**2023-2024 Montgomery Soil Conservation District**

**WQPC Commodity Cover Crop** **Application**

**Applicant Name and Mailing Address: Phone #:**

**Due to a noticeable shift in acres from the Maryland Department of Agriculture traditional cover crop program, to the District’s commodity cover crop program, changes to our program had to be made given the impact on our annual budget. For the District to maintain the $15 per acre commodity cover crop reimbursement, we must limit each applicant’s enrolled acres for the Commodity Cover Crop Program this year. To be as fair as possible, we have computed the average number of commodity acres certified for the past 3 years by each participant. Your acreage for cost share will be capped at this average for the 2023-2024 program year. Unfortunately, we cannot fund more acres than those allocated to you. If you would like to participate in the program, please review the terms below and sign and date this form.**

**Your eligible acreage is**

Please return this form to the Montgomery Soil Conservation District. Completed applications will be accepted via U.S. mail, email, or may be dropped off at the District Office in Derwood. Scanned copies of completed applications may be emailed to james.harne@md.nacdnet.net

A current **Nutrient Management Plan** and a **Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan** are required for participation in this program. The Maryland Department of Agriculture “Current Nutrient Management Plan Certification” form shall be submitted to meet this nutrient management requirement. Participants will have until July 18th to provide this form to the District. Do you have current **Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans** (< 10 years old) for land you farm? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (yes/no). If no, do you agree to work with the Montgomery Soil Conservation District to complete these items for farms you wish to enroll in this program?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(yes/no). **Only land farmed within Montgomery County is eligible for this program.**

1. An applicant does not have to participate in the Maryland Department of Agriculture Cover Crop Program to be eligible for the District’s Commodity Cover Crop cost share program, however planting rates, dates, and methods must be consistent with those eligible under the 2023/2024 Maryland Department of Agriculture Program. Acres planted must also be reported to the District in the fall. Nutrients may only be applied to small grains in the fall based on the results of a Fall Soil Nitrate Test. This is a requirement of Maryland Nutrient Management Regulation. Fall nutrients may be applied up to the maximum allowable amount set by the University of Maryland. Fall chemical applications may be made until December 15th on an existing crop. Organic fertilizer applications must occur prior to November 15th. Organic nutrients must be incorporated unless you are following no till farming principles. Additional nutrients may not be applied prior to March 1st, 2024. (Unless the University of Maryland determines that the necessary number of growing degree days has been reached and recommends fertilization prior to March 1st, to maximize yield). Follow the University of Maryland Extension Brief EBR-15 for recommendations on how to perform the Fall Soil Nitrate Test (FSNT).
2. The last planting date for commodity cover crops will be November 5th. Applicants must report acres planted for this program by November 13, 2024. A seed tag or seed test must be provided showing at least 80% germination for the crop planted and containing no prohibited or noxious weeds. Fall spot checks will be performed to verify the acreage planted, seeding rate, and planting method. Acres that do not meet the required standard will be ineligible for reimbursement.
3. Applicants may submit for reimbursement for their commodity cover crops between March 1, 2024 and June 3, 2024. An applicant does not have to harvest the cover crop in order to be eligible for reimbursement, but it must not be suppressed until after March 1, 2024.
4. Applicants must provide copies of the Fall Soil Nitrate Test for each field enrolled in the program if they fall fertilize. Farmers should consult with their nutrient management advisor on the appropriate number of tests necessary per farm or management unit.
5. The Montgomery Soil Conservation District will provide a $15.00 reimbursement per acre for land enrolled in the program as long as all requirements are met. Payments will be made via check following spring certification but not before March 1, 2024.
6. The applicant certifies: I have read and understand the terms of this program. I request cost sharing under this program to install a water quality best management practice. I agree to follow the process as outlined above. I have read the program guidelines and understand the steps involved for approval. I understand I am not approved for cost-share funds until I have met all requirements outlined in this application. If at any time program requirements are not met, the agreement can be cancelled by the District with no obligation to pay the applicant and any payments already made will be forfeited. I understand this agreement may be terminated automatically, without liability to the District, if there are no available public funds under the program supporting this project.

Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

MSCD Administrative Review: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_