

**Climate Resilient Farming Program  
Round 6 Questions and Answers  
March 11, 2022**

**Round 6 Questions**

**Q: How are we able to reflect the 100% cost share (for soil health testing, outreach, and technical assistance) on the SW-2? When the cost is input, it affects the total percentage of the state rate, thus impacting the cost percentage of other costs.**

A: Outreach can be listed as Other Direct Expense on the SW-2 and not included in the SW3. The 80/20 cost share percentage for BMP implementation will be reflected on the SW-3.

**Q: If a farm is rotating their crops and will be putting fields into hay for 3-5 years as part of their soil health planning, can they utilize the pasture and hay planting practice (512) as part of their soil health system?**

A: Yes, Pasture and Hay planting (512) is an eligible practice as part of a soil healthy system under CRF Track 3 Healthy Soils NY.

**Q: Can you explain exactly what you mean by “Commitment by producer and District to record results in event of adverse weather.” What should these records look like?**

A: The statement, “Commitment by producer and District to record results in event of adverse weather” is listed in the proposal rating sheet in relation to Track 1 scoring for the category GHG Emissions Reduction and Resiliency. The statement refers to how the farm or District will track and record the impacts of a storm on the farm in relation to the manure storage overtopping and how the cover will increase the resiliency of the farm through preventing this issue.

**Q: Are weather stations as part of an IPM system eligible?**

A: Yes, IPM is in the Ag BMP Catalogue making it an eligible practice that could be implemented as a CRF Round 6 Track 3 Soil Health project. An IPM System could be proposed implementing Pest Management Conservation System (595) and include weather monitoring equipment, which directly relates to the practice system. The IPM plan itself would not be eligible at this time and any necessary subscriptions for service should be proposed as match. A District that is working with a farm on a project like this would want to include in their application information about how the weather monitoring equipment relates to the IPM implementation to provide the connection between the equipment and BMPs proposed.

**Q: Conflict of Interest - I am planning soil health projects on the farms of three of our five directors. Can I do separate resolutions for each project, where the participating directors recuse themselves**

**from the conversation and resolution for just their application? Or do the participating directors need to recuse themselves from all conversations regarding our CRF Round 6 applications?**

A: SWCD Board Members/Directors involved in applications for CRF would need to recuse themselves from discussions regarding their specific application and contract. Separate resolutions for each application would be an appropriate approach that would allow the Board Members to recuse themselves from the resolution pertaining to their application. The minutes should note the name and times that each Board Member left and returned the meeting to recuse from the agenda item.

**Q: Recently Tioga County Cornell Cooperative Extension purchased a farm, while they are a 501c3, they now own land and buildings and are in the AEM program working with the local SWCD to plan a stream corridor plan that involves buffers, wetland restoration, and flood mitigation practices that would benefit not only this farmstead but also farms downstream. Is this an eligible entity for CRF funding?**

A: A CCE could be an eligible participant if the farm owned by the CCE is being operated as a commercial enterprise.

**Q: We have been contacted by a municipality regarding a stream problem site. Stream erosion is causing problems for the Town road as well as eroding adjacent farm property and a stream crossing used by the farm to access their fields. If the farmer is not interested in applying, can the Town apply and do the work, which would benefit both the town and the farm, as long as they get written agreement from the farm? Or does application need to be in the farm name?**

A: Specific farms that will benefit from water management systems funded under this program must be identified on the Track2 application and SW3, whether contributing match or not. The municipality would be included as a partner and listed on the SW3 if providing match. The agreement between the farm owner/operator must be for a term at least as long as the life span of the BMPs proposed to be implemented. The agreement must also specify which party will be responsible for maintaining the BMPs.

