

# 2026 DAIRY PLUS PROGRAM



## Request for Grant Applications

Released Date: June 16, 2026  
Applications Due: September 14, 2026 by 5:00 p.m. PT  
Late submissions will not be accepted.



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# About the Program

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## Background and Purpose

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Office of Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability (OARS) [2026 Dairy Plus Program](#) will award competitive grants to California dairy farms for the implementation of advanced manure management practices that address both methane emissions and nitrogen and salt surplus.

The [California Dairy Research Foundation \(CDRF\)](#), in collaboration with CDFA and several other organizations, has been awarded \$85 million in funding by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#) under the Advancing Markets for Producers (AMP) initiative. Through the year 2028, this project will provide incentives for dairy producers to adopt advanced manure management practices, measure current and estimate future greenhouse gas (GHG) and nutrient benefits associated with implemented practices, provide outreach and technical assistance, and develop sustainable product markets for milk. Approximately \$75 million of the total awarded amount will support the implementation of advanced manure management practices through the Dairy Plus Program.

Dairy Plus projects build on manure methane practices supported by the existing CDFA [Alternative Manure Management Program \(AMMP\)](#) and [Dairy Digester Research and Development Program \(DDRDP\)](#) to address nitrogen and salt surplus. Producers who have successfully implemented or are in the process of implementing a system that contains one (or more) of the approved AMMP and/or DDRDP practices<sup>1</sup> may apply for funding through the Dairy Plus Program, regardless of whether their systems have received state funding (refer to [Appendix F](#)).

This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under agreement number NR233A750004G048.

## Funding and Duration

The 2026 Dairy Plus Program will make approximately \$34 million available to support the implementation of advanced manure management practices. The 2026 Dairy Plus Program will provide supplemental funding opportunities for projects in previous and in-progress Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP) and Dairy Digester Research and Development Program (DDRDP), and for projects in the process of implementing a system that is equivalent to approved AMMP and/or DDRDP practices (i.e., AMMP-like and/or DDRDP-like practices). Projects proposing advanced manure management

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to [Appendix F](#) for the approved AMMP and DDRDP practices (i.e., AMMP- and DDRDP-like practices).

practices must go beyond the usual GHG emission reductions and benefits already provided by the AMMP and DDRDP, and equivalent AMMP and/or DDRDP-like practices (See [Eligibility and Exclusions](#)).

- The maximum grant term will be 12 months initially, with the possibility of 24 months pending extension of contract end date approval from USDA. Awarded projects must be complete and operational no later than 12 months from the date of the award or until further notice. The grant agreement term for awarded projects is initially anticipated to begin on March 1, 2027, and end on February 29, 2028. Grant funds cannot be expended before the start of the grant agreement or after the completion of the grant term. Note: The start and end dates of the grant agreement are subject to change and contingent on the approval of the CPA 52 (NRCS-CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation Worksheet) for the proposed project, as well as pending extension of contract end date approval from USDA.
- Project funding award cap at \$750 per cow, for a maximum of \$1,250,000 per project (see [Funding Scenarios](#)).
- CDFA reserves the right to offer an award amount different from the amount requested.
- Grants are paid out on a reimbursement basis following invoice submission by the awardee. Grant funds are subject to state and federal program reimbursement timelines and the availability of program funding.

## Eligibility and Exclusions

The proposed project must meet the following eligibility requirements for the 2026 Dairy Plus Program:

- The project site must be in a commercial California dairy operation.
  - A *dairy operation* is defined as an entity that operates a dairy herd, which produces milk or cream commercially, and whose bulk milk or bulk cream is received or handled by any distributor, manufacturer, or any nonprofit cooperative association of dairy producers.
- California farmers, ranchers, and California Native American Tribes are eligible to apply. Producers receiving grant award funds must be located in California with a physical California business address.
- Producers receiving grant award funds must be registered with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) for the specific farm/tract information for all tracts. Note: One farm per tract is eligible for award.
- Only one FSA-registered entity/producer name is eligible for an award in each solicitation round. If multiple dairy operations under one FSA-registered entity/producer name are selected, only one dairy operation will be awarded.
- The proposed project is for an advanced manure management system, which may

include a maximum of 25% of the budget for the improvement of the existing and/or previously funded, primary manure management system, with the exception of anaerobic digester and biogas end-use systems.

- Eligible project types can be categorized as:
  - In-progress or previous AMMP recipient proposing a Dairy Plus Program project.
  - In-progress or previous DDRDP recipient proposing a Dairy Plus Program project.
  - In-progress or already operational “AMMP approved practice/AMMP-like” system proposing a Dairy Plus Program project (refer to [Appendix F](#)).
  - In-progress or already operational “DDRDP approved practice/DDRDP-like” system proposing a Dairy Plus Program project (refer to [Appendix F](#)).
- The recipient and project must adhere to all “[Requirements and Limitations](#),” which include federal requirements specific to the USDA Advancing Markets for Producers program. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Each Dairy Plus Program project requesting funding must include at least one of the following project components that reduce methane emissions, and nitrogen and salt surpluses. Climate-smart practices eligible for federal funding under this grant are limited to certain Natural Resources Conservation Service-listed practices or those supported and quantified by the CARB Benefits Calculator Tool for AMMP and/or DDRDP.

1. Projects accompanying an in-progress or previously completed AMMP, or a new, in-progress, or previously completed “AMMP-like practice” project (refer to [Appendix E](#)):
  - a. **Vermifiltration** – this practice must be implemented in conjunction with an existing or a new primary mechanical separator.
  - b. **Solid separation of manure solids through a weeping wall** – the system must have a minimum of **two cells**.
  - c. **Advanced solid-liquid separation assisted by flocculants and/or bead filters** – this practice must be implemented in conjunction with an existing or a new primary solid-liquid separation system.
  - d. **Advanced solid-liquid separation through centrifuge** – this practice must be implemented in conjunction with an existing or a new primary solid-liquid separation system.
  - e. **Primary practices above (a., b., c., or d.) AND subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) using liquid manure.**
  - f. **Primary practices above (a., b., c., or d.) AND aerated composting, as follows:**

- i. Composting in vessel (composting in an enclosed vessel, with forced aeration and continuous mixing).
- ii. Composting in aerated static pile (composting in piles with forced aeration but no mixing).
- iii. Composting in intensive windrows (with regular turning for mixing and aeration).
- iv. Composting in passive windrows (with infrequent turning for mixing and aeration).
- v. Composting in aerated vermifiltration system (solids separated by the vermifilter are also processed by worms within the vermifilter).

Any previous AMMP grant recipient with an in-progress or closed-out project, or dairies that have an in-progress or already implemented AMMP-like practice, may be eligible to apply regardless of the past practice type implemented. However, for certain practices (i.e., compost bedded pack barn, conversion from flush to scrape, pasture-based management), the proposed advanced practice for the Dairy Plus Program must address the portion of the herd **not already covered by the in-progress or previously implemented AMMP or “AMMP-like practices” project**, as the manure handled by those systems should already be largely removed from a liquid waste stream.

Additionally, if the applicant is proposing a Dairy Plus Program project building on an in-progress AMMP project (i.e., is still in an active grant term), they cannot make changes to the AMMP project unless they follow the regular modification request processes outlined by AMMP. The Dairy Plus Program project must be proposed and achievable in a way that does not require significant alteration or changing the already funded and approved AMMP project scope of work.

