



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS 2026 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE AND COVER CROP PROGRAMS

- The Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program (MACS) funding is an essential resource for farmers to install conservation projects on their farms to control soil, erosion, reduce nutrient runoff, support carbon sequestration and protect water quality.
- MACS also helps to get conservation projects on the ground that are funded through Farm Bill programs by supplementing a portion of the landowner's cost. As farmers are facing a challenging economy, support from the MACS program helps to ensure that federal investments are fully utilized.
- **MASCD supports the proposed budget of \$8M for MACS, along with funding for the Cover Crop Program, to ensure that Maryland farmers can maintain progress on water quality and climate goals.**

SUPPORT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS

- Technical support for farmers and landowners is critical to meeting Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Goals. Soil conservation districts connect farmers with financial assistance and help to leverage state investments in conservation through federal and local sources.
- **MASCD supports full funding for technical assistance and operating costs for FY27.**

COMMON-SENSE, IMPLEMENTABLE MEASURES FOR THE AG SECTOR

- MASCD values the work of partner agencies to support Maryland's diverse agricultural community, including value-added operations. We ask that legislation and regulations are structured to avoid unintended consequences that work against these efforts.
- **MASCD opposes HB91 to prohibit Neonicotinoid Pesticides, both because untreated seed stock is unavailable and because it's important for environmental goals to maintain a robust management "toolbox".**
- **MASCD is working with MDE and MDA to ensure that Erosion & Sediment Control requirements are both effective and practical as they relate to agricultural operations, especially where the state is also seeking to promote agritourism.**

MARYLAND'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS:

THE BOOTS ON THE GROUND TO HELP FARMERS MEET WATER QUALITY AND CLIMATE GOALS

Soil conservation districts (SCDs) are politically independent subdivisions of the state where a unique partnership exists between the state, federal and local governments in furtherance of conservation goals. SCDs work with farmers and landowners to carry out the state's agricultural conservation programs, implement best management practices (BMPs) on farms and review and approve urban erosion and sediment control plans to conserve our natural resources and protect the Bay.