**Q: If a farm has a digester or a digester is under construction, can they apply for a waste storage cover without a flare? If the farm has a plan for a digester, but no construction has commenced, can they apply for a waste storage cover without a flare?**

A: The project must demonstrate the destruction or utilization of the methane captured from the covered manure storage. The cover system must capture biogas emission and transfer biogas to a point of discharge with a flare or biogas utilization equipment as appropriate. A flare should be considered as a failsafe control should the digester encounter malfunctions. In the case that a flare is not installed, the collection, control, and utilization of biogas must meet the appropriate criteria in NRCS CPS 366 Anaerobic Digester. Digesters are not eligible for cost-share under CRF Round 6.

**Q: A dairy farm in our county already has an anaerobic digester system to extract methane from their manure. They would like to cover their waste storage both to capture additional methane and increase their climate resiliency by excluding rainwater. Can the cover be designed so that the additional methane can be captured and utilized in the existing system? Or is a flare a required component in every case?**

A: The project must demonstrate the destruction or utilization of the methane captured from the covered manure storage. The cover system must capture biogas emission and transfer biogas to a point of discharge with a flare or biogas utilization equipment as appropriate. A flare should be considered as a failsafe control should the digester encounter malfunctions. In the case that a flare is not installed, the collection, control, and utilization of biogas must meet the appropriate criteria in NRCS CPS 366 Anaerobic Digester.

**Q: Is a digester an eligible practice as a standalone project in CRFT1 or does it need to be in combination with a Cover and Flare System?**

A: Digesters are not eligible for cost-share under CRF Round 6.

**Q: NY NRCS 590 nutrient management is eligible for Track 3 – Soil Health. Can the latest NY NRCS cost-share rate be used for a flat rate reimbursement? The 590 is set at a rate of \$41.08/ac for injection or incorporation. The \$31.81/ac you see in column F – Unit Payment is the 75% amount that EQIP will reimburse for. This would mean no documentation of actual cost would be required of the farm or do they need to track all expenses and provide that documentation to determine their actual final reimbursement rate?**

A: Yes, the District may propose and justify using the EQIP rate for the 590 injection or incorporation practice. Documentation for actual cost would not be required when proposing to use a per acre rates.

**Q. Is an extension of the farm's buried pipe for their dragline system (NY NRCS 634 waste transfer) to allow them to access additional acres of land to incorporate their manure on an eligible practice under Track 3 – Soil Health?**

A: Yes, the inclusion of 634 waste transfer into the Nutrient Management system under Track 3 would be eligible. There should be emphasis made on a reduction in synthetic fertilizer use and/or increased efficiency of nutrient management *resulting in a decrease of nitrous oxide emissions* on the additional acres the extension will provide.

**Q: The announcement for CRF Round 6 mentions “stabilize or reinforce conveyances” under Track 2. I’ve been working with a local corn producer who has had issues with lateral streambank migration due to increased flooding in our region over the last couple of decades. This has resulted in severe soil loss on valuable farmland. Though Track 2 doesn’t specifically mention streams, would conveyances include streams by definition?**

A: Yes, the following system and practices are eligible under Track 2 relating to stream management.

**Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management Systems** stabilize and reinforce existing waterways to accommodate high flows with minimal damage. This system could be used to address unmet needs from previous events that still pose threats or as proactive steps. BMPs listed under this system include:

- Channel Bed Stabilization (NRCS584)
- Stream Bank and Shoreline Protection (NRCS580)
- Open Channel (NRCS582)
- Clearing and Snagging (NRCS326)
- Obstruction Removal (NRCS500)

**Q: In the definition for farmer, it says produce a crop: are trees, Christmas trees, maple sap, nuts, etc. considered a crop? Is there a minimum dollar value for sales to qualify as a farmer like with Ag Value Exemption?**

A: The farm does not have to meet a minimum dollar value for sales to qualify for CRF. As long as the landowner or operator is raising an agricultural or forestry product as a commercial enterprise, they are eligible to participate in the CRF Program.