2. Projects accompanying an in-progress or previously completed DDRDP, or “DDRDP-like practices” project (refer to [Appendix F](#)):
  - a. **Post-digester vermifiltration** – this practice must be implemented after the anaerobic digester.
  - b. **Post-digester advanced solid-liquid separation assisted by flocculants and/or bead filters** – this practice must be implemented after the anaerobic digester.
  - c. **Post-digester advanced solid-liquid separation through centrifuge** – this practice must be implemented after the anaerobic digester.
  - d. **Practices above (a., b., or c.) AND subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) using liquid manure digestate.**

In-progress or previously completed DDRDP, or “DDRDP-like practices” projects applying for the 2026 Dairy Plus Program must incorporate a post-anaerobic digestion practice or technology for treating the digestate material that exits the dairy digester. Such practices or technologies cannot be implemented before the anaerobic digester system.

Additionally, if the applicant is proposing a Dairy Plus Program project for an in-progress DDRDP project (i.e., is still in an active grant term), they cannot make changes to the DDRDP project unless they follow the regular modification request processes outlined by DDRDP. The Dairy Plus Program project must be proposed and achievable in a way that does not require altering or changing the already funded and approved DDRDP project scope of work.

Dairy Plus Program funds **cannot** be used for the following:

- To fund the implementation or maintenance of all systems related to anaerobic digestion and biogas end use, including but not limited to, anaerobic digesters, biogas cleanup equipment, biogas upgrading equipment, pipelines, and electricity generators.
- To duplicate activities or costs funded by other federal or state grant programs, including in-progress, or previously completed AMMP and/or DDRDP grants.
- To fund advanced manure management technologies/practices that are not described in the [Eligibilities and Exclusions](#).
- To fund projects on dairy operations that propose an increase in baseline emissions GHG (e.g., increasing herd size, changing existing manure management practices to those that increase GHG emissions, including but not limited to conversion from dry scrape to flush lagoon systems).

## CDFA and USDA Priorities

In alignment with USDA, CDFA will prioritize awards to beginning, veteran, socially disadvantaged, and/or limited resource farmers or ranchers, by carving out a minimum of 10% of Dairy Plus Program funds (or approximately \$7,500,000) to be granted to members of these groups throughout the program’s lifetime. “Historically Underserved” includes farmers or ranchers who are: Beginning, Socially Disadvantaged, Veterans, and Limited Resource (<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/our-agency/historically-underserved-farmers-and-ranchers>). These groups are defined below:

- Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher means a participant who:
  - With direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous two years; and
  - Who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of the county median household

income in each of the previous two years.

- Beginning Farmer and Rancher means a participant who:
  - Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years, and who:
    - Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.
    - In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located.
- Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher (SDFR) means a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. These groups include American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic. This definition also aligns with California's [Farmer Equity Act of 2017](#).

Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of USDA AMP/Dairy Plus programs.

- Veteran Farmer or Rancher means a participant who:
  - Served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve component thereof; was released from service under conditions other than dishonorable; and:
    - Has not operated a farm or ranch, or has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years; or
    - Who first obtained status as a veteran during the most recent 10-year period.

A Self-Determination Tool is available to the public and may be completed online at: <https://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>.

**Note:** Providing demographic information is voluntary, and not providing a response will not negatively impact the application; however, providing a response will assist CDFA in prioritizing funding to small and historically underserved farmers and ranchers.

### **Executive Order N-6-22 – Russia Sanctions**

On March 4, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-6-22 (the EO) regarding Economic Sanctions against Russia and Russian entities and individuals. "Economic Sanctions" refers to sanctions imposed by the U.S. government in response to

Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law. By submitting a bid, proposal, or application, the Bidder/Applicant represents that it is not a target of Economic Sanctions. Should the State determine Bidder/Applicant is a target of Economic Sanctions or is conducting prohibited transactions with sanctioned individuals or entities, that shall be grounds for rejection of the Bidder's/Applicant's bid/proposal/application any time prior to the contract/agreement execution, or, if determined after contract/agreement execution, shall be grounds for termination by the State.

## Timeline

Dairy Plus Program Timeline (Tentative, subject to change)	
Invitation to Submit Grant Applications	June 16, 2026
CDFA Application Workshops and Webinars	June 25 and July 8, 2026
Grant Applications Due	September 14, 2026
Review Process	September 2026 – November 2026
Announcement and Award Funding	November 2026
Grant Agreement Execution	See <a href="#">Grant Agreement</a>

# Funding Scenarios

Program/System	State Funding (CDFA)	Federal Funding (USDA)*	Total Funding	Matching Funds Required
<p><b>Dairy Plus for In Progress or Previous AMMP, or with approved AMMP-like practices**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Vermifiltration</li> <li>b) Weeping wall (min of 2 cells)</li> <li>c) Advanced solid-liquid separation assisted by flocculants and/or bead filters</li> <li>d) Advanced solid-liquid separation through centrifuge</li> <li>e) Practices above (a, b, c, or d) AND subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) using liquid manure</li> <li>f) Practices above (a, b, c, or d) AND aerated composting</li> </ul>	NA	Up to \$1.25 M (\$750/cow)	Up to \$1.25 M	N/A
<p><b>Dairy Plus for In Progress or Previous DDRDP, or with approved DDRDP-like practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Post-digester vermifiltration</li> <li>b) Post-digester advanced solid-liquid separation assisted by flocculants and/or bead filters</li> <li>c) Post-digester Advanced solid-liquid separation through centrifuge</li> <li>d) Above practices (a, b, or c) AND subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) using liquid manure digestate</li> </ul>	NA	Up to \$1.25 M (\$750/cow)	Up to \$1.25 M	N/A

\*Dairy Plus Program funds cannot be used to fund dairy digester and/or biogas clean-up and upgrading equipment

\*\*Required for adding an advanced manure management practice addressing both GHG emissions and nitrogen and salt surpluses specified under the Dairy Plus Program. Any in-progress or previous AMMP recipient, or AMMP-like applicants may be eligible regardless of the practice type implemented, but for certain practices (i.e., compost bedded pack barn, conversion from flush to scrape, pasture), the advanced practice must address the portion of the herd **not already covered by the in-progress or previous AMMP or with an approved AMMP-like practices project.**

# Requirements and Limitations

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## Program Conditions

Once a project has been awarded funds, and until the project is complete and closed out, the project **may not**:

- Change or alter the proposed advanced manure management practice to be implemented, as it may change the GHG estimates and co-benefits.
- Change the herd size beyond the limits established by the operation's existing permits at the time of application during the project term.
- Change the construction layout, construction location within the farm, design of buildings, and/or technology systems without approval from CDFA and CDRF prior to such change.
- Change the construction or design of buildings such that the number of animals in the project boundary is impacted, resulting in a change in estimated GHG reductions.
- Change ownership and/or partnership entities of the dairy. In the event the grantee needs to change ownership of the dairy and/or partnership entities or enters negotiations for the sale of the dairy operation for which a grant was awarded, the grantee shall disclose said negotiations to the CDFA and CDRF immediately. The grant shall not be assigned to the purchaser unless approved by the CDFA and CDRF pursuant to any/all terms and conditions that CDFA and CDRF deem necessary. Should the grantee or purchaser refuse to comply with the terms and conditions set forth by the CDFA or the grantee sells the dairy operation that was the subject of the grant award without approval of grant transfer from the CDFA and CDRF, the grant agreement will be terminated, and the grantee shall return all grant monies to the CDFA and CDRF immediately.

