

2014-15 COST-SHARE PROGRAM FOR ON-FARM WEATHER STATIONS

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has established a cost-share program to help producers enrolled in applicable FDACS best management practices (BMPs) purchase on-site weather stations and temperature sensors. These weather stations will collect real-time information throughout the year on **rainfall, air temperature, relative humidity, dew point, wind speed, and wind direction**. The information will be accessible to producers on their Smartphones and computers, through the University of Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN) website.

Participant Eligibility

Enrolled producers may apply for one station and up to five temperature sensors for each operation of less than 300 acres of production land. Producers with larger operations may apply for one station and up to five temperature sensors for each 300 acres of production land on the operation(s).

Candidate Selection Guidelines

Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. However, requests related to irrigation for frost/freeze protection will be given priority.

Cost-Share Amounts

FDACS will provide **75 percent of the cost** up to a **\$50,000 maximum per producer**, with a **\$5,000 cap per station/sensor set** (see table below).

300 acres or less production land	1 weather station and up to 5 temperature sensors	75% with \$5,000 cap for each operation	\$50,000 total maximum per producer
More than 300 acres of production land	1 weather station and up to 5 temperature sensors per 300 acres	75% with \$5,000 cap for each 300 acres	

The stations must be programmed and installed by a company that agrees to meet approved specifications, at the on-site location(s) the farmer designates.

Why purchase a weather station?

The use of weather stations helps producers:

- Better determine when to delay irrigation after rainfall and when to irrigate during frost/freeze events, which can reduce water use and save costs on pump operation.
- Better determine when to use fungicide or pesticide sprays or foliar fertilizer applications, which can avoid waste and save related costs.
- Enhance the potential for reducing the pumping of surface and ground water and the runoff and leaching of fertilizers and other farm chemicals into water resources.

For more information on this cost-share program, and assistance with applying, please contact:

Susie Bishop, Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District
4505 George Blvd., Sebring, FL 33875
sbishop@highlandsswcd.org or (863) 402-7020 Office, (863) 385-7028 FAX

For more information on BMP enrollment, contact FDACS at:

AgBMPHelp@freshfromflorida.com, or (850) 617-1727



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner