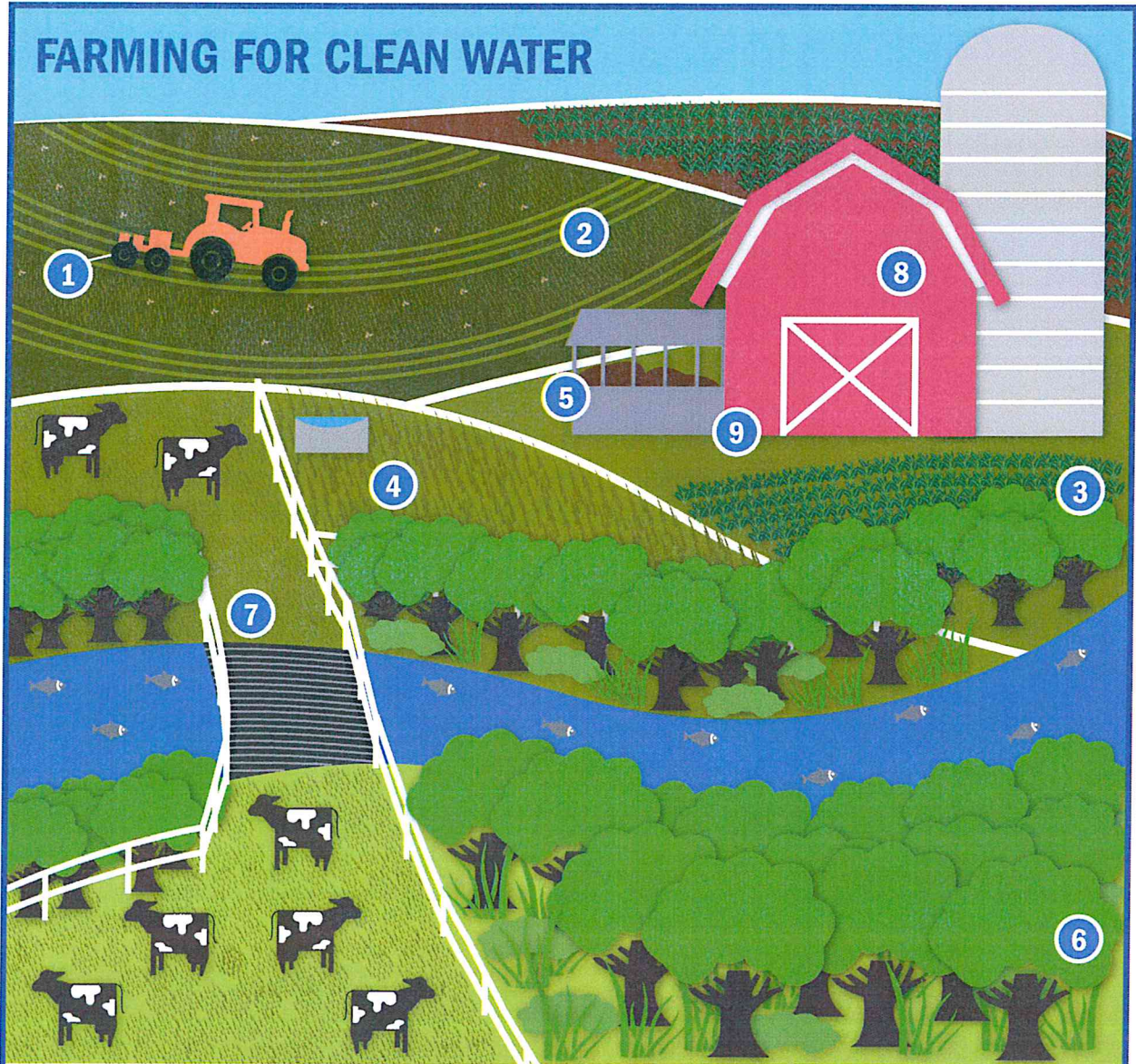


FARMING FOR CLEAN WATER



Farmers use a variety of conservation practices that improve water quality, prevent the loss of valuable topsoil and nutrients, improve crop and livestock production, increase soil health, reduce water runoff in times of drought, and limit flooding in times of excess rain. Clean water farming methods include:

- 1 Conservation tillage** is a low-impact method of farming that retains the root systems of previously-cultivated crops by inserting seeds into the ground without plowing. It reduces erosion, prevents soil compaction, improves soil health, increases water infiltration, and sequesters carbon, while reducing the need for labor and fuel.
- 2 Contour stripcropping** reduces soil erosion and runoff, with strips of crops planted along the contour and perpendicular to the slope.
- 3 Cover crops** are typically planted in the fall, to hold excess nutrients remaining in the field after harvest, prevent soil erosion from wind and rain, retain moisture, reduce weeds, and increase organic matter.
- 4 Rotational grazing systems** allow livestock to have access to high-quality forages, reduces feed costs, improves animal health, reduces soil erosion, improves manure utilization by vegetation, and improves water quality.
- 5 Composting livestock manure** stabilizes nitrogen and phosphorus so they are less likely to be lost from cropland. Storage structures hold manure until it can be applied when crops will need the nutrients.
- 6 Forested streambank buffers** help protect streams by absorbing nutrients and retaining soil, as well as providing shade that cools water temperatures and providing wildlife habitat, especially when at least 35-foot wide.
- 7 Stream bank fencing** protects the buffer, and keeps livestock out of streams so they cannot erode the banks and excrete waste directly into the streams. Stabilized crossings allow livestock to access pastures on the other side of a stream without causing erosion on the banks.
- 8 Improvements to livestock housing**, barnyards, and manure-storage areas help retain manure for later application and divert stormwater so it does not transport wastes to nearby streams.
- 9 Nutrient management plans** help producers apply nutrients from manure and other sources used by the crops at the best time and rate to improve production, reduce nutrient runoff, decrease the need for purchased fertilizers, and improve soil and water quality.



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

cbf.org/farmingforcleanwater