## Program Requirements

The funds awarded under the Dairy Plus Program are subject to federal terms and conditions. For producers to receive incentive payments as a part of the Advancing Markets for Producers, they must:

- Establish Farm Records with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) (have farm, tract, and field numbers in place)
- Complete an [AD-2047 \(Customer Data Worksheet to facilitate the collection of customer data for Business Partner Record\)](#)
- Certify Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC)

compliance via [Form AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification](#), and

- Certify that they are not a foreign person or entity.

Additionally, grant recipients are required to:

- Sign an FSA authorization form for CDRF to access records information in conjunction with conservation assistance on the grant recipient's behalf. FSA information (such as the name of the operation) will need to match what is submitted to the CDFA for establishing a payee data record (STD-204) for processing reimbursement payments. Payee data records are verified against IRS records. Note: The FSA authorization form is now present in the Dairy Plus Program application.
- Provide information on the number for farm, tract, field; latitude and longitude, acres of land impacted, and other information as requested.
- Participate in on-farm measurement activities with the University of California for monitoring and quantification of the advanced manure management practices before, during, and after implementation of the project, if selected.
- Submit regular status reports to CDFA, CDRF, and USDA explaining in detail the project's progress. Reporting deadlines and requirements to be provided by CDRF.
- Report annual data to CDFA regarding their advanced manure management practice for at least five years after the end of the project term and/or the practice becomes operational.

## California Environmental Quality Act and Permits

CDFA intends to fund proposals that demonstrate project readiness based on evidence that applicants are prepared to promptly begin project implementation. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, a list of permits already obtained and details of the process required to obtain remaining permits.

If awarded, grant recipients are expected to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and all applicable permits within **six (6) months** of grant agreement execution. CEQA and permit compliance requirements vary depending on project type and location. If the environmental impacts of the project are deemed insignificant by the leading agency (in most cases, the County), an initial environmental study and negative declaration may satisfy CEQA requirements. Applicants are advised to check with their local county and city planning commissions for CEQA and conditional use permit requirements.

CalGold, an online tool for permit assistance provided by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), may be a useful resource. Visit <https://www.calgold.ca.gov/> for more information.

## Demonstration of Progress

Additionally, grant applicants are required to demonstrate progress within six (6) months by accomplishing at least one of the following: securing matching funds, ordering related supplies/equipment, submitting invoices to CDFA for reimbursement, providing proof of matching costs expenditures, obtaining necessary planning permits, or demonstrating site preparation for the implementation of the project. Failure to demonstrate progress in the activities mentioned above may result in termination of the grant agreement.

## Use of Commercially Available Project Technology

Projects are required to use commercially available technologies. *Commercially available technologies* are those having a proven operating history specific to the grant application. Such a system is based on established design and installation procedures and practices. Professional service providers, traders, large construction equipment providers, and laborers who are familiar with installation procedures and practices. Please refer to [Key Terms and Definitions \(Appendix D\)](#) for a detailed definition of "commercially available" as applicable to this program.

## Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Calculations

### **For projects accompanying an in-progress, or previously completed Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP) project, or approved AMMP-like practices project:**

Applicants are required to use the quantification methodology titled "Greenhouse Gas Quantification Methodology for the California Department of Food and Agriculture Alternative Manure Management Program" and associated "[Benefits Calculator Tool for the AMMP](#)" developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

### **For projects accompanying in-progress or previously completed Dairy Digester Research and Development Program project, or with approved DDRDP-like practices project:**

Applicants are required to use the latest quantification methodology titled "Greenhouse Gas Quantification Methodology for the California Department of Food and Agriculture Dairy Digester Research and Development Program" and associated "[Benefits Calculator Tool for the DDRDP](#)" developed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

The Quantification Methodologies and Benefits Calculator Tools are available on the CARB CCI (California Climate Investments) Quantification, Benefits, and Reporting Materials webpage: <https://www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov/tools>. These were developed specifically for the AMMP and DDRDP, and are based on the [CARB Compliance Offset Protocol – Livestock Projects \(2014\)](#), with some modifications to allow for the calculation of anticipated net GHG reductions of an AMMP (or approved AMMP-like practice) or DDRDP (or approved DDRDP-like practice) project prior to implementation.

The Benefits Calculator Tool submitted with a Dairy Plus Program application must address

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the whole proposed advanced manure management system and include the elements that go above and beyond the existing (in-progress or previous project recipient) AMMP (or approved AMMP-like practices) and/or DDRDP (or approved DDRDP-like practices) portion. For example:

- 1) An applicant who operates an AMMP or AMMP-like solid-liquid separator for their primary manure management that wants to submit a vermifiltration system application for the Dairy Plus Program should submit an AMMP Benefits Calculator Tool containing both the solid-liquid separator and the vermifiltration system for the Dairy Plus Program application (the whole advanced manure management system).
- 2) An applicant who operates a DDRDP or DDRDP-like covered lagoon anaerobic digester application for their primary manure management that wants to submit a post-digestion vermifiltration system application for the Dairy Plus Program should submit a DDRDP Benefits Calculator Tool containing both the covered lagoon anaerobic digester and the post-digestion vermifiltration system for the Dairy Plus Program application (the whole advanced manure management system).

Applicants are to input the number of animals being affected by the Dairy Plus Program project proposed, as it is on the farm. CDFA and technical reviewers will not accept modifications made to the number of animals with the purpose of artificially resulting in a higher manure management collection rate.

Do **not** modify the AMMP or DDRDP Benefits Calculator Tool file. Modified AMMP or DDRDP Benefits Calculator Tools files (i.e., unlocked AMMP or DDRDP Benefit Calculator) will be considered as unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments and will be automatically disqualified at the administrative review phase.

## Cost Share

CDFA will fund project costs with a maximum grant award as indicated within each funding scenario (refer to the [Funding Scenarios](#) section). Cost share, including matching funds and in-kind contributions, is not required for the 2026 Dairy Plus Program; however, cost share is encouraged to demonstrate commitment to the project. Although cost share is encouraged, it is not scored based on the committed amount. Reviewers will consider whether cost share is provided as evidence of commitment to the project, but they will not reward applicants for proposing a greater share than other applicants. *Matching funds* are a portion of project costs not borne by the Dairy Plus Program. Matching contributions include allowable costs incurred that are directly related to the implementation of the project (i.e., supplies and materials, equipment, contractor/consultant fees, and other associated project costs).

**Note:** AMMP and DDRDP grant awards from previous solicitations will not serve as matching funds for the Dairy Plus Program. CDFA and CDRF have the discretion to evaluate if

proposed matching funds meet the minimum requirements.

*In-kind contributions* are donated goods or services for which fees would ordinarily be paid or provided to the applicant at no cash cost. Donated goods and services must be necessary for the project to be considered in kind (i.e., goods/services would be otherwise purchased if not donated). For professional donated services, the professional donating the service must be licensed to work in that profession and value their service at the same rate at which an ordinary professional with the same expertise and training would charge for the same or similar service.

