

# Climate Smart Agriculture Technical Assistance

Program Updates to Align with Technical Assistance MOA

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# Background

Assembly Bill 2377 (2018): Provide technical assistance to individual farmers and ranchers who are interested in applying for or have received incentive awards from CDFA's CSA Incentive Programs: Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP), Healthy Soils Program (HSP), and State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP)

- 2020-2022 - CDFA awarded 75 projects, \$5.2 M to support the 3 programs
- **Objective 1: Pre-Award Assistance** – outreach, application assistance
- **Objective 2: Post-Award (Implementation) Assistance** – liaison services, grant management assistance, project management



# California Conservation Planning Partnership (C2P2)

In late 2022, CDFA, USDA NRCS, UC ANR and CA RCD Association signed a Memorandum of Agreement focused on Technical Assistance

Working together, the partners will utilize their individual strengths to provide a coordinated approach and consistent service to customers to address the enormous natural resource challenges throughout California.

## Key Messages:

- Four primary partners are collaborating to increase the effectiveness of their individual, yet complementary services.
- Aligning efforts will result in better utilization of what each partner brings to the table.
- Customers will experience streamlined assistance instead of navigating the processes of multiple organizations on their own.





# Areas of Emphasis

- **Equity in Delivery of Technical Assistance** - Interagency collaboration to address equity
- **Conservation Innovation and Practices** - TA Pipeline (research to impact); Conservation economics and C impact; Practice alignment across organizations
- **Coordination** - Improve both program accessibility and seamless support across organizations (“The Hand-Off”)
- **Technical Capacity (through Training)** - Enhance strong, consistent and complementary technical capacity at Federal, State and local levels to better deliver assistance
- **Consistent Locally Led TA** - Engage stakeholders and strive to share resources when feasible and work together to ensure there is capacity to deliver TA locally
- **Collective Impact and Communication** - Better share and promote stories and impact across organizations



# Increased Funding Levels in 2023 for CSA TA Program

- Increased per CSA program funding cap from \$60k per year to \$90k per year
- Increased funding cap to \$150k per year for organizations that will provide assistance in language(s) other than English
  - At least 25% of direct costs must be dedicated to non-English support

Funding Scenarios – CSA Program and Bilingual Services

| Number of CSA Programs | Languages Supported*         | Maximum Award |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| One Program            | English only                 | \$90,000      |
| One Program            | English and another language | \$150,000     |
| Two Programs           | English only                 | \$180,000     |
| Two Programs           | English and another language | \$300,000     |
| Three Programs         | English only                 | \$270,000     |
| Three Programs         | English and another language | \$450,000     |





# Expansion of the Program-Funded Activities

- **Objective 3: Support verification of HSP and SWEEP projects**
  - This will be a tremendous help to CDFA
  - Technical assistance providers are reimbursed and will provide an opportunity for new connections to producers
  - More in-person site visits

C2P2 MOA: COORDINATION, LOCALLY-LED TA



A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hands typing on a silver laptop keyboard. The laptop is open on a wooden desk. In the foreground, a spiral-bound notebook is partially visible. The person is wearing a plaid shirt. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Expansion of the Program-Funded Activities

- **Objective 4: Additional Activities (up to 20%)**
  - Provide training to producers
  - Preparing case studies
  - Consult with unawarded applicants
  - Obtain training

C2P2 MOA: TECHNICAL CAPACITY, CONSISTENT  
LOCALLY-LED TA, COLLECTIVE IMPACT





# Support for Training and Continuing Education

- Challenge: Demand exceeds supply and geographically not all parts of the state are covered. Ex: only a handful of orgs apply for funding to support AMMP
- CDFA will encourage TA-awarded organizations to utilize funding for training new staff, continuing ed, building expertise in new areas.



# Topic Areas for Capacity Building/Training

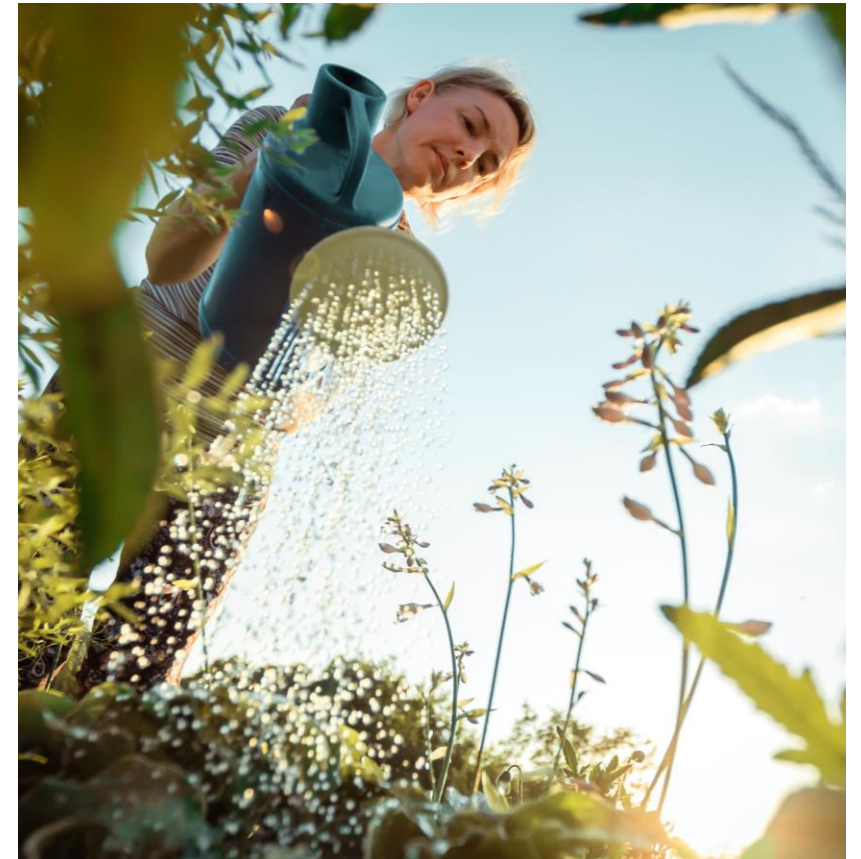
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- Food Safety
- Nutrient Management
- Organic Transition
- Manure Management
- Compost Production
- Conservation Planning
- Carbon Farm Planning
- Tribal Engagement
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

## Outcomes and Link to TA MOA:

1. Support technical assistance organizations in maintaining or developing technical capacity
2. Shared vocabulary
3. Ability serve as touchpoints for producers on topics, even if not an expert or providing TA on that topic.

Technical Assistance is integrating into many parts of CDFA (not just OEFI).





# New Award Update

Recently executed 20 new TA grants, totaling \$2.7M to support AMMP, HSP, and SWEEP

- Project term: November 2023 – October 2026
- HSP TA providers have been supporting the open application period.
- SWEEP TA providers – pivot to project verification and case study preparation.

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/technical/>



# Moving Forward

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- Continue to look for ways to offer flexibility to CSA TA awardees.
- It is difficult for CSA TA applicants to estimate the demand for their application and project implementation assistance.
- Funding available for CSA TA will continue to depend on appropriations to the Climate Smart Ag programs (AMMP, HSP, and SWEEP).
  - Reality - CDFA may have to adjust the program framework, funding caps and other priorities from cycle to cycle.
- CDFA will lead C2P2 workgroup focused on **Equity in Delivery of Technical Assistance**
  - Identify shared priorities

