

AG CONSERVATION LEASING: FOR THE LANDOWNER

HOW TO USE A FARM LEASE TO SUPPORT CONSERVATION PRACTICES ON YOUR LAND

WHY HAVE A LEASE?

- Risk Reduction
- Clear Expectations
- Allocation of Responsibilities

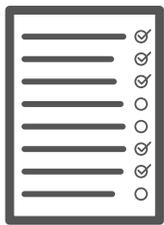
A lease can protect both the farmer and landowner by preventing miscommunication and providing clear guidelines of what is expected by both parties. Leases are becoming increasingly important as land transitions to new owners. A lease can also be used as a tool to support conservation practices on leased land.

HOW TO DISCUSS CONSERVATION PRACTICES WITH THE FARMER?

Communication

Spend time with your farmer and work together to identify how the farm could be improved by implementing conservation practices.

- What goals do you have for the farm?
- How can we make using conservation practices equitable?



HOW CAN A CONSERVATION PLAN HELP YOU REACH YOUR GOALS?

Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans are farm-specific plans that set natural resource goals and best management practice priorities. Developing a conservation plan is a great way to understand the needs and challenges of your specific farm. These plans can be created for free by experts in your county Soil Conservation District.

HOW TO STRUCTURE A LEASE FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES?

A lease can support conservation practices by establishing a definite rental term, fair rental rate and agricultural conservation standards and practices. Lease provisions can be structured to allocate the initial and long-term costs of conservation practices. Compensation for maintenance of practices can also be addressed in a lease.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Download the Agricultural Conservation Leasing Guide at umaglaw.org

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This work is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program under subaward number ENE18-151.



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Additional resources on the back.

WHO CAN HELP YOU IMPLEMENT CONSERVATION PRACTICES?

Soil Conservation Districts (SCDs)

Maryland has 24 SCDs that work directly with landowners and farmers to enhance farming operations while helping conserve soil and preserve water quality. In addition to providing technical assistance for installing conservation practices, SCDs can connect landowners and farmers with financial assistance options to help offset the costs of implementation. For more information about SCDs, visit https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/technical_assistance.aspx.

National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

NRCS provides technical support and offers cost-share assistance for several of their conservation practices. For more information about their programs, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

FSA works with NRCS to help implement conservation programs and provide funding for implementation. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about FSA conservation programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)

MDA offers conservation grants and loans through programs such as MACS, cover crop, manure transport and matching service, and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). For more information on MDA, visit <https://mda.maryland.gov>.

University of Maryland Extension (UME)

UME educates the public and shares information and guidance from research gathered across the state. UME can also offer advice on working with federal and state agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations, to enroll in conservation programs. For more information about UME, visit <https://extension.umd.edu>.

Numerous Non-Governmental Organizations

Both local and national NGOs have programs to encourage implementation of agricultural conservation practices.