

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)**  
**Virginia State University SFOP Survey (VSU-SDF)**  
**Grant # CBRAP-FY21-VSU-SDF**

**DCR Survey Report**

2/21/2022

**Summary**

This is a summary of a Department of Conservation and Recreation Services (DCR) survey that was administered by Virginia State University (VSU) Small Farm Outreach Program (SFOP). An Agreement established by DCR and VSU allowed for this project to be conducted. The goal of the survey is to evaluate the effectiveness of DCR programs, and to gather feedback from Socially Disadvantaged farmers (SDF) in Virginia, to determine the existing amount of SDF participation within the project area in either DCR or US Department of Agriculture conservation programs.

The survey was conducted during the period of November 1, 2021 and January 31, 2022. Participants were notified about the surveys by email, promoted on our Small Farm Resource Center home page, and delivered in-person by Program Assistants (PAs). A total of 218 participants provided feedback to the survey. Enclosed in this report are the findings and responses to the eight questions proposed via the survey instrument, and the Qualtrics survey report.

*This report was prepared by Nadine Jackson and William Crutchfield*

**Q1.** 25.60% of the respondents indicated “Yes”, they applied for financial assistance for environmental conservation practices (i.e., Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, or others) through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the last three years, and 74.40% of respondents indicated “No”, they have not applied. This indicates that most of the respondents did not apply for financial assistance for environmental conservation practices. Table 1 shows the number of respondents who responded “Yes” and “No” to Question 1.

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Have you applied for financial assistance for environmental conservation practices (i.e., Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, or others) through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the last three years?	53	154

**Q2.** 51.66% of respondents indicated that they intend to apply for an environmental conservation program(s) from the USDA in the future, and 48.34% indicated “No” to Q2. This indicates that almost half of the respondents to question 2 intend to and almost half of the respondent did not intend to apply for an environmental conservation program from USDA. Table 2 shows the number of respondents who responded “Yes” and “No” to Question 2.

<b>Table 2</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Do you intend to apply for an environmental conservation program(s) from the USDA in the future?	102	109

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**Q3.** 14.69% respondents to Q3 indicated that they “have applied for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) in the last three years, and 85.31% of the respondent indicated “No”, they have not applied. This indicates that most of the respondents did not apply for agricultural best management practices cost-share program through local soil and water conservation district in the last three years. Table 3 shows the number of respondents who responded “Yes” and “No” to Question 3.

<b>Table 3</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Have you applied for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) in the last three years?	31	180

**Q4.** 37.88% of respondents indicated, “Yes, their application was successful”, and 62.12% of respondents indicated “No”, their application was not successful. This indicates that most of the respondents’ applications were not successful. Table 4 shows the number of respondents who responded “Yes” and “No” to Question 4.

<b>Table 4</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
If so, was your application successful?	25	41

**Q5.** 46.63% of respondents indicated they intend to apply for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the future, while 53.37% indicated No, they have not applied. This indicates that almost half of the respondents indicated yes, however most of the respondents indicated that they do not intend to apply for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the future. Table 5 shows the number of respondents who responded “Yes” and “No” to Question 5.

<b>Table 5</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Do you intend to apply for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the future?	97	111

**Q6.** 41.63% of respondents indicated they received technical assistance for nutrient management plans from the Virginia Department Conservation Recreation (DCR) staff, a Virginia Tech employee working with DCR, or a DCR contractor, while 58.37% indicated “No”, they have not received technical assistance. This indicates that almost half of the respondents indicated yes, however most of the respondents indicated they did not receive technical assistance for nutrient management plans from DCR, Virginia Tech employee working with DCR, or a DCR contractor. Table 6 shows the number of respondents who responded “Yes” and “No” to Question 6.

<b>Table 6</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Have you ever received technical assistance for nutrient management plans from the Virginia Department Conservation Recreation (DCR) staff, a Virginia Tech employee working with DCR, or a DCR contractor?	87	122

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**Q7A.** On the question, “If you have not participated in agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the last three years, what was your primary reason?” respondents indicated the following:

- 36.46 % did not know about cost-share assistance through the local SWCD.
- 33.15% did not need cost-share assistance from the local SWCD.
- 13.26% have applied with the local SWCD before and found that my farm was not eligible for assistance due to its being less than 5 acres in size.
- 2.76% applied for cost-share at the local SWCD more than 3-years ago, but were not funded.
- 14.36% applied for assistance from either NRCS or FSA.

