

GUIDELINES FOR ON-FARM STATUS REVIEWS

The status review is required in accordance with Article 15.01.05.11 (Project Monitoring) of the MACS Regulations.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of a review are to determine that: 1) a cost-shared BMP is in place as designed and approved and to the extent reported; 2) BMPs are functioning as intended; 3) the landowner or tenant is performing routine maintenance such as mowing, weed control, clean-out of a Sediment Basin or maintaining an animal waste facility according to the Waste Management System Plan (WMSP); 4) there has been no change in operation or ownership, and if there were, to record the current information and begin Property Transfer paperwork and/or updating of the WMSP; 5) a current Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) exists for the operation.

District staff are to contact cooperators and landowners when they see a BMP that is in need of maintenance or that is being used improperly to try to assist in correcting any problems that may arise. It is extremely important for the District to establish a dialogue with cooperators to encourage proper use and maintenance. It is the intent of the program to have cooperators use and maintain BMPs properly. The MACS program relies heavily on the Districts to ensure the intent of the program is carried out. If however the efforts of the District fail, the Maryland Code of Regulations for Cost Sharing, Chapter .05.1.A, require the District to notify the Department of any violations.

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. MDA will generate a random list consisting of 10%, or a maximum of 50, completed projects in each district annually. The list indicating the applicant's name, project Agreement number, type of BMP(s) and date installed will be sent to the district along with *On-Farm Status Review of BMP Maintenance and Use* forms.
2. Any completed project may be randomly selected once every three years.
3. The Districts will assign a technically proficient person(s) from their staff to perform the reviews. The reviewer should **not** be the person who designed the project.

COMPLETING THE ON-FARM STATUS REVIEW FORM

1. **All** blocks on the form must be completed. All BMPs included on one Agreement must be entered on the same form, on separate lines, in the table near the top of the form with appropriate MACS practice type name and NRCS practice number. The extent of each practice as performed and the units are to be indicated in the designated column.
2. The Applicant's **current** name, address, and phone number must be provided. This is an aide to updating MACS and SCD records.
3. Do an on-site evaluation of the BMP. Carefully read each of the eleven questions and check *Yes, No or NA* as appropriate for the current conditions. If you respond "*No*" to any of questions 1-6, **or** "*Yes*" to any of questions 7-10, elaborate in the space for "SCD Description/Remarks." Please make mention of any particularly positive aspect of the project, such as excellent maintenance. If reviewing a roofed WSS, note percent of the structure used for animal waste storage and list the contents of the structure today. **Use the reverse side if necessary.**
4. ***If the practice is destroyed, damaged, abused, or its effectiveness is reduced for any reason, it must be reported on the On-Farm Status Review form and the cause must be specified (e.g., poor maintenance or an unpredictable act of nature).***
5. **Be sure to indicate the date in which all repairs are to be completed by in item 12.** After the On-Farm Status Review of BMP Maintenance and Use form is complete, the reviewer will enter his or her name and position, then sign and date the form. Completed forms are to be sent to MDA within three (3) weeks after an On-Farm Status Review has been performed.
6. If the project is found to be in unsatisfactory condition, the applicant will be advised via a letter from the MACS program administrator notifying him/her of the status of the project and asking him/her to contact their local SCD Office for specific information or assistance. Applicants with an unsatisfactory condition of a MACS agreement will not be eligible for any further grant assistance through the Conservation Grants Program if the deficiencies were caused by the applicant's negligence or poor maintenance. The District is to provide the necessary technical advice to the applicant for the required corrective measures. The MACS Program *may* provide financial assistance for repairs if the district certifies that damages to the project were due to an unpredictable act of nature.