**Q: Landowners that rent land to a farmer are eligible, am I applying for the farmer or the landowner?**

A: Non-Farming landowners could be eligible to participate in the CRF program. The land where the best management practice will be located must be actively worked by a farm operation. A rental agreement between the non-farming landowner and the farm operation must be in place for the lifespan of the proposed best management practice system.

**Q: New Participant Benefit – If one farmer included in the application has not been awarded cost share in CRF, AgNPS, or AEM Base Implementation but other farmers included have been previously awarded does the application qualify for the New Participant Benefit of 5 points?**

A: No, the application would not qualify for the new participant benefit unless all the farmers qualified for the benefit.

**Q: If an application is for multiple farms and some/one of the farm(s) have received previous funding while some/one of the farm(s) are considered a “New Participant”, will the application receive the 5 preference points?**

A: No, the application would not qualify for the new participant benefit unless all the farmers qualified for the benefit.

**Q: New Landowner but same farm do they qualify for New Participant?**

A: Yes, new ownership would qualify as a new participant.

**Q: The farm in question was awarded the grant but never received any of the funding. They chose to opt out and changed operation for a few years. Would they still be ineligible for the New Participant points - even without taking any funding?**

A: If they were previously awarded but the contract was cancelled, they would qualify for the new participant benefit.

**Q: I am putting together an Irrigation Water Management System project application for CRF Round 6. The COMET Planner does not have Irrigation Water Management Systems or NRCS Practices available to quantify or estimate GHG emission reductions for this project. Question # 21 of the CRF R6 application asks "What is the proposed GHG emission reduction? (Utilizing COMET-Planner or methodology outlined in guidance documents)" Page 18 of the guidance document does not outline any additional methodology besides the COMET Planner. Is there other suitable methodology to quantify proposed GHG emission reductions?**

A: No, there are not any alternative methodologies to estimate GHG reduction from water management practices. These practices are adaptation practices to help increase the resiliency of the farm. Please emphasize these characteristics of the project. All the projects under Track 2 will be scored more for the adaptation value they provide over the GHG reduction.

**Q: A grower interested in the Climate Resiliency grant is researching air to water heat pumps to switch over from coal to sustainable heating for his farm buildings. With how much greenhouse gas emissions reductions that would result from that project (especially because he now has solar powering the whole farm!) it seems like it'd be a good fit for climate resiliency. However, it doesn't fit the water quality or soil health tracks at all. Do you see anything that would allow for that?**

A: Projects must fit within one of the existing tracks for funding. Energy upgrades are not currently supported as stand-alone projects under the Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 6. There may be available resources to support energy efficiency measures and clean energy upgrades through NYSERDA - <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/business-and-industry/agriculture> or National Grid - <https://www.nationalgridus.com/Upstate-NY-Business/Energy-Saving-Programs/Agri-business-program>. (Round 6)

**Q: We are proposing that a couple farms will implement the new NRCS standard 808 Soil Carbon Amendment. The COMET Planner does not have that specific standard listed. Does State Committee have any recommendations on which standard available in COMET planner we could use as a substitute for this?**

A: For estimating GHG reduction for compost application using interim standard Soil Carbon Amendment (NRCS 808) use COMET-Planner for California Healthy Soils Program - <http://comet-planner-cdfahsp.com/>. The Soil Carbon Amendment (808) practice is available on this version of COMET. Include the estimate in your total and note in the narrative that COMET Planner California Healthy Soils Program was used for the estimation of this practice. (Round 6)

**Q: Most winter growing in NY state requires supplemental heat to keep the plants alive and growing. The main form of heating is propane, which is very expensive and burns fossil fuels. Some growers are experimenting with geothermal systems to replace propane heating, but the cost of installing these systems can be very burdensome on the growers. Would a geothermal system for a greenhouse or high tunnel be considered in the CRF grant? A geothermal system in the greenhouse or high tunnel would stop greenhouse gas emissions from propane heat while providing a more stable year-round income for farmers and fresh produce for the community.**