Applicants are required to provide the contribution source, type, and amount of all contributions in support of the project.

## Federal Cost Principles

Federal cost principles are regulations based on organization type used to determine allowable costs and ensure consistent treatment of costs. Applicants are responsible for identifying the federal cost principles appropriate for their organization, consistently applying cost principles to the Dairy Plus Program grant funds, and ensuring contractors or consultants comply with federal cost principle requirements.

- State, local, or Indian tribal governments; non-profit organizations; and colleges and universities will be subject to 2 CFR 200 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=898fdaa0b947dd0bf8c962a137d230dd&node=pt2.1.200&rtn=div5>).
- For-profit organizations will be subject to 48 CFR Subpart 31.2 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-48/chapter-1/subchapter-E/part-31/subpart-31.2>).

## Allowable Costs

The categories listed below are consistent with the project Budget Worksheet template. Allowable project costs include, but are not limited to:

- *Supplies*: Supplies and materials are items with an acquisition cost of less than \$10,000 per unit and have a useful life of less than one year.
- *Equipment*: Equipment is an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property and has a useful life of more than one year and a purchase cost that equals or exceeds \$10,000 per unit.
- *Contractor/Consultant*: Contractor fees are limited to labor for installing the project. Consultant fees are for a specific and identifiable service that is directly related to project implementation. Compensation for individual contractor/consultant fees must be reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for the same or similar services. Costs in this category must not exceed 25% of the total amount requested.

- *Design and engineering*: Design and engineering costs, including those provided by contractor/consultants up to 5% of the total amount requested are allowable. Compensation for design and engineering fees must be reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for the same or similar services.
- *Other Costs*: Other direct costs and expenses for implementing the project not covered in any of the previous categories.

Allowable costs must be documented, reasonable, and allocable to the project. Dairy Plus Program project costs must be incurred for the purpose for which the funding was granted and charged to the award on a specifically calculated basis. All project expenses billed to the Dairy Plus Program project must maintain all documents, including, but not limited to, invoices, receipts, and agreements. Dairy Plus Program project expenses must be necessary for award performance and prudently incurred. All project expenses billed to the Dairy Plus Program must be paid by the recipient prior to reimbursement and must be supported with proper documentation.

## Unallowable Costs

A cost is unallowable if it does not comply with program requirements or other terms and conditions in the grant agreement. The following costs are **not** allowed:

- Costs incurred outside of the grant term.
- Costs that are not directly related to the implementation of the Dairy Plus Program practice.
- Costs not included in the approved budget worksheet.
- Costs related to grant management and fulfilling requirements set by the Program, including but not limited to: progress reports, final performance reports, post-project completion report preparation, and virtual or in-person site visits for critical project review/verification. *Note: for technical assistance, please refer to section [Assistance and Questions](#).*
- Costs covered by another State or Federal grant program, including AMMP and DDRDP.
- Pre-development costs, including, but not limited to, application preparation, project designs, and any other activities that contributed to a project's readiness.
- Cost of all permits necessary for the completion of the project. Examples include, but are not limited to, air district permits, county building permits, and water board permits.
- Costs associated with CEQA environmental review, such as preparation of Environmental Impact Reports.
- Direct and/or indirect expenditures for purchasing or leasing land and/or buildings, including costs associated with the land use or loss of agricultural production.
- Direct and/or indirect expenditures for purchasing dairy manure (tipping fees) or other feedstocks.

- Costs associated with travel (e.g., hotels, flights, per diem, etc.).
- Costs associated with the five-year GHG emissions reduction reporting.
- Costs incurred during community outreach.
- Costs associated with mitigation of potential adverse impacts (i.e., California Government Code Section 16428.86(a)).
- Costs not supported by adequate proof of payment documentation.

\*For more guidance on Allowable and Unallowable Costs, please reference CCR 330.2 and guidance posted by CDFA on the webpage [Final Selected Items of Cost Guidance \(ca.gov\)](#).

# How to Apply

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Applicants will be required to complete and submit their grant applications using an electronic online application submission platform (CDFA Grant Opportunity and Administration Tracking System - GOATS). The Applicant Portal can be accessed at the [Dairy Plus Program webpage](#).

The online application for the Dairy Plus Program is now a standalone application. Email is the primary form of communication at CDFA, so it is important that all email addresses used in the online application are accurate and up to date.

CDFA will conduct workshops and offer “[Questions and Answers](#)” rounds to assist potential applicants in how to apply for the Dairy Plus Program. Additionally, CDRF (<https://cdf.org/climate-smart-commodities-grant-info/>) and partners will provide further outreach and education to help interested applicants.

For guidance on navigating the CDFA GOATS Applicant Portal, please see the [2026 Dairy Plus Program Applicant Guide for Online Application Platform](#).

Applicants may review the application questions and required documents to be attached in the [Application Preview](#). Applicants are encouraged to gather all required information prior to completing the online application to facilitate effective and timely submission.

In case of technical difficulties with the application, please send an email to [CDFA.OEFI.DairyPlus@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:CDFA.OEFI.DairyPlus@cdfa.ca.gov) and include the applicant's name and the application ID in the subject line.

# Grant Application: Questions and Attachments

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## Questions

A preview of the application questions to be answered in [CDFA's Grant Opportunity and Administration Tracking System – GOATS](#) is available in the [Application Preview](#).

## Attachments

Attachments must be submitted in Arial font size 12, with one (1) inch margins, and page numbers on the bottom right corner. Attachments listed as single PDF files (bids, quotes, estimates, design plans, etc.) have no page limit.

All attachments must include the project title in the top left corner of the page.

Each proposal must submit the following documents, using the provided templates:

- Application Summary Form
- Project Description
- Work Plan
- Nitrogen and Salt Management and Water Quality Improvement
- Budget Worksheet
- Estimated GHG Emissions Reduction

### **Application Summary Form (required)**

The Application Summary Form must be completed using the provided PDF template. This document is required.

Applicants are encouraged to copy and paste their responses from the Application Summary Form into the CDFA's [GOATS](#) Application Platform.

Please ensure that you complete and upload the Application Summary Form as a single PDF file.

### **Attachment A: Project Description (required)**

The project description should not be more than 15 pages.

The Project Description must contain a summary of the operation's background, herd details, selected [funding scenario](#), eligible project types for consideration in the proposal, whether the site is owned or leased, project sustainability beyond the project term, and long-term operations and maintenance plans. Additionally, it should explain how the Dairy Plus Program funded advanced manure management project will provide benefits and co-benefits beyond the traditional manure management systems (e.g., such as practices

funded or approved by AMMP and DDRDP), and how it can provide additional greenhouse gas emission reductions and improve nitrogen and salt management. The description should also explain how this project will positively affect the local community and the environment. Finally, it should provide a description of permits necessary to complete the project, along with the status or plan to obtain them.

Complete and upload the [Project Description Template](#) as a Word document.