**Q7B.** The table below shows sixteen (16) respondents indicated that they applied for NRCS programs and six (6) of the respondents indicated they applied for FSA assistants.

Programs applied for	#
NRCS	16
FSA	6

**Q8.** There were ten written responses recorded for Question 8. The responses indicated that respondents did not have something positive to share about conservation programs. 26.50% of the respondents indicated “Yes” to “Is there any other information you would like to share about conservation programs” and 73.50% indicated “No”.

**Below are the responses below from respondents:**

Need to be better informed.

Need more awareness of opportunities.

I will consider doing it next year.

Really don't feel that ext agents of NRCS share the application process equitably with minority farmers. I had to push for information. We need a better representation process on county committees also.

NRCS lacks knowledge on program application process.

I need to know more about it

It was more than 3 years ago when we asked for information and they said we did not know what we were talking about. So we never applied again.

We were given the run around bad enough that we said forget it.

no confidence in the program for minorities

No confidence

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**Virginia State University SFOP Survey (VSU-SDF)**  
**Grant # CBRAP-FY21-VSU-SDF**

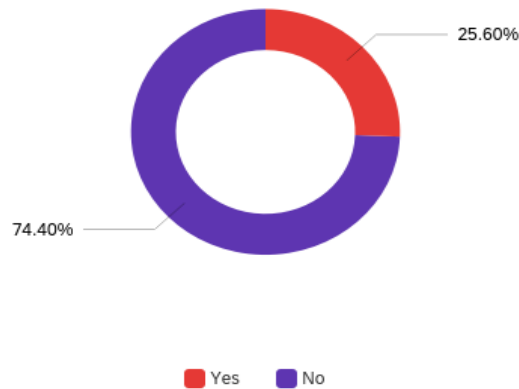
# DCR SURVEY RESULTS FROM QUALTRICS REPORT

## Small Farm Outreach Program Socially Disadvantage Farmers Survey

February 14, 2022

**Q1. Have you applied for financial assistance for environmental conservation practices (i.e., Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, or others) through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the last three years? If a different program, please specify. If so, was your application successful?**

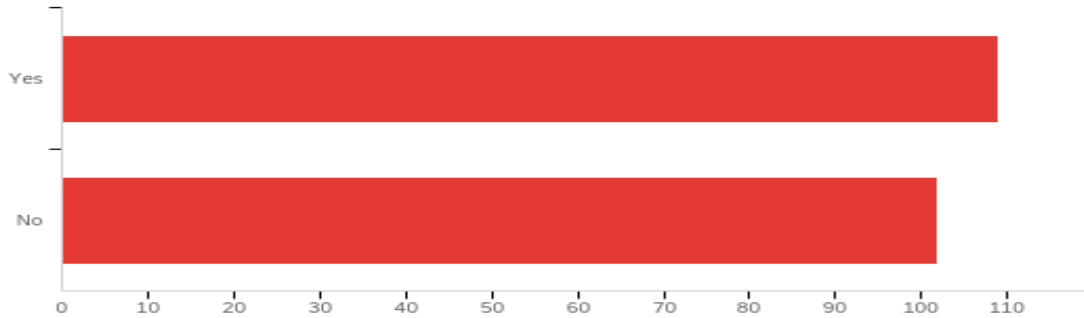
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	25.60%	53
3	No	74.40%	154
	Total	100%	207



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	25.60%	53
3	No	74.40%	154
	Total	100%	207

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**Q2. Do you intend to apply for an environmental conservation program(s) from the USDA in the future?**

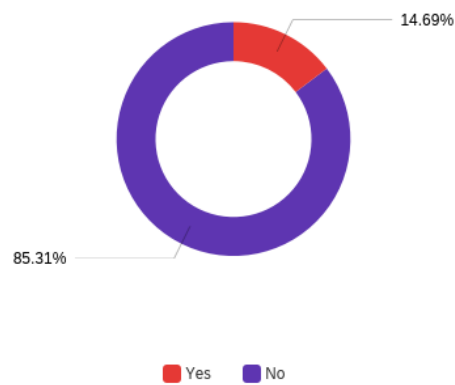


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
2	Do you intend to apply for an environmental conservation program(s) from the USDA in the future?	1.00	3.00	1.97	1.00	1.00	211