A: Energy upgrades are not currently supported as stand-alone projects under the Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 6. There may be available resources to support energy efficiency measures and clean energy upgrades through NYSEDA - <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/business-and-industry/agriculture> or National Grid - <https://www.nationalgridus.com/Upstate-NY-Business/Energy-Saving-Programs/Agri-business-program>. (Round 6)

**Q: Is a farm eligible to apply that wants to plant chestnut and hazelnut trees in open fields in a savannah style Silvopasture along with some other water management practices including waterways and terracing? Do animals have to be present on the land or is it ok for them to be on another farm while the Silvopasture gets established?**

A: Silvopasture (NRCS381) is an eligible practice under Track 3 Healthy Soils NY. Including the establishment of a Silvopasture. Water management practices directly related to the Silvopasture system would be eligible within Track 3. The application narrative should include information about the long-term planning and management of the Silvopasture system to ensure project success. (Round 6)

**Q: Are the components of dragline systems and manure injection systems eligible expenses in the CRF Healthy Soils NY Track 3? Would a farm be able to purchase a manure pump, draghose, tool bar, etc. in order to implement manure injection for better nutrient(nitrogen) management?**

A: Under Track 3 Healthy Soils NY, Nutrient Management (590) is eligible only for manure incorporation or reduction in synthetic fertilizer-use following an existing Nutrient Management Plan. Dragline systems and manure injection systems are manure incorporation practices and are therefore eligible. Equipment is eligible for cost-share if it directly relates to the function of the BMP being implemented. (Round 6)

**Q: Provide clarification on the new participant benefit.**

A: For the new participant benefit, it states in the RFP that proposals that include farm operations that have not previously participated in SWCC cost-share programs including CRF, AgNPS, and AEM Base Implementation will receive 5 preference points to be applied to the overall application score. Preference points will be applied by SWCC staff at application review utilizing the SWCCs internal database of past participants.

As the applicant you will need to answer the corresponding question in the application regarding the farm being a new participant. If that question is marked “yes” the farm will be searched for in the SWCC cost-share program database. If the farm has not been awarded a grant from any SWCC programs than the proposal will receive an additional 5 points added to the final aggregated score. (Round 6)

**Q: Clarify guidance that “Projects that incorporate training and outreach including cover crop signs with acreage cover cropped will score higher than just implementation projects.”**

A: This guidance suggests that the SWCC would like to see projects that have both planting of cover crops and an outreach/educational component. (Round 6)

### **Previously Asked Questions**

**Q: Can state funds be used to purchase equipment to complete implementation of Best Management Practices associated with Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management Systems? Specifically, could an excavator be purchased to install the system and then be owned and maintained by the District for future stream corridor and shoreline management implementation projects.**

A: Equipment must be directly related to the function of the BMP. An excavator would not be directly related to the function of the BMP and therefore is not eligible. (Round 5)

**Q: What NRCS standard should be used for permanent seedings in the vineyards? Also, where and how do I put in the equipment costs? The district will own it not the farms.**

A: The practice standard to use would be Conservation Cover 327. The flat rate for Conservation Cover of Orchard or Vineyard Alleyways is \$87.29/acre based on 2019 NY EQIP rates.

Equipment costs should go under Other Direct Expenses on the SW2. They would not go on the SW3. (Round 5)

**Q: We would like to apply for funding to interseed rye on 160 acres of corn. In our scenario the farm plans to plant approximately 160 acres of corn in 2020 and purchase an interseeder through the grant program to interseed Rye into corn around June. The soy beans that he would then plant the following year he would cover crop when the soy bean is removed, which would be Rye, but it would not be interseeded. So, under this scenario those interseeded acres would be moving around the farm. But the way I understand things, he needs to cover the same acres for 3 consecutive years.**