In addition to the Project Description Template, include the following supporting information (no template provided):

- **Attachment A.1 (required):** Site plan, project design documents, schematic diagrams, permitting, maintenance plans, evidence for providing benefits to priority populations and/or historically underserved farmers and ranchers, etc. Upload as a single PDF file; no total page limit (if applicable). **Note 1:** Site plans **must** include a map of the facility, specifically indicating the location of the project installation. Project designs **must** include numerical depth and widths of construction criteria. Project design, schematics, and diagrams are required to be **final by the time of application submittal**. Any change requests must be received within 45 days of approval, will require authorization, and are subject to approval. **Note 2:** All project design components (e.g., pipelines, cement, electrical, etc.) **must** be clearly identified as reimbursable or matching funds in Attachment D: Budget Worksheet.
- **Attachment A.2 (required):** Signed [FSA Permission Form](#) (template form). Awardees must establish Farm Records with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) (have farm, tract, and field numbers in place). Signing the FSA Permission form provides CDRF with the permission to work with FSA on the awardee's behalf upon award to complete the USDA Environmental Review (CPA-52) approval process in a timely manner.

#### **Attachment B: Work Plan Template (required)**

The Work Plan must clearly describe the tasks and activities required to accomplish goals/objectives in the proposed Project Description. It must identify measurable targets and timelines and include an evaluation component to measure the success of the project and determine whether the project objectives were accomplished.

Complete and upload the [Work Plan Template](#) as a Word document.

#### **Attachment C: Nitrogen and Salt Management and Water Quality Improvements (required)**

The Nitrogen and Salt Management and Water Quality Improvements attachment should provide detailed information and literature review on how the proposed advanced manure management practice will improve nitrogen and salt management and water quality on the dairy farm. Applicants should describe the current nitrogen and salt management issues in the dairy operation, the importance of the proposed project for

reducing or mitigating excess nitrogen and salts, pollutants to the groundwater and waterways, and any extra co-benefits provided by the proposed initiative for their specific operation. Applicants should also discuss the plan for monitoring and evaluating if the proposed project is effective in improving nitrogen and salt management and water quality on the dairy farm and region, as well as the maintenance of the direct benefits and co-benefits achieved over the years.

Complete and upload the [Nitrogen and Salt Management and Water Quality Improvements Template](#) as a PDF file; no total page limit.

**Attachment D: Budget Worksheet (required)**

The Budget Worksheet should provide a clear accounting of costs, work hours, and equipment associated with all activities necessary to complete the project. The costs/equipment should include all project design components including, but not limited to, pipelines, cement, and electrical. These costs MUST be clearly identified and reported in the Budget Worksheet. Applicants must also identify the Dairy Plus Program funds requested, the source and amount of matching (cash) funds, in-kind contributions, State and Federal funds, and all other funding sources necessary to complete the project.

**IMPORTANT:** The budget worksheet should be completed with all the aspects of the project, which include matching funds, in-kind contributions, etc.

Complete and upload the [Budget Worksheet Template](#) as an Excel spreadsheet.

In addition to the Budget Worksheet Template, include the following supporting materials (no template provided):

- **Attachment D.1:** Bids, quotes, or estimates to support budget costs. While complete documentation is not required for the application, it is strongly encouraged. Applicants are also encouraged to obtain multiple estimates to ensure costs are reasonable and consistent with the market rate. Upload as a single PDF file; no total page limit.

Note: when obtaining estimates and quotes and building a project budget, please keep in mind the time between application and the start of a project's grant term if awarded can be approximately 6 months; try to reasonably evaluate the cost of items or work when they will be purchased or performed and whether it will be financially feasible to achieve within the total project budget (includes grant funding and matching funds).

**Attachment E: Estimated GHG Emissions Reduction (required)**

Estimate the project's GHG emissions reduction and environmental benefits with the AMMP or DDRDP Benefits Calculator Tool (this will depend on the proposal type; see the example described in the section [Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Calculations](#)).

Complete and upload the AMMP or DDRDP [Benefits Calculator Tool](#) as an Excel spreadsheet.

In addition to the complete Benefits Calculator Tool, include the following supporting materials:

- **Attachment E.1:** Explanation of Assumptions for GHG Calculations (if applicable, e.g., supporting documentation for herd size for the past 12 months, milk production values used in calculator, current usage, and/or method used to estimate pre- and post-project diesel or electricity). Upload as a single PDF file; no total page limit.
- **Attachment E.2:** Description of how the proposed project will reduce GHG emissions beyond the existing practices and/or beyond the AMMP (and AMMP-like) and/or DDRDP (and DDRDP-like) proposed practices at the dairy operation. Upload as a single PDF file; no total page limit.

Detailed Scoring Criteria are included in [Appendix E](#).

Applicants are to input the number of animals being affected by the Dairy Plus Program project proposed, as it is on the farm. CDFA and technical reviewers will not accept modifications made to the number of animals with the purpose of artificially resulting in a higher manure management collection rate.

Additionally, do **not** modify the AMMP or DDRDP Benefits Calculator Tool file. Modified AMMP or DDRDP Benefits Calculator Tools files (i.e., unlocked AMMP or DDRDP Benefit Calculator) will be considered as unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments and will be automatically disqualified at the administrative review phase.

# Review and Notification

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## Review Process

CDFA will fund advanced manure management project(s) that result in long-term, annual, and measurable GHG reductions and nitrogen and salt management improvement from handling dairy manure, and maximize project co-benefits.

CDFA and CDRF are committed to fully expending all awarded funds for Dairy Plus Program to benefit the CA dairy community while achieving targets set in the agreement with USDA, which includes GHG reductions of up to 450,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e annually, awards for up to 60 producers to adopt advanced manure management practices in their farms, mitigating the methane emissions of up to 100,000 dairy cows, and contribution of \$27,800,000 in matching funds from State Funding and participating producers to the Dairy Plus Program.

CDRF and CDFA will conduct two levels of review during the grant application process. The first is an administrative review to determine whether grant application requirements are met. Grant applications disqualified as a result of the administrative review may be appealed.

The second level of review will be a technical review. CDRF and CDFA will convene the technical review panel, which will consist of public and private experts in dairy methane, and nitrogen and salt management. The technical review panel will make funding recommendations to the California Secretary of Agriculture according to the following two possible scenarios:

### **Scenario 1 - Low application pressure:**

There is enough funding to cover all Dairy Plus Program requests for funding during this solicitation. All projects that pass administrative review, meet minimum scoring criteria for the technical review, and contribute sufficiently to a program-wide trajectory toward meeting USDA GHG reduction targets will be recommended for funding. The technical review panel will set the minimum scoring criteria prior to commencing the review.

### **Scenario 2 - High application pressure:**

There is not enough funding to cover all Dairy Plus Program requests for funding during this solicitation. The technical review panel will rank projects according to the review criteria provided in [Appendix E](#). The technical review panel will make funding recommendations considering application ranking, geography, dairy size, practice diversity, historically underserved farmer and rancher status, and program-wide requirements to meet USDA GHG

reduction targets.

Final award decisions cannot be appealed.

In alignment with USDA, CDFA will prioritize awards to beginning, veteran, socially disadvantaged, and/or limited resource, farmers and ranchers. For more detailed information, please refer to the section [CDFA and USDA Priorities](#) and or the NRCS Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers (at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/our-agency/historically-underserved-farmers-and-ranchers>).

CDFA will follow the procedures set forth in [Appendix C: Confidential Information](#) with respect to confidential and proprietary information provided in the grant application.

CDFA may assess applicants' AMMP and DDRDP past grant performance in determining if a new project will receive funding. Past performance may include, but is not limited to, documentation and data during and after project completion, termination of projects by CDFA due to lack of progress, and termination of projects by the recipient that had incurred grant costs and have not returned the funds to CDFA.

