

**2017 HEALTHY SOILS PROGRAM (HSP) Incentives Program**  
**SECOND SOLICITATION**  
**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)**  
**MARCH 30, 2018**

1. Q. Are the materials from the application workshop and webinar presentations available online?  
A. The presentation materials are available on the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) HSP Incentives Program webpage at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/2017SecondSolicitationDocs/HSPIncentivesWorkshopPresentation.pdf>.
2. Q. In Appendix II Document 2: Step-by-Step Instructions to determine Soil Organic Matter, are applicants able to enter multiple addresses?  
A. Applicants may find information for multiple addresses but can only enter one address at a time to get the soil organic matter results per location.
3. Q. How does CDFA know when a practice is ready for verification?  
A. Recipients must inform the Environmental Scientist at CDFA - Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) and their assigned analyst at CDFA - Office of Grants Administration (OGA) their schedules for practice implementation and arrange with the OEFI environmental scientist dates for practice verification. The OEFI scientist will conduct field evaluations by Assessor Parcel Number (APN) to verify practice implementation compliance with program requirements.
4. Q. Which number in the Census track site should applicants use for the census track ID?  
A. Once you submit your project location and click submit, scroll down and find "Census Tracts" then copy down the number next to the OID.
5. Q. Can applicants modify the layout of the Application Template form for chart viewing?  
A: Applicants may modify the layout of the Application Template; however, edits to the content of the application template are not permissible.
6. Q. What should applicants enter for current management practices within the application template?  
A. Current management practices should include a summary of all management decisions pertinent to the fields being proposed for the project, including but not limited to, management of soil and water, irrigation practices, fertilizer application regime, and if soil amendments are being applied.
7. Q. Will CDFA announce the available funding amount before the application period ends on April 13, 2018?  
A. CDFA is not able to announce dollar amounts awarded before April 13, 2018. However, CDFA will post list of all applications received on a weekly basis on CDFA's HSP Incentives website.
8. Q. What is meant by testing soil organic matter every year for ten years for woody cover practice?  
A. Awardees are expected to maintain woody plantings for at least ten years. The expectation is that they will only need to provide soil organic matter data prior to planting

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woody cover, and after one, two and three years after planting woody cover.

9. Q. How can applicants determine if their project is in a disadvantaged community?  
A. Applicants can determine if their project sites is located in a disadvantaged community by accessing the [CalEnviroScreen 3.0](#). Refer to the disadvantage community section outlined on page 8 of the Application Template.
10. Q. On page 3 of the Application Template, under Project Logistics, should applicants enter all proposed practices that will be implemented for the APN on the same line?  
A. Each practice should be in a new line and just state the same APN if there are multiple practices to be implemented on the same APN.
11. Q. Is there a word count limit on for Soil Health and Environmental Co-Benefits, Conservation Plan and Project Sustainability? Will a longer explanation in those section garner more points for the application?  
A. Answers should be concise and to the point and explained in 500 words or less for each question.
12. Q. Is there a requirement to implement more than one allowable practice? Will implementing more practices be viewed/scored more favorably?  
A. Implementation of multiple practices is not a requirement under the HSP Incentives Program. However, an eligible project must implement at least one of the eligible practices. Implementing more than one practice may result in a greater GHG reduction from a project, however, this has no effect on score during the review process.
13. Q. Is there a limit on the number of applications an organization can submit?  
A. There is no limit on number of applications submitted by an organization. However, only one project per unique tax ID may be submitted.
14. Q. Should the Letter of Agreement from landowner state that their consent to allow the applicant to implement the proposed project over the duration of the project term?  
A. The Letter of Agreement from the landowner should state their consent for the duration of the project term (May 1, 2018 through December 31, 2020).
15. Q. Does the eligibility term "California Farmer" include permitted marijuana farms?  
A. For the purpose of this program an agricultural operation is defined as row, vineyard, field and tree crops, commercial nurseries, nursery stock production, and greenhouse operations producing food crops or flowers as defined in Food and Agricultural Code section 77911, therefore, marijuana farms are not eligible. Refer to 2017 HSP Second Solicitation Incentives FAQ number 22.
16. Q. Can CDFA provide a list of compost facilities that qualify under the requirements?  
A. CDFA cannot provide a list of compost facilities. Applicants may find list of composting facilities at California's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery website. <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/SWFacilities/Directory/SearchList/List?FAC=Composting&OPSTATUS=Active&REGSTATUS=Permitted>

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17. Q. Are applicants allowed to make their own compost on site and apply it to the field?  
A. Compost produced on-farm is not eligible for the program.
18. Q. If an applicant is already doing no till, is it eligible as a soil practice or does it have to be a new practice?  
A. If an applicant is already doing on-till on the field, then, no-till on this field is not eligible for the program although it is among the eligible list of soil management practices. Applicants must select a different management practice for this field to be eligible for the program.
19. Q. If a practice was previously implemented 5-10 years ago but not in the past 3 years, is it considered a new practice?  
A. Yes, as long as the practices have not been implemented in the fields since January 2017.
20. Q. Can applicants include two compost applications per year, once in the spring and once in the fall? Would the HSP funds cover both applications or will they only cover one application of compost per year?  
A. The payment rate for each practice implementation is per unit per year. If an applicant has, for example, 7 acres for compost application in the project, the total requested HSP funding for compost application per year should be (\$35 x 7 x application rate), while the application rate should be within the range as indicated in the Request for Grant Applications (RGA). The applicant can decide to have one time or multiple-time applications.
21. Q. The HSP RGA says that compost is to be applied annually for the 3 years of the project, to the same fields. Is it possible to do a single application with a rate of three times - thereby cutting costs and GHG's associated with transport, labor, etc.?  
A. CDFA does not recommend compost application at rates greater than those indicated in the HSP RGA. CDFA grant dollars will only support compost application at the rates listed in the HSP RGA.
22. Q. If a compost facility is not "licensed" but makes compost with municipal green waste, is it eligible?  
B. No, the compost facility permitted or otherwise authorized by state and local authorities that can demonstrate compliance with all state regulations regarding inspection of incoming feedstocks, finished-product testing requirements including the Process to Further Reduce Pathogens (PFRP) as described in 14 CCR Section 17868.3, maximum metal concentrations for heavy metals per 14 CCR Section 17868.2, and physical contamination limits per 14 CCR Section 17868.3.1.
23. Q. Are cover crop seed costs an eligible cost?  
A. The standard payment rate for this practice includes seed costs.
24. Q. Can Federal funds be used as cost share?  
A. Federal funds can be used as cost share.