A: There is not currently a rule against changing fields for cover crops based on rotation, but the total acres proposed to be cover cropped must be implemented. Unless the farm is currently receiving cost share assistance with state funding to cover crop the soy than it would be eligible for cost share under the proposed scenario. Additionally, as long as the interseeder is utilized for cover crop implementation during the duration of the contract than it would not need to be on the same fields. (Round 5)

**Q: The District has a client who raises and finishes beef on pasture. They also have a dedicated field to growing hay as a source of supplement feed for the winter. The past few years, both the pasture and**

**hay fields did not produce enough due to droughts. Would a Water-Reel big gun type of sprinkler (compliant with NRCS Sprinkler Standard Code 442) be eligible for funding through the Climate Resilient Farming grant?**

A: CRF cannot fund single components, projects must propose a complete system. An Irrigation Water Management System would be eligible but must also meet the goals of the program to reduce the environmental footprint of the farm. (Round 5)

**Clarification on Cost Share Rate:** Items for 100% cost share for outreach and technical assistance should be listed under Other Direct Expenses Related to Project (line F on SW2). (Round 5)

**Clarification on Project ID:** The prioritization number relates to the prioritization per track not overall. If you are submitting multiple applications for different tracks and multiple applications within a track you would prioritize within each track. The following example is for Niagara SWCD submitting two Track 1 applications and two Track 3 applications. (District # - Track # - prioritization #) (Round 5)

- 30-1-1
- 30-1-2
- 30-3-1
- 30-3-2

**Q: Under the Rd. 5 CRF Highlights page 1. Cost Share Rate, listed items for 100% cost share are (soil health training, cover crop signs, and soil health testing). What and who is the soil health training for (District Folks or Farmers)? Or will the grant cover soil health seminar for farmers?**

A: Training is an eligible expense under Track 3 Healthy Soils NY. Training should be targeted towards landowners to increase likelihood of adoption of soil health practices. Projects that incorporate training and outreach including cover crop signs with acreage cover cropped will score higher than just implementation projects. Highest priority may not be most acres but increasing likelihood of adoption by demonstrating to others. (Round 5)

**Q: Are workshops relating to research on behavior science eligible within CRF?**

A: Soil health testing and soil health training are eligible components of a Track 3 soil health project. However, all CRF projects must be focused on implementing practice systems that will mitigate GHG emissions and enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change. Projects may not be solely focused on research or education, and they must be tied to climate change. Projects that incorporate training and outreach with acreage cover cropped will score higher than just implementation projects. (Round 5)

**Q: Would the purchase of an under-vine vineyard mower be eligible for the Climate Resilient Farming program? The mower would be owned by the District and rented out to farms for their use. This would allow for a significant reduction in runoff and erosion from vineyard lands and build a healthier soil for increased absorption of carbon from the atmosphere.**

A: Equipment that is directly related to the function of the BMP are eligible for state assistance under the CRF Program. Districts can request state assistance payments to cost-share the expense related to the purchase of equipment to be used on farms to implement BMP Systems. Specific farm(s) must be listed on the proposal who will be working with the District to implement the BMP systems. Additionally,

the Soil Conservation – Cultural System Implementation Policy for set rates could be utilized to implement the BMPs associated with the equipment being purchased. (Round 5)

**Q: We have a large crop grower in the county that had interest in a higher efficiency corn dryer. Is paying for a dryer something that would be fundable? There would of course be GHG emission reduction due to lower propane use.**

A: No. The project as described does not include an eligible practice system that would fit within any of the available funding tracks, as detailed in Section II of the RFP. Therefore, it is ineligible within CRF Round 5. (Round 5)

**Q: We received a call from a local farmer who is interested in switching his operation over to no till. He discovered our CRF RFP online and was asking if purchasing a roller crimper would be eligible.**

A: Equipment that is directly related to the function of the BMP is eligible for state cost-share. A roller crimper would be directly related to the function of the BMP and therefore is eligible. If being cost-shared for a farm, it should be explained why this specific piece of equipment is needed, and why it cannot be purchased by the District and made available to all applicable farms in the county. Additionally, the Soil Conservation – Cultural System Implementation Policy for set rates could be utilized to implement the BMPs associated with the equipment being purchased. (Round 5)

