

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL



OWEB | Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

2025

Photo: Taylor Larson



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Conservation Management

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

In February 2025, OWEB is opening a solicitation for the Conservation Management Planning grant program, with a total of \$750,000 available for this solicitation. Applications are due April 1, 2025 by 5 pm. Please see below for additional details regarding application development, submission, evaluation.

This document provides guidance for the Conservation Management Planning grant offering only.

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Overview

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) is a program within the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). Through direction provided by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 541.977-541.989 and Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) Chapter 698, the program offers grants to fund working land conservation easements, conservation management, succession planning, and technical assistance.

The purpose of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program is to:

1. Increase the economic viability of Oregon's agricultural operations and economic sector.
2. Maintain or enhance fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, and other natural resources on Oregon's working land.
3. Reduce the conversion and fragmentation of Oregon's working land.

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission

The [Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission](#) is responsible for assisting OWEB with the development of rules for administration of programs in the OAHP and provides funding recommendations for all OAHP applications to the OWEB board based on the availability of funds in the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Fund.

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Conservation Management Plan Grant Program

The Conservation Management Plan Grant Program funds the development, implementation, and monitoring of Conservation Management Plans (CMP) entered into by Agricultural Operators and conservation management Plan Holders to manage working lands in a manner that contributes to the purpose of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program as defined in OAR 698-005-0010.

The purpose of a Conservation Management Plan as defined in OAR 698-005-0020(6) is to develop and implement conservation measures or other protections for maintaining or enhancing fish or wildlife habitat, water quality or other natural resource values in a manner consistent with the social and economic interests and abilities of the agricultural landowner or operator. The CMP may include provisions for addressing priorities related to natural resource values, including but not limited to soil, water, plants, animals, energy, and human need considerations.

The purpose of this document is to aid program participants in developing, applying for, and managing OAHP conservation management plan grants. OWEB encourages applicants to carefully review the following guidance and associated information to facilitate the submission of complete and competitive grant applications, and to understand what will be expected of successful applicants that ultimately engage in grant agreements with OWEB. Please note that in the case of unintended conflicts between this guidance document and OWEB statutes and rules, OWEB [statutes](#) and [rules](#) will take precedent. All documents referred to below are available on the [OAHP webpage](#) on the [OWEB website](#).

Eligibility

Conservation Management Plan grants funded through this program are made to a “Conservation Management Plan Holder,” which is the entity responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and enforcing the agreement under an OAHP Grant Agreement.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for Conservation Management Plan Grants are:

- (a) Entities eligible to hold a conservation easement as defined in [ORS 271.715](#), other than a state agency;
- (b) Watershed councils; and
- (c) Tax exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

