

# Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets Water Quality Division FY2021 Financial Assistance for Farmers Summary

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAF) Water Quality Division regulates farms under the non-point source pollution control program. The overall goal of our work is to improve water quality in Vermont. To meet this goal we administer multiple financial assistance opportunities for farms in Vermont.

In State Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, the Water Quality Division invested more than \$4.3 million of state funds and leveraged over \$3.8 million in federal expenditure to fund on-farm implementation of conservation practices to improve water quality in the State of Vermont. Farmers invested over \$1.7 million of private funds in cost-share contributions towards implementation of these projects.

**43,290 ACRES**  
FIELD CONSERVATION PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED

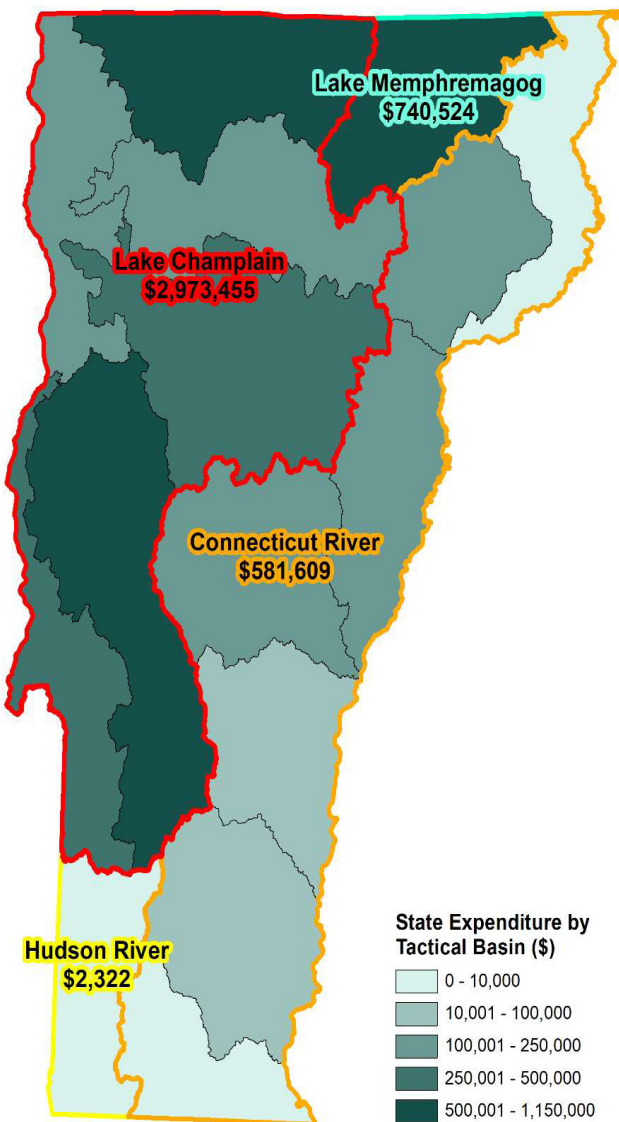
**136 PRACTICES**  
STRUCTURAL CONSERVATION PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED

**\$4.3 MILLION**  
STATE EXPENDITURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

**\$3.8 MILLION**  
FEDERAL EXPENDITURE LEVERAGED

**\$1.7 MILLION**  
INVESTED BY VERMONT FARMERS

## FY21 ON-FARM IMPLEMENTATION BY MAJOR AND MINOR BASIN



Before (left) and after (right) installation of a Heavy Use Protection practice to address runoff and erosion risks



Rotationally grazed land in the Field Agronomic Practice Program must have 3" of residual vegetation



Drilled cover crop funded through the FAP program helps reduce erosion from cropland

## SUMMARY OF FY2021 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	EXPENDITURE	AWARDS	IMPACT
Farm Agronomic Practices	Financial assistance to Vermont farms for implementation of field-based agronomic practices that improve soil and water quality and reduce erosion.	<b>\$769,882</b>	<b>\$844,893</b>	<b>28,700 acres implemented</b>
Best Management Practices	Technical and financial assistance to assist farms with on-farm improvements to abate agricultural waste discharges to state waters.	<b>\$2,882,228*</b>	<b>\$1,897,781</b>	<b>77 practices installed</b>
Conservation Equipment Assistance Program	Financial assistance for equipment to reduce surface runoff, improve manure management, separate phosphorus from manure, or decrease greenhouse gas emissions.	<b>\$1,040,717</b>	<b>\$871,100</b>	<b>27 pieces of innovative equipment</b>
Pasture Surface Water Fencing	Technical and financial assistance for pasture management to improve water quality and livestock exclusion from surface waters.	<b>\$161,417</b>	<b>\$246,970</b>	<b>40 practices implemented</b>
Grassed Waterway Filter Strip	Technical and financial assistance for establishing perennially vegetated grassed waterways, filter strips, and critical source area seedings.	<b>\$9,606</b>	<b>\$11,250</b>	<b>45.8 acres implemented</b>
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	Technical and financial assistance to reduce sediment runoff and improve water quality by removing land from agricultural production and establishing riparian vegetative buffers.	<b>\$34,059</b>	<b>\$34,059</b>	<b>35 acres of buffer</b>

\* Some FY 2020 grant awards were reimbursed in FY 2021 and are therefore reflected in total FY 2021 expenditure

### PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: Conservation Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP)

#### No-till planter on Otter Point Farm

Tanya and Scott Hertzberg received a no-till water wheel transplanter through CEAP for their vegetable operation, Otter Point Farm. This transplanter has two metal discs that cut a thin strip into the soil. An attachment with metal prongs punches holes into the ground for plants and then sprays water into the strip of soil created by the discs, thus watering the seedlings. This equipment reduces the need to disturb the soil and organic matter, maintains most of the cover crop, and reduces the need for extra watering. The Hertzbergs describe the process of the planter: “With the attachment we were able to skip the tillage, and just leave a crop of clover in place. As we’ve learned plowing is destructive to soil health, anytime you can skip a plowing you are saving soil, organic matter, and biotic life.”

The transplanter helped the Hertzbergs to plant winter squash, tomatoes, summer squash and even pumpkin.

“There is a lot of upfront work [with conventional tillage]. Where as with this, you wait for the cover crop, mow or knock it down, and you’re ready!”

**“We’re thrilled with the piece of equipment.”**  
*- Scott Hertzberg, co-owner and operator of Otter Point Farm*



*The no-till planter in action, attached to a tractor and filled with plants and water. The process of this planter limits disturbance to the soil environment.*