**Q: Is a tree planting practice allowable to be cost shared in the CRF as climate change mitigation on historic agricultural fields? I have a farm interested in reforesting some fields that were pastured or cut for hay years ago but are now periodically brush hogged to keep the weeds down. The fields are relatively steep and somewhat poorly drained. When you calculate the time of concentration, you have to consider the land use and a wooded watershed versus one that is in grass with machinery damage would slow down potential flood waters because of canopy, leaf litter, etc. Of course, this would be on a small scale, but the overall goal is to reduce the runoff curve number to the lowest possible number. I guess the better argument would be that the planting would store carbon over a long period of time and sort of kickstart the process of natural regeneration.**

A: Tree planting can be included as part of a CRF Round 5 proposal and can be cost shared up to 75 percent. A riparian buffer system could be used which employs the applicable standards 612 tree/shrub establishment and 490 tree/shrub site preparation. An erosion control system – structural could be utilized including 342 critical area planting as you noted the area has steep slopes and has poor drainage. Additionally, the stormwater design manual Ch. 5 Green Infrastructure has tree planting as a stormwater management practice for runoff reduction. Should you utilize the stormwater manual include additional detail as practices may not be as familiar with reviewers as NRCS practices. Also, noting GHG reductions and co-benefits of flood mitigation are encouraged. (Round 5)

### **Frequently Asked Questions Addressed in Previous Rounds**

**Can I apply for multiple tracks on behalf of the same farm?**

Yes, but you must submit separate applications for each track and the systems must each stand alone and not be dependent on the other.

**How long will the contract be?**

The contract term will start as 3 construction/growing seasons plus three months for administration to close out the project, with an additional 24 months possible through no cost time extensions (with consent of all parties), consistent with the Agricultural NonPoint Source program policies.

**Will there be a contract or a letter of agreement for a project seeking only \$10,000 in state funds? The RFP indicates awards \$10,000 or under may be via letter of agreement.**

The LOA is for the total state amount so yes, \$10,000 or under regardless of total project cost could be done under a LOA.

**The District received a grant through Round 1 of the CRF Program. The project design demonstrates a much higher cost than what was originally budgeted. Can the District apply for additional funds to cover the budget shortfall?**

No, the District cannot apply for additional funds to cover the budget shortfall for the Round 1 project. The District and farmer could decide to re-apply under the current Round for funds with a design in hand and more accurate budget for the project and cancel the Round 1 project.

### **Farm Eligibility**

**Is an educational, publicly owned farm eligible?**

The definition of a farm in the Agriculture and Markets Law (which is the definition that will be used for the Climate Resilient Farming program) is:

*"Farm operation" means the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise" (AGM Article 25-AA §301)*

The farm in question here is an educational rather than commercial enterprise and is therefore ineligible as a farm.

**Is a not-for-profit farm eligible?**

See question above for the definition of "farm operation." A farm is eligible as long as it meets the criteria of being a commercial farm, regardless of its 501(c)3 status.

**Is rented agricultural land that is owned by a municipality eligible for funding?**

Yes, rented agricultural land regardless of who owns the land is eligible for funding. BMPs to be implemented on rented property should not be submitted for funding unless there is a written lease for the use of the property for the life span of the BMP (page 6 of RFP).

**Is a farm that has an easement on it eligible?**

Yes, as long as the easement does not preclude any of the proposed practices.

**A local municipality along with a school district would like to partner with two downstream agricultural producers to implement a water management system to improve the stream corridor and make the whole watershed more resilient to increased severe storms. Is the municipality eligible as a partner with the agricultural producers for cost share and in-kind match as part of the project?**

Yes, a municipality is eligible as a partner with the agricultural producers for cost-share and/or in-kind match as part of the project. Match resources from the municipality should be reflected as a sub-category under sponsor match.