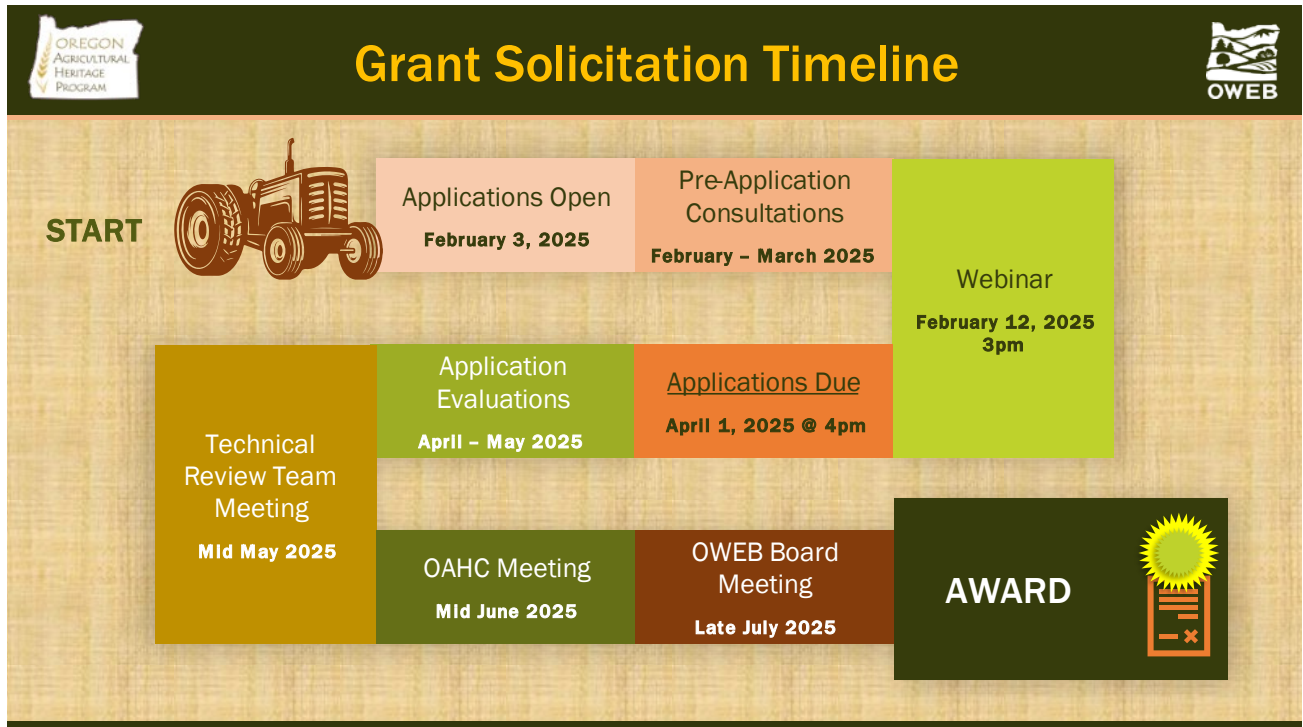
Individual agricultural landowners or operators are not eligible to apply for a Conservation Management Plan Grant directly. Instead, landowners must work with an eligible Plan Holder to develop a grant application that is submitted by the eligible Plan Holder.

In all cases the Plan Holder, as ultimate Grantee, is OWEB’s direct partner and is responsible for working with the Agricultural Operator to develop, implement, and monitor the Conservation Management Plan.

Eligible Properties

Eligible properties for Conservation Management Plans are working lands as defined in [ORS 541.977\(2\)](#): “Working land” means land that is actively used by an agricultural owner or operator for an agricultural operation that includes, but need not be limited to, active engagement in farming or ranching.

Application Instructions



Pre-Application Consultations

Conservation Management Plan grant applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with OWEB staff before applying to discuss: (i) the project’s opportunities, benefits, potential challenges, and schedule; and (ii) the grant application and review processes. The pre-application consultation is an informal conversation and an opportunity for applicants to gain feedback on successfully competing for grant funds and an understanding of what to expect if funds are awarded.

The following must be received by OWEB at least three business days before the scheduled consultation:

A map of the property, prepared from an aerial photo and including the property boundaries and the proposed conservation management plan boundaries.

Application Submission

Applications are designed to solicit information necessary for staff, the technical review team(s), the OAHC and the OWEB Board to complete a project review using the established evaluation criteria described below

and in OAR 698-010-0090 and 698-005-0045. All information submitted in association with the application (support letters, maps, etc.), whether required or optional, must be submitted online via [OWEB's Online Grant Management System \(OGMS\)](#) by the application deadline (April 1, 2025). Applications are considered complete as submitted. For additional information about applying for OWEB grants, see [OWEB's Online Application Guidance](#). While not specific to the OAHP Conservation Management Plan Grant Program, this general guidance may provide helpful tips.

OWEB strongly recommends that applicants submit their grant applications at least 24 hours before the application deadline. OWEB's online grant applications include a verification step that will flag missing and incomplete information in the application. Verifying and submitting your grant application at least 24 hours in advance allows time for applicants to correct errors that are found during verification. **All applications must be successfully submitted through OWEB's online grant application system by 5 pm on April 1, 2025. No exceptions will be made.**

Applicants should carefully review all guidance materials on the program webpage and information (including iButtons) in the online grant applications. This review will help applicants confirm before submitting their application that all questions are answered completely, based on the guidelines included in the application, and all required uploads are provided.

