Request for Agribusiness Partners and Farmers for
Manure Injection Services in the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Basin

Application Due Date: Friday August 29, 2025

Selections will be made by Tuesday September 30, 2025

Please note: At this time, only proposals from the Pennsylvania portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed will be considered. All remaining funding will be available for proposals from applicators/farmers throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed beginning in January 2026.

I. Project Overview/General Information

A. Purpose of Request

The goal of this project is to reduce nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) loss from farms in the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Basin by expanding the adoption of liquid animal manure injection and advanced nutrient management.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks qualified custom animal manure applicators and farmers interested in providing low disturbance manure injection services (compatible with no-till systems) to clients located in the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Basin. If selected, agribusinesses or farmers will contract with Sustainable Chesapeake to receive payment on a per-acre basis. Sliding-scale payments and/or an upfront deposit for implementation will be considered as-needed.

Our goal is to incentivize investments in manure injection equipment and leverage applicator and project partner relationships with their clients to encourage farmers to try manure injection and advanced nutrient management in hopes that they will continue the service beyond the project timeframe.

While all agribusinesses and farmers are eligible, the most competitive proposals will include acres new to manure injection.

B. Timeframe/Anticipated Period of Performance

The anticipated project timeframe is October 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027. All eligible project activities must occur within this timeframe.

C. Partners

PA 4R Alliance, Sustainable Chesapeake, The Nature Conservancy, Maola Local Dairies, Lebanon County Conservation District, Lancaster County Conservation District, Pennsylvania State University, Cornell University, and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

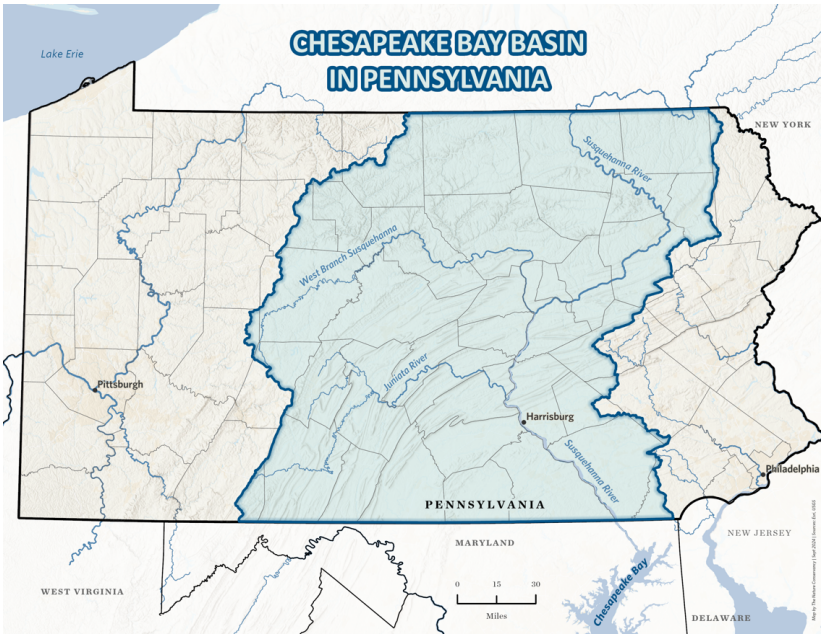
D. Funding Source

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Environmental Protection Agency via an agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.[1]

II. Scope of Work

A. Determining Eligible Farms

As part of the work, and as noted above, qualified manure applicator partners must work with clients located within the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Basin. Refer to the map below to determine if your clients are within the project area.



[1] *The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Government or the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and its funding sources. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government, or the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation or its funding sources.*

B. Agribusiness and Farmer Partner Requirements/Deliverables

Qualified **manure applicator agribusiness partners that can offer low-disturbance manure injection (compatible with no-till)** with an established customer base will need to:

1. Maintain a license to apply manure in the state in which they are located, according to all applicable laws and regulations. Priority will be given to applicants with a proven track record for safety, and continued commitment to safety.

2. Purchase or already own low-disturbance manure injection equipment needed to implement the project. Applicators expanding their capacity (through purchase of new or used manure injection equipment) will be prioritized (*including options to pay for implementation at a higher rate).* A typical payment rate for new equipment is $40/acre, however applicants suggesting lower payment rates will be more competitive.

3. Recruit farmers to implement manure injection according to nutrient or manure management plans written to include manure injection in Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Basin. Priority will be given to applicators that can recruit farmers trying manure injection for the first time.

4. Work with project partners and participating farmers to ensure manure injection acres are credited towards the Pennsylvania total maximum daily load goals. This will involve sharing the location of acres where manure is injected.

5. Receive payment for injection on a per acre, reimbursable basis.

6. Participate in field days, a potential annual meeting with Nutrient Management Advisors, and/or other outreach activities to educate farmers and other manure applicators about manure injection.

7. Eligible applicants must be willing to sign a subcontract with Sustainable Chesapeake and comply with all requirements for Sustainable Chesapeake's terms and conditions (available upon request).

8. Manage opportunities to leverage funding from this project, if eligible, with state conservation incentive programs such as REAP, if desired.

Qualified **farmers interested in investing in low-disturbance manure injection equipment (compatible with no-till)** will need to:

1. Apply manure according to nutrient management plans or manure management plans that have been updated to include manure injection.

2. Manage opportunities to leverage funding from this project with state conservation incentive programs such as REAP, if desired.

3. Purchase or already own low-disturbance manure injection equipment needed to implement the project. Farmers or agribusinesses purchasing new or used manure injection equipment will be prioritized. A typical payment rate for new equipment is $40/acre, however applicants suggesting lower payment rates will be more competitive.