## Disqualifications

During the administrative review, the following will result in the automatic disqualification of a grant application:

- Applications received after the stated submission deadline.
- One or more unanswered questions necessary for the administrative or technical review.
- Missing, blank, unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments (including if a required attachment is for a different application and its content cannot be used to assess the project fully).
- Requests for more than the maximum award amount.
- Applications that include unallowable costs or activities.
- Application does not comply with [Program Eligibility and Exclusions](#), or does not meet [Program Requirements](#).

APPEAL RIGHTS: Any disqualification taken by the Office of Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability (OARS) during the administrative review for the preceding reasons may be appealed to CDFA's Office of Hearings and Appeals within 10 days of receiving a notice of disqualification from CDFA. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party's name on the grant application or their authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the OARS decision being challenged. The submissions must be emailed to [CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov). If submissions are not received within the time frame provided above, the appeal will be denied.

## Notification and Information Posting

All applicants will be notified regarding the status of their grant applications. Successful applicants will receive specific instructions regarding the award process, including information on invoicing and reporting requirements. Applicants not selected for an award will be notified that their application was not accepted for an award at the time of the announcement of the awards.

CDFA will post basic information on the [Dairy Plus Program](#) website regarding the applications it has received at least 10 days before awarding grant funds. Once final decisions on funding awards are made, CDFA will post the list of projects selected for funding. In accordance with the Grants Information Act of 2018 (Stats. 2018, Ch. 318) and AB132, information on awarded projects will also be posted on the [California Grants Portal](#).

# Assistance and Questions

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## Workshops and Technical Assistance

CDFA will conduct application assistance workshops on the 2026 Dairy Plus Program solicitation process and use of the electronic application submission system; please visit the [Dairy Plus Program](#) webpage for more details. All workshops will be available as live webinars and as recordings, and all applicants are encouraged to participate in the workshops.

In addition, CDRF, in collaboration with CDFA, will fund Technical Assistance (provided by a non-CDFA entity, such as non-profit organizations and/or university cooperative extension) on the technical aspects of the application process, including the GHG calculation requirements. CDFA strongly encourages applicants to obtain technical assistance when developing a grant application. These technical assistance providers have expertise in dairy manure management and may be able to assist applicants with the preparation of applications, GHG emission reduction calculations, permitting information, project description, and availability of a computer with internet access to prepare applications.

Information about CDFA and CDRF conducted workshops and CDRF funded Technical Assistance is available on the Dairy Plus Program webpage at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oars/DairyPlus/>, the CDRF Dairy Plus Program webpage at <https://cdf.org/climate-smart-commodities-grant-info/>, and the CDRF technical assistance webpage at <https://cdf.org/plus-assistance/>. Please check the websites regularly for updated schedules for Technical Assistance Workshops.

## Questions and Answers (Q&A)

CDFA cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications; however, general questions regarding the solicitation process may be submitted to: [cdfa.oefi\\_DairyPlus@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cdfa.oefi_DairyPlus@cdfa.ca.gov). Please include "2026 Dairy Plus Program Question" in the subject line of the email to ensure a response.

CDFA will conduct three rounds of Questions and Answers (Q&A) to address general questions about the application submission process and program requirements. Responses to all questions received during the workshops or by email will be posted to CDFA's Dairy Plus Program website according to the schedule below.

Questions Received by:	Responses Posted by:
July 3, 2026	July 10, 2026
July 24, 2026	July 31, 2026
August 21, 2026	August 28, 2026

To maintain the integrity of the competitive grant process, CDFA is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with any information regarding specific grant application questions during the solicitation process.

# Appendix A: Attachments

Attachments should be submitted as indicated in the table below, in Arial font size 12, with one (1) inch margins, and page numbers on the bottom right corner. Attachments listed as single PDF files (bids, quotes and estimates, design plans, etc.) have no page limit.

All attachments must include the project title in the top left corner of the page.

<b>Application Attachments</b>	
<b>Questionnaire</b>	Application Summary Form <b>(required)</b> (Single PDF file)
<b>Project Description and Work Plan</b>	
<b>Attachment A</b>	<a href="#">Project Description Template</a> <b>(required)</b> (Microsoft Word file, 15 pages max, template provided)
<b>Attachment A.1</b>	Site plan, project design documents, schematic diagrams, permitting, maintenance plans, evidence for providing benefits to priority populations and/or historically underserved farmers or ranchers, etc. <b>(required)</b> (Single PDF file, no page limit)
<b>Attachment A.2</b>	<a href="#">FSA Permission Form</a> (template) <b>(required)</b> (Signed single PDF file)
<b>Attachment B</b>	<a href="#">Work Plan Template</a> <b>(required)</b> (Microsoft Word file, 5 pages max, template provided)
<b>Nitrogen and Salt Management and Water Quality Improvements</b>	
<b>Attachment C</b>	<a href="#">Nitrogen and Salt Management and Water Quality Improvement Template</a> <b>(required)</b> (Single PDF file, no page limit)
<b>Budget Worksheet</b>	
<b>Attachment D</b>	<a href="#">Budget Worksheet Template</a> <b>(required)</b> (Excel file, template provided)
Attachment D.1	Bids or quotes to support budget costs (Single PDF file, no page limit)
<b>Estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction</b>	
<b>Attachment E</b>	AMMP or DDRDP <a href="#">Benefits Calculator Tool</a> <b>(required)</b> (Excel file, template provided)
Attachment E.1	Explanation of GHG Calculations (if applicable) (Single PDF file, no page limit)
Attachment E.2	Description of how the proposed project will reduce GHG emissions beyond the existing practices and/or beyond the AMMP /DDRDP proposed and approved practices at the dairy operation. (if applicable) (Single PDF file, no page limit)

# Appendix B: Grant Recipient Requirements

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## Grant Agreement

Applicants with projects selected for award of funds will receive a Grant Agreement package with specific instructions regarding award requirements, including information on project implementation and payment process. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information. CDFA reserves the right to rescind an award due to a lack of response from an awardee.

Grant Agreement Stage	Estimated Time for Stage Completion
Grant packet is completed – during this step, CDFA, CDRF, and USDA will work with awardees to get the information necessary to execute the grant agreement. The timeline for this step is dependent on how prompt information is provided to CDFA, CDRF, and USDA by the grant recipient.	Variable
Grant agreement execution	Up to 120 days

Once a Grant Agreement is executed, grant recipients can begin implementation of the project. Grant recipients are responsible for the overall management of their awarded project and ensuring all project activities are completed before the end of the grant term.

## Pre-Project Consultation

A Pre-Project Consultation conducted by a CDFA representative to confirm project site information, discuss implementation plans, and ensure the project is compliant with program requirements may be required prior to execution of a Grant Agreement.

## Payment Process

CDFA will provide grant recipients with the necessary grant award and invoicing documents. Invoices must be submitted quarterly and include all supporting financial documentation to substantiate expenses. Funds will be allocated on a reimbursement basis. CDFA will withhold 10 percent from the total grant award until the verification requirement is complete to ensure grant recipients complete their project as approved by CDFA. Invoicing and closeout of all project expenditures must be completed before the end of the grant term.

