



Ohio Revised Code

Section 939.02 Powers and duties of director of agriculture.

Effective: October 17, 2019

Legislation: House Bill 166 - 133rd General Assembly

The director of agriculture shall do all of the following:

(A) Provide administrative leadership to soil and water conservation districts in planning, budgeting, staffing, and administering district programs and the training of district supervisors and personnel in their duties, responsibilities, and authorities as prescribed in this chapter and Chapter 940. of the Revised Code;

(B) Administer this chapter and Chapter 940. of the Revised Code pertaining to state responsibilities and provide staff assistance to the Ohio soil and water conservation commission in exercising its statutory responsibilities;

(C) Assist in expediting state responsibilities for watershed development and other natural resource conservation works of improvement;

(D) Coordinate or support the development and implementation of cooperative programs and working agreements between soil and water conservation districts and the department of agriculture, department of natural resources, environmental protection agency, or other agencies of local, state, and federal government. The cooperative programs and working agreements shall be for the support of farm, rural, suburban, and urban conservation programs.

(E) Subject to the approval of the Ohio soil and water conservation commission, adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code that do or comply with all of the following:

(1) Establish technically feasible and economically reasonable standards to achieve a level of management and conservation practices in farming operations that will abate wind or water erosion of the soil or abate the degradation of the waters of the state by residual farm products, manure, or soil sediment, including attached substances, and establish criteria for determination of the acceptability of such management and conservation practices;



- (2) Establish procedures for administration of rules for agricultural pollution abatement and for enforcement of those rules;
- (3) Specify the pollution abatement practices eligible for state cost sharing and determine the conditions for eligibility, the construction standards and specifications, the useful life, the maintenance requirements, and the limits of cost sharing for those practices. Eligible practices shall be limited to practices that address agricultural operations and that require expenditures that are likely to exceed the economic returns to the owner or operator and that abate soil erosion or degradation of the waters of the state by residual farm products, manure, or soil sediment, including attached pollutants.
- (4) Establish procedures for administering grants to owners or operators of agricultural land or animal feeding operations for the implementation of operation and management plans;
- (5) Do both of the following with regard to composting conducted in conjunction with agricultural operations:
 - (a) Establish methods, techniques, or practices for composting dead animals, or particular types of dead animals, that are to be used at such operations, as the director considers to be necessary or appropriate;
 - (b) Establish requirements and procedures governing the review and approval or disapproval of composting plans by the supervisors of soil and water conservation districts under division (S) of section 940.06 of the Revised Code.
- (6) Establish best management practices for inclusion in operation and management plans;
- (7) Establish the amount of civil penalties assessed by the director under division (A) of section 939.07 of the Revised Code for violation of rules adopted under division (E) of this section;
- (8) Not conflict with air or water quality standards adopted pursuant to section 3704.03 or 6111.041 of the Revised Code. Compliance with rules adopted under this section does not affect liability for



noncompliance with air or water quality standards adopted pursuant to section 3704.03 or 6111.041 of the Revised Code. The application of a level of management and conservation practices recommended under this section to control windblown soil from farming operations creates a presumption of compliance with section 3704.03 of the Revised Code as that section applies to windblown soil.

(F) Cost share with landowners on practices established pursuant to division (E)(3) of this section as moneys are appropriated and available for that purpose. Any practice for which cost share is provided shall be maintained for its useful life. Failure to maintain a cost share practice for its useful life shall subject the landowner to full repayment to the department.

(G) Employ field assistants and other employees that are necessary for the performance of the work prescribed by Chapter 940. of the Revised Code, for performance of work of the department under this chapter, and as agreed to under working agreements or contractual arrangements with soil and water conservation districts, prescribe their duties, and fix their compensation in accordance with schedules that are provided by law for the compensation of state employees. All such employees of the department, unless specifically exempted by law, shall be employed subject to the classified civil service laws in force at the time of employment.

(H) In connection with new or relocated projects involving highways, underground cables, pipelines, railroads, and other improvements affecting soil and water resources, including surface and subsurface drainage:

(1) Provide engineering service that is mutually agreeable to the Ohio soil and water conservation commission and the director to aid in the design and installation of soil and water conservation practices as a necessary component of such projects;

(2) Maintain close liaison between the owners of lands on which the projects are executed, soil and water conservation districts, and authorities responsible for such projects;

(3) Review plans for such projects to ensure their compliance with standards developed under division (E) of this section in cooperation with the department of transportation or with any other interested agency that is engaged in soil or water conservation projects in the state in order to



minimize adverse impacts on soil and water resources adjacent to or otherwise affected by these projects;

(4) Recommend measures to retard erosion and protect soil and water resources through the installation of water impoundment or other soil and water conservation practices;

(5) Cooperate with other agencies and subdivisions of the state to protect the agricultural status of rural lands adjacent to such projects and control adverse impacts on soil and water resources.

(I) Collect, analyze, inventory, and interpret all available information pertaining to the origin, distribution, extent, use, and conservation of the soil resources of the state;

(J) Prepare and maintain up-to-date reports, maps, and other materials pertaining to the soil resources of the state and their use and make that information available to governmental agencies, public officials, conservation entities, and the public;

(K) Provide soil and water conservation districts with technical assistance including on-site soil investigations and soil interpretation reports on the suitability or limitations of soil to support a particular use or to plan soil conservation measures. The assistance shall be on terms that are mutually agreeable to the districts and the department of agriculture.

(L) Assist local government officials in utilizing land use planning and zoning, current agricultural use value assessment, development reviews, and land management activities;

(M) When necessary for the purposes of this chapter or Chapter 940. of the Revised Code, develop or approve operation and management plans. The director may designate an employee of the department to develop or approve operation and management plans in lieu of the director.

This section does not restrict the manure of domestic or farm animals defecated on land outside an animal feeding operation or runoff from that land into the waters of the state.