



Aerator Rental Program

If you are interested in participating in the Aerator rental program, please contact:

**Poultney Mettowee Natural
Resource Conservation District**

802-287-8339

PO Box 209

Poultney, VT 05764



With funding from the following sources:



Aeration Tillage in Rutland County

In 2009, the Poultney Mettowee Conservation District received funding from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture to purchase two Gen-Till Aerators: an 8ft 9" unit and a 15ft folding unit.

What does an aerator do?

An aerator creates a vertical slit in the soil that opens up the soil for better water and nutrient infiltration and decreases compaction at the surface, at least on a temporary basis.

Each unit has 5 different setting depending on how much soil disturbance you want. 0, 2.5, 5, 7.5 or 10 degrees. 0 is limited soil disturbance where as 10 degrees is much soil disturbance.

Why should I aerate?

Farmers that have used the aerator on their soils have noticed a visible increase in water infiltration during rain events thus lessening potential runoff and erosion and providing more water to forage roots on hilly terrain. Some farmers believe that soil aeration also breaks up sod bound fields and pastures.

But won't aeration hurt my forage stand?

In research done by the Conservation District in 2010 and 2011 with grants from NE SARE and the Lake Champlain Basin Program, there was no detriment to forage stands in either quality or yield.

What about using an aerator on alfalfa stands?

In research done by the District in 2011-2013 with a grant from NE SARE indicates that there is no detriment to aerating mixed alfalfa/grass stands in light soil, when aeration occurs in in spring or after 1st cut.

What else can an aerator be used for?

Aerators can also be used for incorporating manure in corn fields, for loosening the topsoil for cover crop plantings if there isn't a no-till drill available for the seeding and for reducing soil surface compaction.

What are the tractor requirements for using the aerator?

A good guide is roughly 10hp per foot of unit but this really depends on 2WD versus 4WD tractors, on your soil conditions and the topography of the fields. You also need to have hydraulic hoses to raise and lower the unit.

What kind of truck do you need to move the aerators?

For the 8ft 9" unit you will need a good 1 / 2 ton preferable with a tow / haul package

For the 15ft folding unit you will need a 3 / 4 ton truck preferable with a tow / haul package. These units have quite a bit of tongue weight.

What are the rental fees associated with the units and is there cost share available?

You will pay PMNRCD \$5 / ac for using either of the Gen-Till units.

There is potential cost share available of up to \$12 / acre through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets from the Farm Agronomic Practice Program (FAP). USDA / NRCS sometimes has cost share available through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) of up to \$38 / acre.