Budget Guidance

Applicants are encouraged to carefully consider all cost factors associated with the project before submitting an application. Under OAR 698-010-0060, Conservation Management Plan grant funds may be utilized to develop, implement, and/or monitor conservation management plans.

The budget must encompass the entirety of project expenses, irrespective of their funding origin. The application allows the applicant to specify the funding source for each individual project component. Applicants retain the discretion to determine which items will contribute towards the match requirement for the OWEB grant.

The budget should include all project costs regardless of funding source. The application allows for the designation of funding sources for each project item and the applicant to decide which items to include as match for the OWEB grant. All payments to the Agricultural Operator, including compensation for ecosystem services, should be allocated to the 'Contracted Services' budget line.

Maximum Project Budget = \$200,000

Additional grant budget guidance is contained in the [GoBIG](#) document, available on the OWEB Grants page. Applicants are highly encourage to consult with the OAHP program coordinator on budget development taylor.larson@oweb.oregon.gov prior to submitting their application.

Match

All applicants shall demonstrate that 5% of the application is being sought as match. While confirmation of secured match is not required at time of application, it is required before first payment. Confirmation of

secured match may be a signed document that indicates the amount of match and states that it is dedicated to the Project.

The following funds and activities qualify as match:

1. In-kind contributions to activities listed under OAR 698-010-0050;
2. Funding commitments made by others as a result of the grant applicant efforts.

Project Timeline

Applicants are required to prepare a projected timeline for key actions associated with the proposed Conservation Management Plan(s). It is important that it incorporate realistic timeframes for actions such as plan drafting, approval, implementation, monitoring, and reporting to ensure the project is completed, within the duration of the grant agreement. Project timing can be discussed at the pre-application consultation.

Maximum Project Timeline = 4 years

Uploaded Documents

OGMS, the online grant application system, will prompt the applicant for uploaded documents. All documentation must be submitted online. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. When uploading documents to the online applications system, select the upload type specified for each document to ensure that your information is properly identified and kept confidential as applicable. Expectations and further description of those documents are detailed below.

Document	Required	Upload Image Type
Base Map	Y	Map
Context Map	N	Map
Conservation Opportunities Map	N	Map
Resource Map	N	Map
Land Use Map	N	Map
Landowner Acknowledgement Form	N	Cooperative/Landowner Agreement
Secured Match Form	N	Secured Match Form

Base Map

An aerial photograph of the project property, with the property boundary clearly depicted.

Context Map

A map depicting the property’s location and surrounding conservation areas (e.g. federal, state, and tribal lands, conserved properties, conservation management areas, mapped habitat locations). If additional resource values are used to justify the significance of the working land in the proposal, identify those resources on the map. Also identify the property’s location relative to the closest town.

Conservation Opportunities Map

A map showing the location and estimated implementation date of potential, prioritized long-range conservation actions.

Resource Map(s)

Aerial photo-based map depicting the distribution of soil types, water resources, including surface water (e.g. streams, rivers, ponds, wetlands) and irrigation infrastructure (e.g. ditches, pivots, wells) and, wildlife habitat types across the property.

Land Use Map

Aerial photo-based map delineating the current land cover and agricultural activities across the property. Identify irrigated acres, non-irrigated acres, rangeland (if applicable), and non-agricultural acres (e.g. buildings; exclusive habitat/natural resource conservation areas). Include relevant infrastructure on the property.

Landowner Acknowledgement Form

The OAHF Conservation Management Plan Landowner Acknowledgement Form is available on the [OAHF webpage](#).

Secured Match Form

For any secured match included in the project budget, provide individual documentation from an authorized representative of the match source describing the amount and allowable uses for the match. The Secured Match Form is available on the [OAHF webpage](#).

Evaluation Process

After applications are submitted, they will be reviewed by OWEB staff to confirm eligibility and completeness. Once applications have been determined complete and eligible, the applications will be evaluated and ranked by the technical review team. These evaluations and rankings will then be presented to the OAHF Commission who will make a formal funding recommendation to the OWEB Board.