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25. Q. Can an applicant request funding to continue implementation of a soil management practice where it is already being implemented?
- A. HSP can only fund soil management practices implemented on land where they were not implemented previously. Continuing ongoing practice implementation is not eligible for funding. However, if an applicant chooses to bring additional acreage under an existing, eligible practice implementation, they may request for funding for those additional acres.
26. Q. Is grazing land converted to no-till eligible for this program?
- A. Grazing land covered to no-till may be eligible if grazing land has been tilled in the past three years and now converted to no-till.
27. Q. If an applicant received USDA NRCS EQIP funds to implement two conservation management practices and one has already started, should applicant apply for HSP funding and use EQIP as cost share?
- A. The practice that has already started is not eligible for HSP funds. For the practice that has not started, applicants can apply for the HSP funds with EQIP funds as cost share. However, total amounts requested from HSP and EQIP should not exceed total practice costs during project Year 1 and 2 (May 1, 2018 – December 31, 2019).
28. Q. Does an applicant need to apply compost on the same acres all the 3 years? can applicant apply compost to different acres on the same APN for each year?
- A. Applicants must apply compost on the same acres once every year for all three years. An applicant cannot apply compost to different acres even though they are in the same APN.
29. Q. Can applicants utilize an out of state compost facilities, if compost facility is closer than a permitted California facility?
- A. Compost to be used for this program must meet the definition of compost eligible for the program in the CDFA Compost Application White Paper (page 4-5)\_ [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysouils/docs/CompostApplicationRate\\_WhitePaper.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysouils/docs/CompostApplicationRate_WhitePaper.pdf). Therefore, applicants will need to check with composting facilities in that state to determine eligibility.
30. Q. Under the Riparian Forest Buffer practice, there are different s such as “cuttings, small to medium” and “cuttings, medium to large”, etc. How are they measured? Do applicants need to build fences for tree plantings?
- A. The measures for different scenarios under Riparian Forest Buffer practice are listed below.
- a) Range of small to medium cuttings: a quarter to one inch in diameter and 24 - 48 inches in height;
  - b) Range of medium to large cuttings or posts: 2 - 6 inches in diameter and 6 feet in length;
  - c) Minimum size for small containers is 1 quart;
  - d) Minimum size for larger container is 2-3 gallons.
- Applicants must provide tree shelters (e.g., fence) to protect plantings from animal or other damages.

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31. Q. Is planting Bay Laurel trees for the windbreak around the perimeter of my annual herb production plot and harvest and sell a portion of the leaves eligible?
- A. The primary roles of the windbreaks are to provide wind protection to adjacent fields and to sequester carbon. If harvesting bay leaves from the trees does not interfere with those roles, the harvest is allowed. Removing more branches from the trees than would be typical for upkeep and renovation of the windbreak is not allowed.
32. Q. If an applicant has a residue management practice with NRCS on a portion of their property, does that mean they can't do a no-till?
- A. If the existing residue management practice with NRCS is Reduced-Till and is going to convert to no-till, no-till is eligible for the program. If existing residue management practice is no-till, it is not eligible for the Program. However, if the reduced-till or no-till management practice will be expanded to a new field or APN where either practice has not been implemented, it is eligible.
33. Q. Is organic chicken feed an eligible mulching practice contributing to organic mulching practice?
- A. Laying hen chickens is not considered as Mulching practice. Please see the linked file (<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/CA/484-std-ca-9-15.pdf>) for detail description on conservation practice standards for Mulching (NRCS CPS484).
34. Q. Does the definition of agricultural operation include livestock and rangeland?
- A. The definition of agricultural operation includes livestock and livestock product operations.
35. Q. What dollar amount should applicants use to quantify their labor for in-kind contributions?
- A. Applicants can use estimated total dollar amount for their in-kind contribution, such as labor or equipment usage. This dollar amount may be entered in the Budget Worksheet Column N "In-Kind Contribution" which have no effect on the grant amount requested. It can also be used in Year 3 Cost Share Table (last column) (Application Template page 5).
36. Q. Can applicants include their time implementing the practice as in-kind cost?
- A. Yes. Cost sharing can be in the form of matching funds or an in-kind contribution. An in-kind contribution is the estimated dollar value of any time, property, or supplies donated to a project.
37. Q. What are the acceptable or recommended rates for calculating in-kind contributions for labor and property? For the purposes of determining cost sharing, does property refer to equipment or land use?
- A. Costs for in-kind contributions should be based on what it would cost to pay someone for the labor or property. Rates must be reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for the same or similar services. Property can refer to either equipment or land use.
38. Q. Is San Diego included in the list of fire-affected counties that may receive additional consideration during the HSP Second Solicitation Review Process?
- A. Yes, San Diego county is included among the counties in which a state of emergency was declared

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in 2017 or 2018 due to wildfires under Governor Edmond G. Brown, Jr.'s executive orders B-41-17, B-45-17, B-46-18 and B-47-18. Projects located on APNs in this county may receive additional consideration.

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