

RFP0326
CAFO Enhanced Nutrient and Methane Management Program
Frequently Asked Questions
September 26, 2024

FINAL

- 1. Q: We have a farm that is planning to build two satellite waste storage facilities and wants to cover and flare both. Can we apply for both of these systems in one application for Track B?**

A: Yes, there is no limit to the number of Cover-and Flare Storages that may be proposed in Track B on one farm.
- 2. Q: If we applied for one system in Round 1 and it was awarded, would the farm be eligible to re-apply for a second system in the future round of this program?**

A: Yes, if awarded in Round 1 a farm may apply for funding of additional cover-and flare storages in subsequent rounds.
- 3. Q: Is there a scale for the cost effectiveness to determine how different cost share percentages will be awarded points?**

A: There is no scale of points that are attributed to certain cost-share percentages. Points are allocated if the “project leverages additional funding (i.e., federal or local) to match state funding requested”; the points attributed to the amount of leveraged funding will be determined, in part, by comparison to the average cost-share % of all applications in that Track.
- 4. Q: What types of Farm Operations are eligible for this program?**

A: Participating farms must be regulated by the CAFO General Permit and will need to provide the SPDES ID Number (e.g., NYA000123). Additional information about the CAFO permit is available, here: <https://dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/wastewater-stormwater-water-withdrawal/spdes-permit-program/concentrated-animal-feeding-operations>. There is no restriction on the type of CAFO operation eligible (e.g., dairy, poultry, racetrack).

Applicants must be considered in compliance with the appropriate CAFO General Permit requirements to be considered for funding. Funding cannot be provided to a CAFO that has an unresolved Notice of Violation under the terms of the CAFO General Permits. In cases where an enforcement action is underway, to be considered eligible for funding, a Consent Order with a compliance schedule must be enacted or the Notice of Violation must otherwise be resolved.

- 5. Q: Would the use of digital tools and models (i.e., AdaptN, CNCPS) be able to be cost shared via this grant application?**

A: Implementation of the Nutrient Management System – Cultural via Track A supports application equipment/systems for manure incorporation/injection or reduction in synthetic fertilizer use with an existing Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP); software or models are covered by this option provided they are incorporated into the CNMP and follow the NRCS-NY Nutrient Management Conservation Practice Standard (NRCS-NY 590). Per NRCS-NY 590, use of models such as AdaptN is allowable if following the guidelines for Adaptive Nitrogen Management for Field Crops in New York (<http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/guidelines/nutrientguide.html>). Successful applications will demonstrate how both climate and water quality goals are met by the models’ use.

Use of the CNCPS model is also eligible for cost-share funding via Track A as a part of a Feed Management System project. Such projects aim to optimize livestock feeding, nutrient use efficiency, and production

providing overall benefit for nutrient management on farms while reducing methane production per unit of production. CNCPS would be used by nutritionists to design, monitor, and advance diets/management and record herd performance during the project.

6. Q: Is Track B limited to Cover-and-Flare, or would the installation of a methane digester be eligible?

A: Digesters are not eligible for cost-share under CAFO ENMP Round 1.

7. Q: If the District currently has State funding through CRF 7 for a Manure Storage Cover and Flare project, could the District apply to Track B of the CAFO ENMP Program for additional funding and use the federal funds as match for the State CRF funds?

A: State cost-share funding for projects awarded by one program cannot be used as match to other State programs. A grant received from a federal cost-share program (e.g., from NRCS) may be used as match to a State program.

CAFO ENMP Round 1 is entirely supported by State funds from the NYS Clean Water Infrastructure Act; awarded Track B projects will be used to help satisfy the State's overall match requirements for federal funds awarded to NYS AGM through the USDA Climate Smart Commodities Program.

8. Q: If a project received partial funding from a previous grant, can the district apply for the balance of the project cost through CAFO-ENMP grant program?

A: State cost-share funding for projects awarded by one program cannot be used as match to other State programs. A grant received from a federal cost-share program (e.g., from NRCS) may be used as match to a State program.

9. Q: Are waste storages without a cover and flare eligible cost-share under Track A?

A: Longer-term, liquid waste storages are not eligible for cost-share within Track A. The following provides background for Track A Waste Storage and Transfer Systems from the RFP.