Evaluation Criteria

Conservation Management Plan grant applications will be evaluated on:

- 1. The significance of the agricultural, natural resource, and related social values of the working land subject to the Conservation Management Plan(s), including:**
 - a. The potential viability of the property for agriculture, including but not limited to soil types, suitability for producing different types of crops, and water availability.
 - b. The land's contribution to long-term conservation of the region's agricultural land base.
 - c. The regional significance of the agricultural operation based on location, its associated infrastructure, and other relevant factors including supporting agricultural values important to the region.

- d. Supporting implementation of local, regional, state, federal or Tribal priorities and plans that support fish or wildlife habitat, water quality or other natural resource values.
- 2. The extent to which implementation of the plan(s) would protect, maintain, or enhance farming or ranching on working land, including how implementation of the plan(s) would:**
 - a. Maintain or improve the economic viability of the operation.
 - b. Reduce the potential for future conversion or fragmentation of the property and surrounding working land.
- 3. The extent to which implementation of the plan would protect, maintain, or enhance significant fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, or other natural resource values including:**
 - a. Protecting, maintaining, or improving the quality and connectivity of plant or wildlife habitat on and around the working land.
 - b. Utilizing land stewardship practices that maintain or enhance soil health.
- 4. The extent to which the Conservation Management Plan would protect agricultural outcomes or benefits from other related investments.**
- 5. The capacity and competence of the prospective Conservation Management Plan Holder to enter into and (if implementation funding is awarded) monitor and carry out implementation of a Conservation Management Plan, including:**
 - a. The financial capability to manage the plan(s) over time.
 - b. The demonstrated relevant commitment, expertise, and track record to successfully develop, implement, carry out, and monitor plan(s).
- 6. The extent to which the benefit to the state may be maximized, based on:**
 - a. The ability to leverage grant moneys from other funding sources.
 - b. The duration and extent of the Conservation Management Plan.
- 7. The extent and nature of the plan impacts on owners or operators of neighboring lands.**
- 8. The extent to which the project will benefit the local area, as evidenced by engagement with and support from the local community and Tribes.**
- 9. How engagement with, and input from, local communities disproportionately impacted by climate change has informed or will inform the project.**
- 10. How changing climate conditions are incorporated into the project and how the project will contribute to durable adaptation and resilience for ecosystems, including human communities.**
- 11. How consideration of greenhouse gas emissions or long-term carbon sequestration or storage has informed the project.**

Technical Review Teams

Review teams are selected by OWEB staff to review project proposals each funding cycle. The review team will be comprised of experts who may be representatives of federal, state, and local agencies, academic institutions, Tribes, and others with expertise OWEB determines beneficial to the review process. Review will be conducted by individuals with agricultural, natural resource, and fish and wildlife habitat expertise.

The review team will evaluate applications, as submitted, according to criteria described above in OAR 698-010-0090 and 698-005-0045. New information unrelated to materials presented with the application will not be considered during the technical review.

Review team rankings and evaluation summaries will be provided to the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission.

Funding Determinations

The Commission shall review and consider the technical review team’s ranking and make a funding recommendation to the Board based on the availability of money from the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Fund. The Board considers and awards Conservation Management Plan Grants. The Board may fund a grant application in whole or in part.

Public Engagement

The public shall be provided with meaningful opportunities to comment on grant applications being considered by the Board and Commission. OWEB staff will notify affected tribes through OWEB’s tribal liaison.

Conservation Management Plan Lifecycle

If funding is awarded through a grant to develop and begin implementation of a Conservation Management Plan, the Plan Holder will work with Agricultural Operator and OWEB to complete the following steps in order to qualify for payments to implement the plan.



Drafting the Conservation Management Plan

A Conservation Management Plan is intended to plan for and implement conservation measures that maintain or enhance fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, or carbon sequestration in a manner consistent with the social and economic interests and abilities of the Agricultural Operator. The Conservation Management Plan must include the required components outlined in OAR 698-010-0080. An example outline is available as [Appendix B](#).