**We have a landowner in the county that is in the process of establishing a small farm on about 25 acres. The farm plans to graze animals and plant about 10 acres of apple and nut trees. As far as the Climate Resilient Farming grant is concerned, they are most interested in Track 3, and specifically the Prescribed Rotational Grazing System. Regarding eligibility, they are in the process of purchasing the property and establishing the farm, with an anticipated property transfer closing date at before the RFP deadline. Does the CRF Program require a certain level of experience or 'establishment' for a farming operation to apply?**

The CRF Program does not require a certain level of experience or establishment for a farming operation to apply. However, landownership and/or control must be established before the closing of the RFP and the District must conduct the required Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) assessment before the proposal details can be developed. In addition, the goal of the CRF Program is to reduce the impact of agriculture on climate change and to increase the adaptability and resiliency of New York State farms in the face of a changing climate. Any applications made on behalf of the farm(s) must meet these goals.

### **Match**

**Is there a minimum landowner/operator contribution requirement? Can the sponsor or County provide the whole 25% local match?**

There is no landowner/operator contribution requirement. The maximum state cost share rate is 75% with a 25% local match, which can be provided through District, federal, or landowner funds (or any combination thereof). State funding cannot match other state funds.

However, one of the metrics for scoring under “Cost Effectiveness” (worth 20% of the overall score) is “Landowner support is documented.” If the landowner is not providing funding for the project, it may be advisable to add some other documentation of landowner commitment to completing the project and eventual upkeep, operations, and maintenance.

### **Resources and Tools**

**Can we use the new program Water Erosion Prediction Project (WEPP) instead of RUSLE for calculations that will be used on the CRF application?**

WEPP may be used in place of RUSLE2 in the CRF application process, despite it not yet being allowed for use in planning for NRCS or CAFO purposes.

### **Equipment**

**Does the program have a preference on whether equipment is brand new or refurbished?**

Any District with specific questions about equipment etc. is welcome to ask specific questions regarding their situation.

However, a general rule of thumb consistent with the Agricultural Non-Point Source Program, is that equipment that has been professionally refurbished and/or carries a new warranty is likely to satisfy program requirements, and equipment that is being simply reused may not meet requirements.

**If a farm is applying to implement a double cover cropping system using a no-till drill and does not have a no-till drill, would that be an eligible expense to request funds for based on the equipment definition in the grant RFP? (If the equipment is directly related to the function of the BMP state assistance payments can be used.)**

Equipment that is directly related to the function of the BMP can be eligible for state assistance under the CRF Program. If being cost-shared for a farm, it should be explained why this specific piece of equipment is needed, why it cannot be purchased by the District and made available to all applicable farms in the county, and why the standard rate per acre reimbursement for cover crop practice systems is not the most feasible option to incentivize adoption of the conservation practice system(s).

**Under the RFP, Soil Health Track, can the District purchase equipment for assisting landowners in completing no till or composting practices and then work with them to implement?**

Equipment that is directly related to the function of the BMP can be eligible for state assistance under the CRF Program. Districts can request state assistance payments to cost-share the expense related to the purchase of equipment to be used on farms to implement BMP Systems. Specific farm(s) must be listed on the proposal who will be working with the District to implement the BMP systems.

**Are wind machines an eligible practice for funding through CRF? The machines are used to protect the vineyard during extreme cold air events and prevent frost damage.**

No. Wind machines do not currently fit under any of the eligible tracks or practice systems, as detailed in the RFP.

## **TRACK 1**

**With regard to Track 1, Agricultural Waste Storage and Flare, would a solids separator unit to help reduce carbon matter and gas development be an eligible component?**

The solids separation is considered a critical component of the system to reduce solids accumulation in the storage. It is eligible for cost-share as a part of a manure storage cover and flare system (refer to RFP Appendix A—Guidance Document Track 1).