Waste Storage and Transfer Systems enhance nutrient collection and use for improved on-farm nutrient cycling, water quality, and soil health, but can increase methane production if manure is stored for longer periods as a liquid, especially during warmer temperatures. Waste Storage and Transfer Systems designed to manage manure in aerobic conditions and for shorter periods of time may provide water quality benefits and greenhouse gas mitigation/prevention relative to current conditions/management. Eligible Waste Storage and Transfer Systems for Track A may include but are not limited to: composted bedded pack livestock facilities; short-term waste collection and transfer systems; and innovative waste storage and transfer projects that improve nutrient management and reduce greenhouse production (provided they sufficiently demonstrate both a nutrient benefit and greenhouse gas reduction).

10. Q: Can a farm apply for manure application equipment/systems under the Nutrient Management System - Cultural if the farm is already currently completing these practices? If the farm is not converting or upgrading their system to one that improves soil health and they are expanding their set up; is that an eligible application?

A: Track A of the CAFO ENMP provides cost share for application equipment/systems for manure incorporation/injection or reduction in synthetic fertilizer through enhancements to the farm's existing management/condition and its Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan. Applicants must describe how the proposed system will improve nutrient management (water quality and greenhouse gas benefits) relative to the existing condition and, thereby, provide more information beyond the interest to expand the farm's manure application system.

11. Will the CRF Round 8 ranking be completed and announced before the deadline for the CAFO ENMP proposals are due?

A: CRF is proposed to be awarded in during Climate Week September 22–29, 2024 and CAFO ENMP proposals will be due on October 28, 2024.

12. Q: Can a farm apply for funds to increase capacity of an existing system to meet expansion? For example, could funding be eligible to meet silage treatment needs of an enlarged bunk silo.

A: Applicants to CAFO ENMP must be in compliance with the CAFO General Permit requirements to be considered for funding (i.e., ineligible if the farm has an unresolved Notice of Violation under the terms of the CAFO General Permit). Project proposals may involve systems to both enhance nutrient/greenhouse gas management relative to the current condition and be appropriately sized for the farm to ensure environmental performance.

13. Q: For Track A, are multiple systems within an application for a single farm eligible?

A: Yes, per section 2.3 of the RFP, a single project from a farm may be comprised of multiple BMP Systems from the Agricultural Best Management Practice Systems Catalogue, as long as all BMP Systems are eligible for the CAFO ENMP funding track selected (A or B).

14. Q: What should be shown on the SHPO CRIS Map regarding Nutrient Management Systems?

A: A SHPO Map is not required for any practices labeled with a No Effect designation within Table 1 of the NRCS NY Individual Undertakings list (2018; https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/NY/NRCS_NY_Undertakings2018.pdf). For example, a project to support drag hose and manure injection equipment to enhance nutrient management on a farm would be associated with the NRCS-NY 590 Conservation Practice Standard which has a No Effect designation in Table 1.

15. Q: In Track A, what qualifies a Short-Term Waste Collection and Transfer System for eligible funding and are there any storage duration requirements for these systems?

A: Waste Storage and Transfer Systems designed to manage manure in aerobic conditions and for shorter periods of time are eligible for Track A funding provided they sufficiently demonstrate both a nutrient benefit and greenhouse gas reduction. Requirements for the Short-Term Waste Collection and Transfer System are defined and described in the Agricultural BMP Systems Catalogue, including a storage duration limit not to exceed 60 days. Longer-term (i.e. 6-month), liquid waste storages are not eligible for cost-share within Track A and must pursue Track B with a Cover and Flare.

16. Q: How do applicant farms demonstrate that the projects “address the current herd size and not planned or future herd size”, as described in Additional Requirements of the Round 1 RFP?

A: Herd size is self-reporting and assumed accurate by the applicant farm’s signature on the application form. The CAFO ENMP is not intended to cover environmental costs associated with planned expansion. In cases where expansion is underway during the application process, farms should provide a letter of explanation and anticipated herd size at time of award (December 2024) as additional/supporting material with the application.

17. Q: What portions or components of an EQIP funded long-term liquid manure storage are eligible for Landowner match in the CAFO ENMP?

A: Longer-term, liquid waste storages are not eligible for cost-share or for use as match within Track A, because they do not provide both a nutrient and greenhouse gas benefit relative to current conditions/management. The following provides background for Track A Waste Storage and Transfer Systems from the RFP.