4. Work with project partners and participating farmers to ensure manure injection acres are credited towards the Pennsylvania total maximum daily load goals. This may include working with conservation district partners to verify implementation.

5. Receive payment for injection on a per acre, reimbursable basis.

6. Confirm application rates according to nutrient management plans and provide location and acreage of service. All acres must be located within the Chesapeake Bay Basin.

7. Participate in field days, a potential annual meeting with Nutrient Management Advisors, and/or other outreach activities to educate farmers and other manure applicators about manure injection.

8. Eligible applicants must be willing to sign a subcontract with Sustainable Chesapeake and comply with all requirements for Sustainable Chesapeake's terms and conditions (available upon request).

III. Proposal Instructions and Evaluation

A. Proposal Contents

Manure applicators are asked to submit clear and concise qualifications detailing their documented and established relationships with clients in Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Basin, and who can deliver manure injection services. The proposal should include responses to the following:

1. What is the legal name of your business? How many years have you been operating?

2. Please tell us about your customer base. Specifically, how many customers do you anticipate will have interest in participating in the project? And how many are new to manure injection?

3. How many acres do you think you could deliver manure injection services on? How many of these acres are new to manure injection?

4. Please tell us about your business and experience related to manure injection and qualifications to deliver these services.

5. Please tell us what professional certifications and experience you and your staff have to implement the project.

6. What payment rate per acre (per application) would you need to make participation in this project work for your business and your clients? This payment rate may be informed by the cost of purchasing new equipment and whether you want to offer a discount to your clients new to manure injection. Your payment rate should also include expenses associated with required insurance and maintenance costs.

7. Do you already have manure injection equipment and/or offer manure injection services? If so, please explain how this funding will allow you to engage farmers new to manure injection.

8. Do you plan on purchasing new equipment to implement the project?

9. How can we reach you if we have additional questions?

Farmers proposals should include responses to the following:

1. What is the legal name of your business? How many years have you been operating?

2. Please tell us about your farm. Specifically, where you are located, what type of manure you use, what crops you grow.

3. How many acres do you think you could deliver manure injection services on (This can include neighboring farms)? How many of these acres have never been treated with injection?

4. Please tell us why you are interested in using manure injection on your farm.

5. What payment rate per acre (per application) would you need to make participation in this project work for your farm? This payment rate may be informed by the cost of purchasing new equipment and complementary cost share funding that may be available to farmers for manure injection equipment through state programs such as REAP. Your payment rate should also include expenses associated with required insurance and maintenance.

6. Are you proposing to purchase new manure injection equipment?

7. Please explain how you are willing to share your experience with other farmers (e.g. participating in farmer meetings, hosting a demonstration on your farm, being featured in a case study). Other ideas are welcomed.

8. How can we reach you if we have additional questions?

B. General Process

Sustainable Chesapeake and project partners will evaluate and assess applications through the following criteria. Please note, that Sustainable Chesapeake and project partners reserve the right to accept or reject responses on any basis they deem appropriate.

C. Selection Criteria

The point system detailed below will be used to assist Sustainable Chesapeake and project partners to make awards. This point system will not be the only determining factor in the selection process but will play a large role in determining the agribusinesses/farmers that are the best fit to meet the requirements.

For Manure Applicators:

1. Documented/Established Relationships with Clients (40 points)
    a. Ability to demonstrate established and documented relationships with clients that are new to manure injection are willing to try the practice, and apply manure at rates based on a nutrient management or manure management plan updated to include manure injection as the method of application.

2. Qualifications and Capabilities (15 points)
    a. Experience and safety track record.
    b. Willingness to participate in field days, an annual meeting with Nutrient Management Advisors, and/or other outreach activities.

3. Professional Certifications/Experience of Staff (15 points)
    a. Demonstrated professional certifications.
    b. Staff with demonstrated experience relevant to the scope of work
    c. Proven track record of safety and commitment to continued safety

4. Cost effectiveness (30 points)

For Farmers:

1. Acreage new to injection, with manure applied at rates based on a nutrient management or manure management plan modified to account for manure injection as the method of application. (50 points)
2. Willingness to share experience with peers. (20 points)
3. Cost effectiveness. (30 points)

IV. Submission

A. Questions and Assistance

Potential applicants are welcome to reach out with questions or for application support to Natasha Rathlev by email, natasha@susches.org, or phone 804-293-0425.

B. Deadline and submission requirements:

1. Please submit the proposal by email to: Natasha Rathlev, natasha@susches.org
2. Submissions should be 20 pages or less (20 single-sided, 10 double-sided).
3. All proposals shall be reviewed after the Friday August 29, 2025 submission deadline.

All documents submitted to Sustainable Chesapeake and the PA 4R Alliance related to this RFP may be subject to requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and may be deemed public records.

V. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

A. No Discrimination

All businesses will be afforded the full opportunity to submit qualifications and will not be discriminated against on any grounds in consideration for award.

B. Sustainable Chesapeake reserves the right to accept or reject a proposal without a stated cause. Further, Sustainable Chesapeake reserves the right to terminate, restructure, or amend the stated process at any time. If no proposals are satisfactory, Sustainable Chesapeake has the right to re-issue or cancel the RFP.

A. Please see below for insurance requirements. Please reach out with any questions or concerns regarding these limits. New policy costs can be built into payment for contractors.

Insurance Requirements

Insurance Type	Businesses or Organizations	Farmers
Occurrence Liability	$1,000,000	$2,000,000
Aggregate Liability	$2,000,000	N/A
Umbrella Insurance	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
Workers Compensation	$500,000	$500,000
Auto	$1,000,000	Commercial - $1,000,000 or Personal - $500,000