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	51.66%	109
3	No	48.34%	102
	Total	100%	211

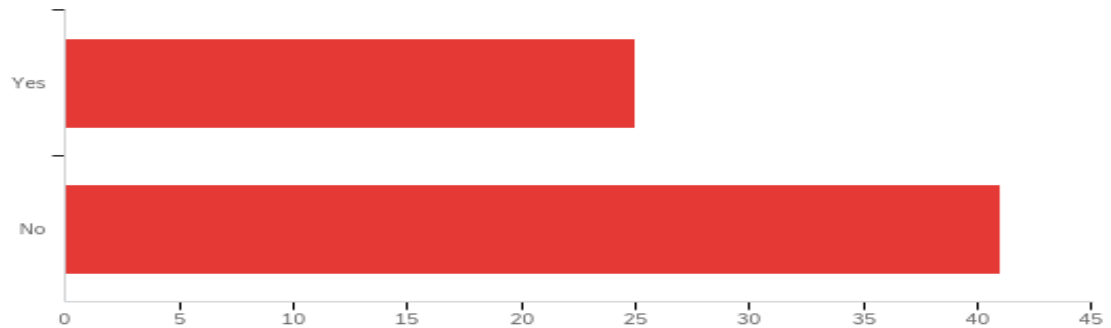
**Q3. Have you applied for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) in the last three years?**



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)**  
**Virginia State University SFOP Survey (VSU-SDF)**  
**Grant # CBRAP-FY21-VSU-SDF**

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
3	Have you applied for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) in the last three years?	1.00	3.00	2.71	0.71	0.50	211
#	Answer	%				Count	
1	Yes	14.69%				31	
3	No	85.31%				180	
	Total	100%				211	

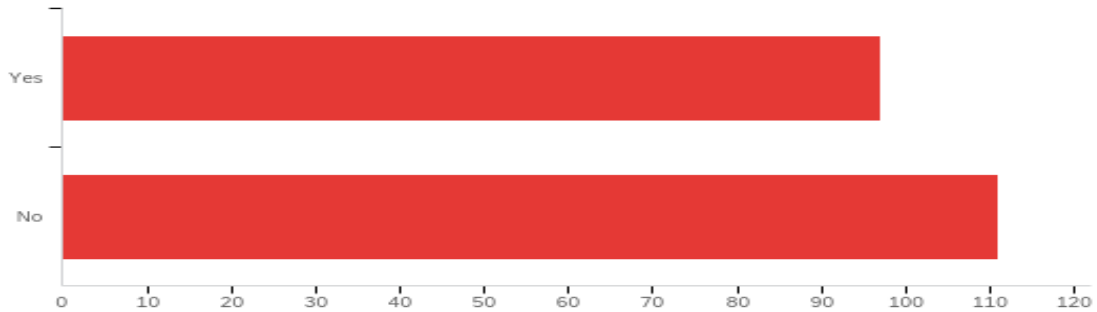
**Q4. If so, was your application successful?**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
4	If so, was your application successful?	1.00	3.00	2.24	0.97	0.94	66
#	Answer	%				Count	
1	Yes	37.88%				25	
3	No	62.12%				41	
	Total	100%				66	

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**Q5. Do you intend to apply for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the future?**



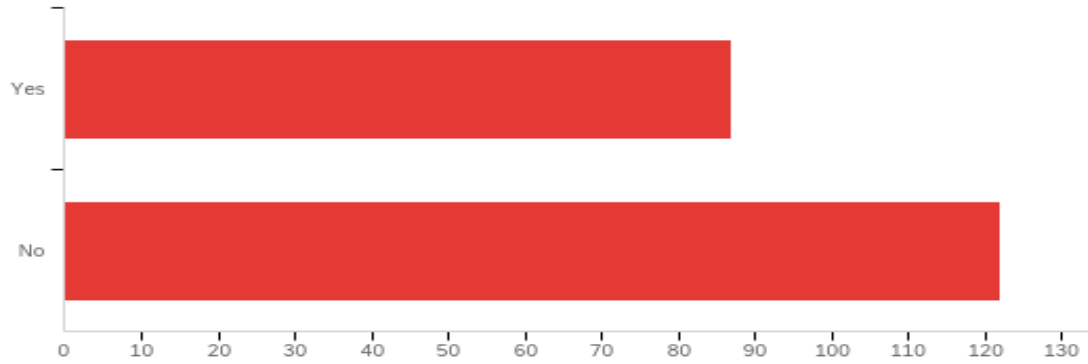
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
5	Do you intend to apply for agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the future?	1.00	3.00	2.07	1.00	1.00	208

