

## Pasture & Surface Water Fencing (PSWF) Program



The Pasture Surface Water Fencing (PSWF) program provides pasture management technical assistance and financial assistance to Vermont farmers. This program intends to improve water quality and on-farm livestock exclusion from surface waters statewide. Contact Connor Steckel at (802)-522-0065 or [connor.steckel@vermont.gov](mailto:connor.steckel@vermont.gov)

Visit the program page at [agriculture.vermont.gov/pswf](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/pswf)

Scan the QR code to visit the program page



### Program Information:

- Free technical assistance from experienced grazing specialists.
- Financial assistance to implement rotational grazing and/or exclusion of livestock from surface waters.
- Reimburse project expenses up to 90% of the cost to install eligible infrastructure, up to the farm's grant amount.
- Up to \$15,000 grant award per farm
- Additional funding is available for exclusion fence only, up to \$20,000 total grant award, as approved by the PSWF program.
- Grants are reviewed year-round, on a first come – first serve basis.
- **Grant agreements must be in place prior to the start of implementation and prior to purchase of materials.**

### Eligible Practices and Payment Rates:

| Practice                      | Maximum Cost Share |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Fence                         | \$4.00/foot        |
| Livestock Pipeline            | No cost share cap  |
| Watering Facility             | No cost share cap  |
| Improved Permanent Water Area | \$8,000            |
| Stream Crossings              | \$8,000            |
| Electric Fence Chargers       | \$2,000            |
| Trails & Walkways             | \$10,000           |

**Partners:** [University of Vermont Extension](#), [Vermont Association of Conservation Districts](#), [Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Service](#), [VAAFM Dairy Business Innovation Center](#), [Vermont Grass Farmers Association](#)

## Eligibility:

- Projects must implement practices that support at least one of the following:
  - **Excluding livestock from surface waters**
  - **Implementing a Rotational Grazing Plan** - *Rotational grazing requires moving livestock frequently enough to implement a prescribed grazing plan that meets the goals of the PSWF program.*
- Farm required to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices.
- Priority is given to farms that have at least 4 acres for the raising, feeding and management of at least five cattle or cows, 15 goats or sheep, four equines, or three camelids.
- Farm manages pastureland where water quality will benefit from implementation of improved pasture management and eligible conservation practices.
- Farm Operator must have ownership or land control for the term of the agreement (10 years). Written lease agreements are required for leased land.
- Farm Operators who have liability insurance are required to provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance with the State listed as an additional insured. A Certificate of Liability Insurance is required for grant agreements of \$10,000.00 or more. If the grant is less than \$10,000.00 and the Grantee does not have the ability to add liability insurance as required, this requirement can be waived.

## Application Process:

- 1) **Initial Application** - Farm Operator Submits a PSWF Application ([Online Application – Click Here](#))
- 2) **Assigned VAAFM Staff or Partner** - VAAFM Staff or Partner technical assistance provider follow up with applicant to determine eligibility and assist with the application process
- 3) **Project Planning** - Farm Operator, with assistance from VAAFM Staff or Partner TA Provider, develops a Project Plan Map, Estimated Budget/Contractor Quotes, and completes a Grazing Plan as applicable
- 4) **Project Review** - VAAFM Program reviews project application, plan, and budget. Makes award determination and provides notification of award to Farm Operator
- 5) **Grant Award** - Farm Operator and VAAFM sign Grant Agreement, project begins

## Additional information about this grant program:

- Application does not guarantee an award.
- Grant agreements must be in place prior to the start of implementation and prior to purchase of materials.
- Farmer is responsible for financing the project during construction and receives reimbursement upon certified project completion.
- Final payment is determined by actual project costs as documented by itemized invoices.
- Farmer's equipment and labor costs are eligible for reimbursement.