Waste Storage and Transfer Systems enhance nutrient collection and use for improved on-farm nutrient cycling, water quality, and soil health, but can increase methane production if manure is stored for longer periods as a liquid, especially during warmer temperatures. Waste Storage and Transfer Systems designed to manage manure in aerobic conditions and for shorter periods of time may provide water quality benefits and greenhouse gas mitigation/prevention relative to current conditions/management. Eligible Waste Storage and Transfer Systems for Track A may include but are not limited to: composted bedded pack livestock facilities; short-term waste collection and transfer systems; and innovative waste storage and transfer projects that improve nutrient management and reduce greenhouse production (provided they sufficiently demonstrate both a nutrient benefit and greenhouse gas reduction).

Additionally, sponsor and landowner contributions and expenditures made or incurred prior to the contract start date or after contract completion, as designated by the Department of Agriculture and Markets, may not be utilized as matching funds, or reimbursed by the State. Therefore, components of a different system on the farm that is already purchased prior to the CAFO ENMP contract may not be used for match, regardless of their GHG and nutrient removal status.

18. Q: Is custom application for manure injection available for cost-share in CAFO ENMP?

A: Yes, Custom Applicator Services for manure incorporation/injection are allowed by the CAFO ENMP; the details of the services should be clearly discussed in the narrative and the costs should be itemized and explained.

19. Q: Would a manure injection toolbar be considered a cost-shareable piece of equipment under Track A of CAFO ENMP?

A: Yes, application equipment/systems for manure incorporation/injection such as injection toolbars are eligible for Cost-share under Track A. Proposals should describe how the proposed use of the equipment in the Nutrient Management System improves management of nutrients and greenhouse gases above the current conditions of the farm's CNMP.

Recently Received Questions

20. Q: For questions 2 and 3 about loans from private lenders and FSA, respectively, in the financial hardship preference points section of the application, what "justification documentation" is deemed acceptable and who provides it?

A: No specific form is required to document financial hardship. If a 'yes' response is given, the landowner will need to provide an official document from a private lender or FSA which supports the answers regarding financial hardship provided in Part D of the application.

21. Q: I had a farmer interested in the animal composting facility (Track A of the CAFO ENMP). I was reviewing the application for the grant, and it asks for estimated reduction of greenhouse gases. I was wondering if there was a current standard for quantifying that?

A: The "Composting System – Animal" is intended to safely produce soil-enriching compost from livestock mortalities, resulting in a beneficial soil amendment, on-farm nutrient cycling, and reduced/avoided anaerobic conditions and associated methane production. There is no current standard for estimating the greenhouse gas reduction from such a System. Applicants are encouraged to outline how the proposed System is likely to enhance water quality and/or greenhouse gas emissions relative to the farm's existing management/condition (e.g., rendering, burial, anaerobic piling, other) using estimates or descriptions to the best of their abilities.

22. How should applicants answer Question 16 on the application (“Metric Tons of CO_{2e}GWP20 Estimated”) if a feasible method for quantifying greenhouse gas reduction estimates is not available or if the benefit relative to the existing condition will be minimal for a particular project in Track A?

A: Applicants may enter phrases like “not available” or “none”, respectively, in such cases, but are able to provide a qualitative description of likely greenhouse gas reductions (or lack thereof) in the narrative text block immediately following based on their knowledge and logic of emissions from the existing condition relative to the emissions from the implemented practice system.

23. We are interested in applying for the CAFO ENMP grant to help cover the cost of a manure injection tool that will integrate into our established no-till cropping system. An obstacle to practicing no-till crop management on a dairy farm is injecting manure in a manner that maintains soil integrity and allows for the proper placement of manure nutrients for crop uptake and maintenance of water quality. Is this a practice that could be considered eligible?

A: Track A of the CAFO ENMP provides cost share for application equipment/systems for manure incorporation/injection as long as they represent improvements/enhancements to the farm’s existing management/condition and its Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan. Applicants must describe how the proposed system will enhance the rate, placement, and timing of nutrient applications or reduction in synthetic fertilizer use for crops thereby resulting in a direct benefit for farm nutrient management and long-term reduction of greenhouse gas production relative to the existing condition.