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	46.63%	97
3	No	53.37%	111
	Total	100%	208

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**Q6. Have you ever received technical assistance for nutrient management plans from the Virginia Department Conservation Recreation (DCR) staff, a Virginia Tech employee working with DCR, or a DCR contractor?**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	6. Have you ever received technical assistance for nutrient management plans from the Virginia Department Conservation Recreation (DCR) staff, a Virginia Tech employee working with DCR, or a DCR contractor?	1.00	3.00	2.17	0.99	0.97	209

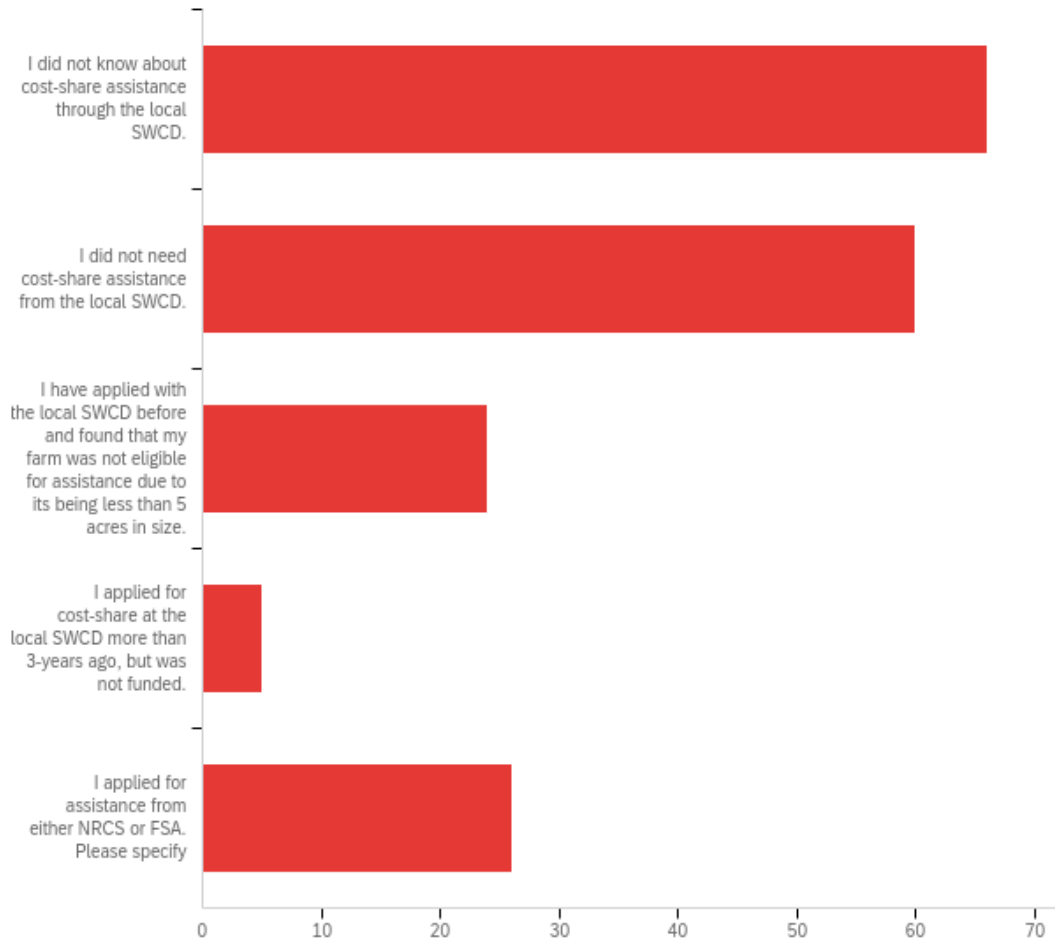
  

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	41.63%	87
3	No	58.37%	122
	Total	100%	209



