

**2020 HEALTHY SOILS PROGRAM
INCENTIVES PROGRAM
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)
APRIL 24, 2020**

1. Q. What does an applicant need to provide as a landowner agreement document if the applicant leases the land?
 - A. A letter demonstrating landowner's signed approval for the lessee to conduct activities required to implement HSP-funded on the land for the duration of the project term (2020 - 2023) is needed.

2. Q. Are 501c3 non-profits eligible for the HSP Incentives program?
 - A. CDFA is unable to advise individual applicants in determining if they qualify under the HSP eligibility criteria. Applicants must evaluate and determine if they fit into the eligibility criteria to apply for the HSP Incentives Program. The current definition for the solicitation is as follows; California farmers, ranchers and Federal and California Recognized Native American Indian Tribes are eligible to apply for the HSP Incentives Program. Projects must be located on a California agricultural operation. For the purpose of this program, an agricultural operation is defined as row, vineyard, field and tree crops, commercial nurseries, nursery stock production, and livestock and livestock product operations.

3. Q. Can four separate agricultural operations, each with unique Tax IDs, apply for unique HSP grants for their independent operations which happen to be located within the same APN?
 - A. Such projects would be eligible if all 4 projects are located on separate fields within the APN. Projects may not overlap on the same fields within the APN.

4. Q. Is a farmer eligible for the HSP Incentives grant if they do not have 3 years of cropping/management history because they just bought the land?
 - A. CDFA encourages inclusion of three years of cropping history and projects without this information may be less competitive in the technical review.

5. Q. Besides on-farm produced compost, will CDFA only reimburse for compost that is certified via Calrecycle?
 - A. Besides on-farm produced compost, the compost eligible for funding under the HSP must be produced by a 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. (14 CCR Section 17868: www.calrecycle.ca.gov/laws/regulations/title14/ch31a5.htm#article7). STA certified or CDFA-OIM compost is recommended. STA certified compost means the compost has been tested for numerous product parameters by an STA-certified lab which uses standardized testing methodologies (TMECC, developed by the United States Composting Council), and the results (in a technical data sheet) are reported to the compost producer.

6. Q. How can an applicant know which C:N ratio of compost to use prior to the application?
 - A. The applicant should call the nearest composting facilities to see which C:N ratios are produced and select the one that best fits the applicant's farm management and plant nutrient needs.

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7. Q. Does a farmer need to submit 2 applications if they want to implement HSP practices on land that they own and rent?
 - A. The farmer may include owned and leased land in a single application as best feasible based on location of the fields. A letter of landowner agreement that grants the applicant permission to implement the HSP grant on the leased lands is required. See question 1 above.
8. Q. In the HSP Incentives application, APN is mentioned several times. What does APN stand for?
 - A. APN stands for Assessor's Parcel Number.
9. Q. Can an applicant use a soil organic matter test analyzed as the baseline sample if it was taken right before submitting their HSP Incentives grant?
 - A. If the applicant's proposal is selected for an award, then a recent soil organic matter sample may be used as the baseline sample after evaluation by CDFA. However, since the sample would have been collected and analyzed prior to execution of the grant agreement, the cost for sampling and testing would not be reimbursed.
10. Q. Is there an income cap that would make applicants ineligible for the HSP program?
 - A. The HSP program does not consider income to determine eligibility and encourages participation from all California farmers and ranchers.
11. Q. If an applicant's proposal is selected for an award, what is the turnaround time for reimbursements for recipients once practices are implemented and the invoice has been submitted?
 - A. Once the invoice has been submitted and approved by CDFA, reimbursement check is issued to the grant recipient within 45-60 days.
12. Q. Who is eligible for the 25% advanced payment for HSP Incentives program?
 - A. All applicants selected for an award are eligible for the 25% advance payment.
13. Q. Are there penalties if a grower cannot implement one of the HSP practices during the executed grant agreement?
 - A. The recipient would not be paid for any practice that is not implemented for three Project Years of the grant agreement term and the budget would be decreased accordingly.
14. Q. If a grower is planting cover crops in an orchard and will only be planting in between tree rows, should they enter the acreage of the entire orchard or only of the alleys in Comet-Planner?
 - A. The applicant should enter the entire acreage of the orchard which will be included in the project.
15. Q. Where can an applicant notify CDFA in the HSP Incentives online application that some of the APNs or parts of APNs that are included in the CDFA HSP RePlan Report will not be in the HSP project? This issue occurred when drawing fields on small APNs due to the low level of zoom allowed by the RePlan tool.
 - A. This information can be indicated in the application portal under Section II. (**Project Logistics; Question:** "List all APNs and Fields included in the proposed project." Please add a sentence

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indicating which APN(s) will not be in the proposed HSP Incentives project. This will ensure that the acreage used in COMET-Planner is based on the correct APN(s)/Field(s) during technical review of the submitted application.