Soil samples will be collected using the University of Illinois guidance and analyzed in an approved soil test laboratory. At a minimum, soil tests will include pH, phosphorus, and potassium.
- Current and/or planned crop rotation and appropriate legume credits for nitrogen.
- Yield goals. Nutrient application rates will be based on amounts required for realistic expected yields which will be calculated using the following method:
 1. Use the actual yields for each field from the previous 5 years.
 2. Discard any yields that differ more than 25% from the average yield.
 3. Average the remaining yields and multiply by 1.05.
 4. If yield records are not available for a field, select a realistic expected yield using the productivity index values given for the soil types in the field.
- Nutrient budgets for nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium quantifying all nutrient sources (i.e., commercial fertilizer, manure, by-products, irrigation water, etc). The recommended rates will be based on the University of Illinois fertility recommendations outlined in the most recent edition of the Illinois Agronomy Handbook.
- Planned rates, methods, timing, and form of nutrient application. Indicate if P and/or K applications are for more than one crop year.
- Nutrient management plan needs to take into account elements of other plans; e.g., if the farmer is using no-till to meet conservation compliance requirements.
- Restrictions on nutrients being applied to frozen, snow covered, or saturated soil if the potential risk for runoff exists. Fall applications of nitrogen shall follow the guidelines in the most current version of the Illinois Agronomy Handbook.
- Location of sensitive areas (if present) and any nutrient management restrictions; e.g., around sink holes, wells, etc.

SWCD CERTIFICATION/PAYMENT

Following the preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan by a qualified plan preparer, the plan must be certified as meeting the NRCS Nutrient Management Standard. The signature of a

qualified NRCS or SWCD employee must be present on the plan, as well as the signatures of the landowner/operator and plan preparer.

Upon receipt of the signed Nutrient Management Plan from the plan preparer, the SWCD may issue the \$2 per acre payment to the plan preparer. Following implementation of the plan and upon receipt of the Nutrient Management Plan Implementation report, signed by an eligible plan preparer, the SWCD may issue the \$5 per acre incentive payment (and \$2 per acre supplemental payment, if approved), to the landowner/operator.

REPORTING

The Illinois Department of Agriculture may request periodic reports regarding the implementation of the Nutrient Management Plan practice.