**Is the flare a required component of Track 1, Agricultural Waste Storage Cover and Flare?**

Yes—the methane must be burned and converted to carbon dioxide.

**Is a CNMP required for Track 1? Are CNMP updates eligible for funding?**

Any farm receiving funding for a manure storage cover and flare system must have a CNMP. Updates to the CNMP are eligible for in-kind match (refer to RFP Appendix A—Guidance Document Track 1).

**We have a farm that is interested in applying for funds for a cover and flare. Does the storage need to already exist in order for the farm to apply for funding?**

No, the storage does not need to already exist to be eligible to apply for funding. However, the RFP and Rating Sheet requires specific information about the proposed amount of methane reduced, clean water exclusion, etc. from the storage. A design for the pending storage system should be in place in order to answer the required questions pursuant to the CRF RFP.

**A farm in the County is in the process of developing a two-staged earthen manure storage system to function with a new barn facility. The first facility is going to be smaller. The second storage facility is going to be much larger. Since both storage facilities are going to be considered part of the same system do, they both have to be covered to prevent rainwater from mixing in? In addition, how long is the producer required to track and report the amount of methane destroyed through the system?**

There is no requirement that both storage facilities be covered. However, additional consideration may be given for Adaptation/Resiliency points if both storages are covered. There is no required length of time for the producer to track and report the amount of methane destroyed. The Track 1 Proposal Rating Sheet includes consideration of the commitment by the producer and District to engage in regular testing and/or recording to be able to demonstrate greenhouse gas emission savings because of practice systems implemented. Additional consideration may be given in the scoring based on the length of time the producer and District commits to tracking and reporting greenhouse gas emissions savings.

**Is replacement of an existing waste storage cover eligible for funding? We have a farm that installed an anaerobic digester over 20 years ago and the cover needs replacement, would this be an eligible project under CRF, Track 1?**

Replacement of an existing waste storage cover that was installed as a component of an anaerobic digester is not eligible under CRF, Track 1.

**Can CRF funds, under Track 1, be used to upgrade a non-functional manure separator?**

No, CRF funds cannot be used to upgrade a non-functional manure solids/liquid separator.

### **TRACK 3**

**Can nutrient management, NY NRCS 590, be eligible for reimbursement through the CRF RFP in the Soil Health Track?**

Yes, nutrient management, NY NRCS 590, is an eligible practice system for reimbursement through the CRF RFP, Soil Health Track.

**Could you please provide some clarification on the CRF proposal Rating Sheet under Cost Effectiveness regarding farm expansion? Specifically, what is a clear definition of farm expansion as it relates to practice proposals under the Soil Health Track?**

Projects addressing needs due to farm expansion shall be defined as any proposed practice system(s) needed to enhance adaptation to climate driven extreme weather from intended or recent farm growth, as opposed to solely due to the new realities of changing climate. Examples could include proposals to extend current or recently cost-shared cover cropping to new crop fields obtained by a farmer or to expand current or recently cost-shared rotational grazing systems on new land acquired by a farmer.

**Under track 3, "will there be a reduction in nitrogen fertilizer as a result of practices systems implemented, and if so, how much? How do I estimate Nitrogen reductions?**

Nitrogen fertilizer reductions may be estimated a number of ways, including comparing current nitrogen fertilizer applications by the farm with those predicted to result from project implementation. Cornell University Nutrient Guidelines (<http://nmisp.cals.cornell.edu/guidelines/nutrientguide.html>) and associated tools and methods may be used to perform the estimates.

**If a farmer is going to do cover cropping or buffers in order to try and get mitigation points in conjunction with a project in track 2, should the cover crop or buffers be close by the main project?**

There is no requirement that the cover crop/buffers be proximal to the main project. However, a project with systems that are designed to function together in event of extreme weather are more likely to score better than a similar project with discrete systems that function on their own but do not build on each other.