

Agriculture Greenhouse Gas Markets Nitrogen Management Credit Program

Producers are wanted to assist in the testing of a nitrogen management pilot project. A new type of credit program has been developed and producers who are implementing, or are starting to implement, practices that optimize the application of nitrogen to their fields or orchards are needed. This program will pay producers to test a protocol designed to reduce nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions.

The new nitrogen management program is important because:

- The program seeks to reward producers for making decisions based on improving nitrogen efficiency.
- The program could generate a new revenue stream for producers through carbon credits while still maintaining crop production.
- Producers will increase the nitrogen application efficiency without impacting yield.



Why nitrogen management?

- Improved nitrogen management can save producers on input costs.
- Reducing nitrogen application can lead to a number of environmental benefits including a reduction of water pollution and the release of greenhouse gases.
- Producers can improve nitrogen application efficiencies without impacting yields.

How does it work?

- Producers must first determine if they are eligible to meet the general requirements for the project, which are outlined below.
- Credits can be generated after a grower has made a change to their nitrogen management practices that results in fewer N₂O emissions.
- N₂O emissions are verified by a third party and sold onto a voluntary market place. Project developers are working towards making the credits available to buyers in the California cap-and-trade program.

What are the basic project eligibility requirements?

- Growing corn over the past 5 years in corn-corn or 6 years in corn-soy rotation.
- Producers are starting to implement, or have recently implemented, new nitrogen optimizing practices like N VRT, zone mapping, soil testing, remote sensing, slow release fertilizers, use of urease inhibitors, changes to nitrogen source, and others.
- Keeping good records of nitrogen applications.
- Current nitrogen management activities should not be the result of any regulatory mandates.

What are examples of approved nitrogen management practices?

- Changes in N fertilizer application rate
- Changes in N fertilizer type (synthetic and/or organic fertilizers)
- Changes in N fertilizer placement
- Changes in N fertilizer timing
- Use of other technologies and/or practices that have been scientifically proven to reduce nitrous oxide emissions.

Revenue for landowners

- Producers will be paid to test a nitrogen management protocol.
- Corn production varies with soil type, nutrients, location, weather, and other factors. Therefore, payment comparisons by acreage are not accurate and will change from year to year and by grower.
- The project developer can help determine potential payment levels based on your specific situation.



What information do I need to provide?

- Climate Smart Group is serving as the project developer for this NRCS funded project. Climate Smart Group has over 7 million acres under contract in Canada for agricultural carbon credit projects.
- The project developer will collect information regarding farm and management practices to determine a baseline and then to determine any changes to N₂O emissions.
- Data needed includes information regarding fertilizer application, planting and harvest, crop type, organic amendments, irrigation, and specific location data for the fields being monitored.
- To help determine eligibility, producers can complete a short assessment questionnaire at <http://climatesmartgroup.com/apply/>.
- Completing the assessment questionnaire does not commit you to the program. Its completion represents a request for more information on your part, and enables Climate Smart Group to assess the likelihood of your being eligible and the payment you may be entitled to.
- After completing the questionnaire, a Climate Smart Group advisor will call you to discuss the program and determine next steps for participation if you wish to proceed.

For More Information Contact:

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Project Partners:

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Environmental Defense Fund
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