

1 implementation of the agricultural standards would be better served by a new
2 financial incentive; and

3 (4) recommend legislative changes that may be required to implement
4 any financial incentive recommended or proposed in the report.

5 (b) The Soil Conservation Practice and Payment for Ecosystem Services
6 Working Group shall consist of persons with knowledge or expertise in
7 agricultural water quality, soil health, economic development, or agricultural
8 financing. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall appoint the
9 members that are not ex officio members. The Working Group shall include
10 the following members:

11 (1) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee;

12 (2) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;

13 (3) the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or designee

14 (4) a representative of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board;

15 (5) a member of the former Dairy Water Collaborative;

16 (6) a representative from the Farmer's Watershed Alliance at least three
17 farmer's watershed alliances;

18 (7) a representative from the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition;

19 (8) a representative from the Connecticut River Watershed Farmers
20 Alliance

21 (9) a representative of the Natural Resources Conservation Council;

1 (10) a representative of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics of
2 the University of Vermont;

3 (11) a representative of the University of Vermont (UVM) Extension;

4 (12) at least two members of the Agricultural Water Quality Partnership;

5 (13) a representative of small-scale, diversified farming; and

6 (14) a member of the Healthy Soils Initiative.

7 (c) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee shall be the
8 chair of the Working Group, and the representative of the Vermont Housing
9 and Conservation Board shall be the vice chair.

10 (d) On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and
11 Markets shall submit an interim report that summarizes the progress of the
12 working group in preparing the report required by this section to the Senate
13 Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and
14 Forestry. On or before January 15, 2021, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food
15 and Markets shall submit the final report required by this section including the
16 findings and recommendations of the Soil Conservation Practice and Payment
17 for Ecosystem Services Working Group regarding financial incentives
18 designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to implement agricultural practices
19 that improve soil health, enhance crop resilience, and reduce agricultural
20 runoff to waters to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House
21 Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.