CDFA will track matching funds throughout the grant term. CDFA may withhold grant funds

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reimbursement to those awardees who are required to provide matching funds if matching funds are not expended at a consistent rate.

## Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit regular Progress Reports during the project term. The Progress Report is used to identify tasks and activities achieved, potential concerns, matching funds expended to date, and other pertinent information. The Progress Report may require recipients to provide project information related to the activities developed as part of the work plan.

## Final Verification

Project verification will be required after project implementation is complete. The purpose of the final verification is to verify the successful completion of the project according to the approved Scope of Work and summarize project accomplishments, including estimated GHG reductions for the entire project, improvements in water quality and nitrogen and salt management resulting from the project, and any additional co-benefits achieved during the grant term.

The State of California has the right to review project documents and conduct audits during project implementation and throughout the project life.

Failure to work with CDFA or its designees to provide the necessary project-related documentation will be considered non-performance. In the event of non-performance, CDFA shall take any action deemed necessary to recover all or any portion of the grant funding. If it is determined by CDFA that at that time the grant project is not meeting, and is unlikely to meet certain milestones, CDFA has the right to terminate the Grant Agreement pursuant to the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement. Termination may result in forfeiture by the grantee of any funds retained pursuant to the 10 percent retention policy.

## Post-Project Completion Requirements

Applicants must agree to the following post-project completion requirements to execute a Grant Agreement: Grant recipients are expected to maintain documentation related to the Dairy Plus Program-funded project. Grant recipients are required to report sustainable product marketing outcomes to CDRF/USDA as requested. Grant recipients are required to report on project outcomes achieved for a period of five years after project completion to CDFA and other relevant agencies.

The purpose of the reporting is to demonstrate the long-term success of Dairy Plus Program-awarded projects by documenting that the adopted advanced manure management practice is still operational and project benefits. After the project is operational, CDFA may work with grant recipients to collect the necessary data and quantify GHG emission reductions.

# Appendix C: Confidential Information

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The California Public Records Act (Government Code sections 6250, et seq.) and related statutory definitions of "confidential or proprietary information" (also known as "trade secrets") determine what information provided by the applicant is exempt from public disclosure. The following describes how questions are resolved regarding what information is confidential, the legal protections for confidential information, and internal and program procedures to maintain confidentiality.

## **What is "confidential?"**

The California Public Records Act prevents the disclosure of confidential or proprietary information including, but not limited to:

- Confidential Business and financial information, including volume of business, costs and prices, customers, financial condition, trade secrets, and similar information obtained under an express or implied pledge of confidence. (Ev. Code § 1060 and Gov. Code § 6254).
- Personal data including tax information prohibited from disclosure. (Gov. Code § 6254 and Rev. & Taxation Code § 19542).
- Information Practices Act of 1977 (Civ. Code section 1798 et seq.)

Applicants are directed to clearly mark, on each page, "confidential/proprietary information" those documents they feel contain confidential or proprietary information. However, the mere marking of documents as "confidential/proprietary information" will not result in their being treated as confidential if they are not exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

## **What if there is a question about what is confidential?**

The CDFA Legal Office will review the records and make a determination as to whether or not the records are exempt from disclosure.

## **What program procedures will keep information confidential?**

Financial information will be analyzed, on a need-to-know basis, by staff from the CDFA, kept confidential, and will be maintained with restricted access. Grantee businesses will agree to provide specific key financial information for three years to develop benchmarks to evaluate the program. The records will be kept for the amount of time set forth in CDFA's Internal Record Retention Policy. Grantee must retain all project records for a period of (3) years after final payment by the State. Grantee must retain all project records for at least one (1) year following an audit.

## Appendix D: Key Terms and Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Advance Payment	Advance Payment is a payment to a recipient for anticipated or obligated expenditures for the performance of grant award activities. Advance Payment is <b>not allowed</b> under the Dairy Plus Program.
Baseline Scenario	"Baseline scenario" represents the GHG emissions presently occurring at the project location and that would occur in the absence of a Dairy Plus Program project.
Beginning Farmer and Rancher	A farmer or rancher who has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years, and who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.</li> <li>• In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located.</li> </ul> In the case of a contract made with a legal entity, all members must meet these requirements.
Commercially-Available Technologies	A system and its technologies that have a proven operating history specific to the proposed application. Such a system should include information on its established design, installation procedures, and practices, and availability of professional service providers and distributors, including construction and installation services. Services should also be readily available to properly maintain and operate the system over time, including established warranties for parts, labor, and performance. Pre-commercial technologies are new technologies or enhancements of existing technologies that are not commercially available. Technologies can include pre-commercial and commercial components, but for the purposes of this solicitation, technology should be commercially available for the component.
GHG	<i>Greenhouse Gas(es)</i> are atmospheric gases that can trap infrared radiation from the sun and contribute to global warming and climate change, such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide. The current solicitation will address projects aimed at reducing methane emissions.
GHG Emission Reduction	A calculated decrease in GHG emissions relative to a project baseline scenario over a specified period.

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher	<p>This means a participant who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous two years, and</li> <li>• Who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years.</li> </ul> <p>A Self-Determination Tool is available to the public and may be completed online at: <a href="https://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/">https://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/</a>.</p>
Matching Funds	Funds provided by the applicant toward the implementation of the advanced manure management project.
Project Boundary	The project boundary includes methane emissions from manure volatile solids, as well as CO <sub>2</sub> emissions associated with manure management support equipment and vehicles (both direct emissions from onsite combustion of fossil fuels and indirect emissions from electricity consumption) in both baseline and project scenarios. Only dairy populations for which manure management will be affected by the Dairy Plus Program project are included within the project boundary. Other dairy populations that are managed in other areas and for which manure management practices will not change may be excluded.
Project Scenario	"Project scenario" represents the GHG emissions and emission reductions that are reasonably expected to occur as a result of implementing a Dairy Plus Program project.
Priority Populations	Priority populations include residents of: (1) census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the California Environmental Protection Agency per SB 535; (2) census tracts identified as low-income per AB 1550; or (3) a low-income household per AB 1550. See Section VII.B of the <a href="#">Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments (August 2018)</a> for more information on the definitions of priority populations.

<p>Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher (SDFR)</p>	<p>Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFR), as defined by California law in the <a href="#">Farmer Equity Act of 2017</a> and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (<a href="https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/our-agency/historically-underserved-farmers-and-ranchers">https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/our-agency/historically-underserved-farmers-and-ranchers</a>), is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. These include: (1) Blacks or African Americans, (2) American Indians or Alaskan Natives, (3) Hispanics, (4) Asians, and (5) Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.</p> <p>For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals.</p> <p>Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation program authorities. The term entities reflects a broad interpretation to include partnerships, couples, legal entities, etc.</p>
<p>Veteran Farmer or Rancher</p>	<p>This means a participant who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve component thereof; was released from service under conditions other than dishonorable; and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has not operated a farm or ranch, or has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years; or</li> <li>○ Who first obtained status as a veteran during the most recent 10-year period.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>A legal entity or joint operation can be a Veteran Farmer or Rancher only if all individual members independently qualify.</p>