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**Q7A. If you have not participated in agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the last three years, what was your primary reason? Check all that apply.**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	7. If you have not participated in agricultural best management practices cost-share program assistance through your local SWCD in the last three years, what was your primary reason? Check all that apply. - Selected Choice	1.00	6.00	2.89	1.73	2.98	181

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#	Answer	%	Count
1	I did not know about cost-share assistance through the local SWCD.	36.46%	66
3	I did not need cost-share assistance from the local SWCD.	33.15%	60
4	I have applied with the local SWCD before and found that my farm was not eligible for assistance due to its being less than 5 acres in size.	13.26%	24
5	I applied for cost-share at the local SWCD more than 3-years ago, but was not funded.	2.76%	5
6	I applied for assistance from either NRCS or FSA. Please specify	14.36%	26
	Total	100%	181

**Q7B. I applied for assistance from either NRCS or FSA. Please specify**

I applied for assistance from either NRCS or FSA

NRCS

FSA farm number

Solar

Erosion Control

I have not applied yet

FSA

NRCS

NRCS - high tunnel

High Tunnel

Cover Crop

NRCS - My acreage is rented out

FSA

NRCS & FSA - we have small plots - all our fields are rented out

FSA

new farmer

NRCS

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NRCS

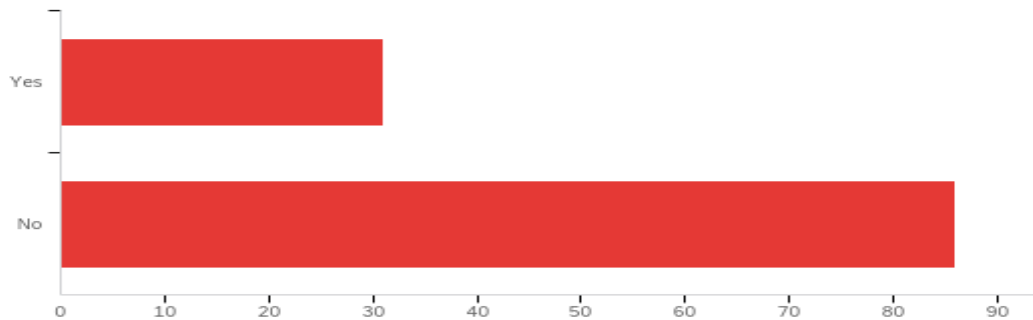
NRCS

NRCS - Cost share

Cover Crop Management

NRCS

**Q8. Is there any other information you would like to share about conservation programs.**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	8. Is there any other information you would like to share about conservation programs.	1.00	3.00	2.47	0.88	0.78	117

#	Answer	%		Count
1	Yes	26.50%		31
3	No	73.50%		86
	Total	100%		117

8. Is there any other information you would like to share about conservation programs.

Need to be better informed.

Need more awareness of opportunities.

I will consider doing it next year.

Really don't feel that ext agents of NRCS share the application process equitably with minority farmers. I had to push for information. We need a better representation process on county committees also.

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No confidence

List of Counties:

Accomack	3	Greene	1	Powhatan	1
Albemarle	3	Greensville	3	Prince Edward	1
Alleghany	1	Halifax	5	Prince George	3
Bath	1	Hampton	2	Prince William	6
Bedford	2	Hanover	3	Richmond City	2
Brunswick	6	Henrico	5	Roanoke	4
Buckingham	1	Henry	1	Russell	1
Campbell	2	Isle of Wight	2	Scott	1
Charles City	2	James City	1	Smyth	1
Charlotte	1	King & Queen	7	Southampton	5
Chesterfield	10	King William	1	Spotsylvania	6
Culpeper	6	Lancaster	2	Stafford	1
Cumberland	6	Loudoun	2	Suffolk	3
Dickenson	2	Louisa	2	Surry	4
Dinwiddie	4	Lunenburg	7	Sussex	1
Essex	1	Madison	1	Petersburg	1
Fairfax	2	Mecklenburg	10	Virginia Beach	1
Fauquier	6	Montgomery	4	Washington	5
Floyd	4	Nelson	3	Westmoreland	1
Franklin	4	Nottaway	6	Wythe	1
Giles	1	Orange	5		
Gloucester	2	Patrick	1		
Goochland	1	Petersburg	2		