The Conservation Management Plan Holder may submit payment requests at any time during the life of the grant agreement to reimburse themselves, contractors, and/or the Agricultural Operator for their time to develop, modify, and/or monitor the Conservation Management Plan.

Conservation Management Plan Approval

Before becoming eligible for implementation and annual payments, the Plan Holder must submit the completed Conservation Management Plan to OWEB for review and approval.

OWEB will review submitted Conservation Management Plans to ensure they:

- a) Reflect goals outlined in the grant application & agreement,
- b) Contain all required components as described in OAR 698-010-0080.
- c) Have a planning horizon of 20-50 years.

Implementation and Annual Payments

The Conservation Management Plan program is designed to purchase the delivery of ecosystem services, from Agricultural Operators, through a payment for conservation practice model. Once a Conservation Management Plan has been approved and following the completion of an annual report (see below), the Conservation Management Plan Holder may submit an annual payment request on behalf of the Agricultural Operator for any approved conservation practices applied during that year.

Payment Rates for Eligible Conservation Practices are detailed in the table below:

Code	Practice Name	Annual Payment/Acre	Riparian Bonus	Lifespan (Years)
327	Conservation Cover	\$240		10
329	Residue and Tillage Management, No Till	\$21		1
336	Soil Carbon Amendment	\$15		1
338	Prescribed Burning	\$100		5
340	Cover Cropping	\$10		1
342	Critical Area Planting	\$90		10
345	Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till	\$15		1
379	Forest Farming	\$6	\$150	1
380	Wind Break/Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation	\$30	\$150	10
390	Riparian Herbaceous Cover	\$225		5
391	Riparian Forest Buffer	\$505		15
393	Filter Strip	\$225		10
412	Grassed Waterway	\$90		10
420	Wildlife Habitat Planting	\$115	\$150	5
512	Pasture and Hay Planting	\$115		10
528	Prescribed Grazing	\$10		1
548	Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment	\$6		5
550	Range Planting	\$15		10
570	Stormwater Runoff Control	\$90		1
590	Nutrient Management	\$24		1
601	Vegetative Barrier	\$90		5
604	Saturated Buffer	\$135		10
612	Tree and Shrub Establishment	\$130	\$150	15
635	Vegetated Treatment Area	\$135		10
643	Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats	\$100	\$150	15
644	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	\$100		1
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	\$100		1
647	Early Successional Habitat Development/Mgt	\$100		15
656	Constructed Wetland	\$225		25
657	Wetland Restoration	\$15		5
658	Wetland Creation	\$15		15
666	Forest Stand Improvement	\$30		10

Conservation practices may be layered on top of each other where appropriately described in the Conservation Management Plan. However, OWEB will not pay more than \$505/acres/year. The riparian payment bonus is only available for eligible practices implemented within 300' of a perennial or seasonal stream.

Modifying the Conservation Management Plan

Conservation Management Plans must allow for flexibility and mutual modification as necessary to reflect changes in practices or circumstances. Modifications of Conservation Management Plans must achieve the same or greater level of benefits as the original plan and be mutually agreed to by the Agricultural Operator, Conservation Management Plan Holder, and OWEB.

Monitoring and Reporting

Annual Site Visits

The Conservation Management Plan Holder must conduct at least one site visit to the property every year to:

- a) Meet with the Agricultural Operator,
- b) Review the Conservation Management Plan to ensure goals and objectives are being met, and

- c) Document implementation of the Conservation Management Plan (see annual reporting requirements).

Annual Reporting

The Conservation Management Plan Holder must provide OWEB with an annual written report of the Conservation Management Plan activities completed that year using the approved annual report form available on the [OAHP webpage](#).

Project Completion Reporting

Upon development of a Conservation Management Plan or completion of Conservation Management Plan implementation, the grantee will provide OWEB with a copy of a project completion report as described in Exhibit C of the grant agreement.

Appendix A

Definitions

Agricultural Operator: a landowner, operator, manager, or other person having responsibility for exercising control over the day-to-day operation of a farm or ranch.

Carbon Sequestration: the process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Carbon Storage: the storage of carbon in plants, soils, geological formations, and the ocean.