# Appendix E: Detailed Scoring Criteria

SCORING CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND WORK PLAN</b>	<b>20</b>
<p><b><u>Project Description (10 Points)</u></b></p> <p>Addressed all requirements of the Project Description section, including, but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the project description provide a thorough background on the operation, including herd details?</li> <li>Does the project description include tons of manure handled through the proposed advanced manure management practice? Are current and proposed manure management practices clear and well described?</li> <li>Is there a clear explanation for the selected funding scenario for the proposed project? The applicant must clearly articulate the source of additional funds.</li> <li>Is there a clear distinction made between the proposed advanced manure management practice and the proposed/completed state-funded practice (i.e., AMMP and DDRDP) or approved AMMP and DDRDP-like practices, with an explanation of how it will provide additional greenhouse gas emission reductions and improve nitrogen and salt management in the dairy farm?</li> <li>What co-benefits does the proposed project provide beyond greenhouse gas reduction? The applicant must describe the nitrogen and salt reduction co-benefits.</li> <li>Does the project description demonstrate how the proposed project will positively impact both local communities and environmental conditions? Will the project provide benefits to priority populations?</li> <li>Does the design clearly provide where, specifically, in the dairy footprint things are going to go? For example, the applicant described the numerical size dimensions of the proposed design, clearly showed the location of the proposed project on the project site, etc.</li> <li>Did the applicant demonstrate knowledge of permits required (potential environmental impacts, applicable state or local regulations and agencies identified)? Did they provide supporting documentation and/or copies of applicable permits? The applicant should describe how far along they are in their permitting planning or implementation process.</li> </ol>	

<p><b><u>Operation and Maintenance (5 Points)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Are comprehensive long-term plans included to ensure maintenance and continued improvement of the functionality of the proposed project over time? Does it demonstrate that the system will be in place and operational for at least 5 years?</li> <li>j. Will the operation result in off-site export of solids/nutrients, and has the end-user for this material been identified?</li> <li>k. Has the proposed project demonstrated that the applicant (including its contractors) and cooperating organizations have sufficient staff resources, technical expertise, and experience to successfully complete the proposed project? Did it provide information on key project personnel and contractors?</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Project Work Plan (5 Points)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>l. Does the project Work Plan provide a comprehensive list of tasks/items necessary to achieve the project objectives/goals (including but not limited to permitting, site planning, and construction)?</li> <li>m. Are there clearly defined timelines included for each task in the Work Plan?</li> <li>n. How does the proposed project's timeline align with available funding, and is it feasible within those parameters?</li> <li>o. Did the proposed project demonstrate that all tasks are logical and achievable within the grant term, and with available resources?</li> <li>p. Did the proposed project identify measurable targets that must be met to accomplish the project within the grant timeline, with specific dates for each target?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>ESTIMATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Did the applicant describe and explain how the proposed project will result in the reduction of metric tons of GHG emissions annually beyond the existing practices for the dairy operation?</li> <li>b. How does the project reduce overall greenhouse gases beyond a traditional AMMP and/or DDRDP project and/or approved AMMP and DDRDP-like practices?</li> <li>c. Has the applicant selected the correct Benefit Calculator Tool for the proposed project?</li> <li>d. Did the applicant complete the Benefits Calculator Tool accurately? Was the proper justification for all assumptions made in the calculation process provided? Did it clearly represent the whole advanced manure management system?</li> </ul>	

<b>NITROGEN AND SALT MANAGEMENT AND WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS</b>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Did the proposed project describe and explain how it will result in improved nitrogen and salt management and water quality compared to existing practices for the dairy operation?</li> <li>b. How does the project improve nitrogen and salt management and water quality beyond a traditional AMMP and/or DDRDP project?</li> <li>c. To what extent does the project target nitrogen and salt management and water quality issues that are a priority for the facility, local community, or region?</li> <li>d. How effective is the project in reducing, preventing, or mitigating water quality impacts and nitrogen and salt surplus compared to other manure management practices or technologies?</li> <li>e. Describe the end fate of nutrient removal. Are the nutrients permanently removed from the liquid waste stream? Are they in a form to export to fields/offsite?</li> <li>f. Does the proposed project discuss the steps that will be taken to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the advanced manure management practice in improving nitrogen and salt management and water quality?</li> <li>g. To what extent does the project engage with stakeholders, such as neighboring producers, local community members, or environmental groups, to address water quality concerns and ensure project success?</li> </ul>	
<b>BUDGET WORKSHEET</b>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Are <b>all costs</b> (including costs identified by the supply chain, producer, vendor, etc.) associated with the project clearly accounted for and included in the Budget Worksheet? Do they appear to match what was proposed in the Project Description and Work Plan?</li> <li>b. Did the applicant describe and quantify sources and amounts of local, state, and federal funds, loans, other grants, and all other funding necessary to complete the proposed project (if applicable)?</li> <li>c. Is there proof of matching funds or in-kind contributions towards completing this project (e.g., Letter of Commitment)?</li> <li>d. Did the applicant provide evidence of the ability to fund upfront costs while waiting for reimbursement? Did they demonstrate financial strength to sustain the project beyond the grant term?</li> <li>e. Did the applicant describe and quantify expenditures already incurred to initiate work on the project, such as engineering, site preparation, infrastructure, utility hookups, permitting, and environmental review (if applicable)?</li> </ul>	

<p>f. Did the applicant provide a complete Budget Worksheet addressing issues, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Itemized costs consistent with the Work Plan.</li> <li>• Back-up documentation, including quotes, estimates, and equipment details in support of budget costs.</li> <li>• Overall budget is well justified and consistent with the Work Plan.</li> <li>• Did the applicant provide a clear accounting of all costs associated with all activities necessary to complete the project, and all costs appear reasonable and allowable?</li> <li>• Did the proposed project include major work items, including but not limited to permitting, site planning, engineering, construction, equipment, materials (i.e., concrete, electrical, water, pipelines, pumps, etc.), field supervision, contractors, health and safety requirements, testing, and bonds?</li> </ul>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>

# Appendix F: Approved AMMP- and DDRDP-like practices

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Approved AMMP and DDRDP-like practices include practices that are consistent with those funded by CDFA's AMMP and DDRDP programs but are funded by the producer or other outside funder.

The approved manure management practices for the **Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP) or AMMP-like practices** are:

1. Pasture-based management, including (i) conversion of a non-pasture dairy or livestock operation to pasture-based management and/or (ii) increasing the amount of time livestock spend on pasture at an existing pasture operation.
2. Alternative manure treatment and storage practices, including installation of a compost bedded pack barn, or installation of a slatted floor pit storage manure collection that is cleaned out at least monthly.
3. Solid separation of manure solids prior to entry into a wet/anaerobic environment (e.g., lagoon, settling pond, settling basin). Eligible solid separation technologies include weeping wall, stationary screen, vibrating screen, screw press, centrifuge, roller drum, or belt press/screen. The separated solids should be treated and/or stored outside of a liquid environment, such as by open solar drying, solid storage, or composting.
4. Conversion from a flush to scrape/vacuum manure collection system. The scraped or vacuum-collected solids should be treated and/or stored outside a liquid environment, such as through open solar drying, solid storage, or composting.

The approved manure management practices for the **Dairy Digester Research and Development Program (DDRDP) or DDRDP-like practices** are:

1. Installation of anaerobic dairy digesters (e.g., covered lagoon, plug flow, fixed film, and complete mix) that capture methane from dairy manure by preventing it from entering the atmosphere and utilizing it to produce renewable energy (i.e., electricity, fuel, etc).