Durable Adaptation and Resilience for Ecosystems: the extent to which a project is expected to help an ecosystem, including human communities, adjust to, respond to, or recover from the effects of a changing climate.

Farming and Ranching: “farm use” as defined in ORS 215.203(2).

Grantee: an organization that is awarded a grant under an Oregon Agricultural Heritage grant program.

Local Communities Disproportionally Impacted by Climate Change: communities such as Native American tribes, communities of color, rural communities, coastal communities, communities experiencing lower incomes, and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes, including seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Plan Holder: an entity that is eligible to hold a Conservation Management Plan that is or would be responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring or enforcing the agreement under an OAHP Grant Agreement.

Working Land: land that is actively used by an agricultural owner or operator for an agricultural operation that includes, but need not be limited to, active engagement in farming or ranching.

** A full list of OAHP definitions can be found in the [Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Administrative Rules](#).*

Appendix B

Conservation Management Plan Outline

1. Purpose

Describe how implementation of the plan supports long-term viability for the agricultural operation and regional economy while enhancing fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, and/or soil health.

2. Context

Describe the relevant history and context of the land and agricultural operation.

Attach:

- **Base Map** showing an aerial image of the land and all relevant property lines.
- **Context Map** depicting the property's location and surrounding conservation areas (e.g. federal, state, and tribal lands, conserved properties, conservation management areas, mapped habitat locations). If additional resource values impact the significance of the land, identify those resources on the map. Also identify the property's location relative to the closest town.
- **Land Use Map** delineating the current land cover and agricultural activities across the property. Identify irrigated acres, non-irrigated acres, rangeland (if applicable), and non-agricultural acres (e.g. buildings, exclusive habitat/natural resource conservation areas, etc.). Include relevant infrastructure on the property.

3. Goals

Describe the short-term (3-5 years) and long-term (20-50 years) social, economic, and conservation goals of the Agricultural Operator.

4. Resource Analysis

Describe the natural resources and ecosystem processes on which the agricultural operation depends and how they need to function in order to achieve the plan's goals. Describe any management concerns.

Attach:

- **Resource Map(s)** depicting the distribution of soil types, water resources, including surface water (e.g. streams, rivers, ponds, wetlands) and irrigation infrastructure (e.g. ditches, pivots, wells) and, wildlife habitat types across the property.

5. Long-Range Opportunities

Identify potential social, economic, and conservation actions to achieve the plan's purpose over a 20–50 year time horizon. Prioritize planned activities by their potential impact on long-term agricultural viability and ecosystem processes.

Attach:

- **Conservation Opportunities Map** showing the location and estimated implementation date of potential, prioritized long-range conservation actions.

6. Action Plan

Select prioritized conservation activities for implementation over a 3-year time horizon using the table below:

Payment Year(s)	Conservation Practice	Acres	Practice Installation Year	Annual Ecosystem Service Value
<i>The year the Plan Holder will request Ecosystem Service Payment on behalf of the Agricultural Operator.</i>	<i>An OAHF approved conservation practice (see current approved practice list in program manual).</i>	<i>The acres subject to the conservation practice.</i>	<i>The year that the conservation practice was, or will be, installed (see current practice lifespan in program manual).</i>	<i>The estimated annual ecosystem service value of the conservation practice (see current practice value in program manual).</i>

Attach:

- **Implementation Map** depicting areas under approved conservation practices over the following 3 years.

7. Expected Outcomes

Describe expected agricultural, ecological, and related social outcomes of the plan once implemented.

8. Stewardship

Describe the Following:

- Ongoing maintenance needed to maintain function of implemented conservation practices.
- Monitoring protocols and how monitoring will inform adaptive management.
- The process for reviewing and modifying the plan.
- An agreed-upon conflict resolution protocol for the Agricultural Operator and the Conservation Management Plan Holder as well as the duration or terminating event for the plan.

Attach:

- **Stewardship Map(s)** depicting the location and timing of maintenance and monitoring activities.

* A full list of OAHF CMP requirements can be found in the [Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Administrative Rules](#).