

## 2021 HEALTHY SOILS PROGRAM INCENTIVES PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS\*

*This document is intended for those whose grant agreements were executed.*

1. Q. Who at CDFA should I contact if I need help?
  - A. You should receive an introduction email from a CDFA HSP team member who will be your project manager. Please contact your project manager for any questions you have. In case your project manager is out of office, and you need assistance right away, send an email to [cdfa.HSP\\_Tech@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cdfa.HSP_Tech@cdfa.ca.gov), and one of the HSP team members will reach out to you promptly.
  
2. Q. My grant agreement is executed now, may I start implementing my project now or should I wait for CDFA to contact me?
  - A. Please check the grant start date on the first page of your executed agreement. You can start implementing your project on and after the start date, even if you have not received an email from CDFA HSP staff. Please make sure to follow the implementation timeline in the work plan table of your grant agreement. You may also read the [Grant Award Procedures Manual \(2021 HSP Incentives Program\)](#) for further guidance. It is available at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/2021-HSPIncentives-GAPManual.pdf>.
  
3. Q. How can I receive 25% advance payment if I have an issue of low cash flow?
  - A. To request an advance payment, please complete the [Advance Payment Request form](#) by using this link ([https://secure.na3.adobesign.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLbqZhBdNG01vz02fNlcY9Iy25XrvoiydIWpfjL9dg4ntXcoA5IUx3OViYIG\\_VSOKFXPdSI\\*](https://secure.na3.adobesign.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLbqZhBdNG01vz02fNlcY9Iy25XrvoiydIWpfjL9dg4ntXcoA5IUx3OViYIG_VSOKFXPdSI*)). Adobe will walk you through the form and it will automatically be sent to CDFA once completed. Some notes on advanced payment:
    - i. Advance payment request must not exceed 25% of the total grant award.
    - ii. It may take up to 60 days from the date when CDFA receives the advance payment request for you to receive an advance payment.
    - iii. No additional payment will be issued until the advance payment is fully spent.
    - iv. Advance payment would be offset according to HSP's payment rates and would not cover any additional cost incurred to implement a practice(s).
    - v. Advance payment can be requested only once in year 1 of the project.
  
4. Q. If I am ready to start project implementation, what should I do first?
  - A. The first step is to take soil sample(s) from the fields/APNs prior to implementing any practices and send samples to a soil analytic laboratory to test soil organic matter content.
    - i. Number of soil samples taken should match the amount in the work plan of your grant agreement.
    - ii. If you need help regarding how to take soil samples or where to send them for analysis, please read CDFA's Soil Sampling Protocol for Soil Organic Matter Content at this link: [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/HSP\\_SoilSampling.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/HSP_SoilSampling.pdf).
    - iii. **Make sure to label soil sample bag(s) clearly using the same field name/APN number as in your RePlan report.** If more than one composite soil sample(s) are taken from the same field, add the location for each sample in the label. The grantee does not need to take or submit pictures of the soil sampling process.
    - iv. Keep a record on where your first soil sample(s) are taken and take samples from the approximately same locations in future years.
    - v. Find a CDFA recommended soil test laboratory near you at [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/CDFA\\_RecomendedSoilsLabs.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/CDFA_RecomendedSoilsLabs.pdf) and contact them prior to sending your soil samples to the laboratory. If you prefer to having test done in another laboratory not in the list of CDFA recommended soil test laboratory,

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make sure that the laboratory uses standard methodology for soil organic matter (or soil organic carbon) analysis.

- vi. It is recommended that you send your soil samples to the same laboratory during the grant term. This helps reduce errors in the sample analysis process and your soil test results from year to year are comparable.
5. Q. What do I need to know to ensure my project implementation meets the program requirements?
- A. Please check your grant agreement and ensure to follow the steps listed below.
- i. Check the implementation timeline in the work plan table (Attachment 1 in the grant agreement) to schedule project implementation. Make sure the practice is completely implemented within each project year. If you foresee any delays, notify your CDFA HSP project manager as soon as possible.
  - ii. Check the RePlan report (Attachment 2 in the agreement) and carefully read the implementation and verification requirements for each practice in the report.
  - iii. Check the COMET-Planner Report (Attachment 3 in the agreement) and make sure the scenario for each practice in the report are met the implementation requirements identified in the RePlan report. Attention to be paid to some specific practices:
    - a) Details of plant/seed species, planting method, seeding rate or planting density, and plant protection method as applicable for all planting practices.
    - b) Compost C:N (Carbon to Nitrogen) ratio and application rate for compost application.
  - iv. **Check with your project manager if you are not sure or want to make any changes.**
  - v. If the practices are not implemented following the guidance in the grant agreement, you may risk not being reimbursed, a reduction in reimbursement amount, 10% withhold of grant funds not being released, and/or termination of the grant.
6. Q. What documents are needed to prepare for verification of practice implementation?
- A. The documents may vary depending on practices you have in the project. Please check the attachment 2, RePlan report, in your grant agreement. It lists documents needed for verification. In general, you need to provide to your project manager the following documents for verification:
- i. A laboratory testing report on soil organic matter for soil samples taken from the field/APN(s) prior to practice implementation.
  - ii. A copy of receipts for materials purchased (for example, a receipt of compost purchased for compost application, a receipt of cover crop seeds and names of species for cover crop, a receipt of seedlings purchased with number/species name for hedgerow planting).
  - iii. For compost application
    - a) An analytical report on compost carbon to nitrogen (C:N) ratio from the composting company.
    - b) A certificate from the composting facility for purchased compost if it is not listed as a CalRecycle certified composting facility on this webpage: <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Search>.
    - c) A composting process log for on-farm produced compost including feedstock, method, dates and temperatures recorded. Specific details for on-farm composting requirements can be found on pg. 11-12 of the 2021 HSP Request for Grant Applications: [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysouils/docs/2021\\_HSP\\_Incentives\\_RG\\_A.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysouils/docs/2021_HSP_Incentives_RG_A.pdf).
  - iv. A farming log recording dates and field activities related to practice implementation. Ask your project manager for clarification.
  - v. Photos with geotagging information showing evidence of practice implementation. If you have difficulties, ask your project manager for guidance.

**2021 HEALTHY SOILS PROGRAM INCENTIVES PROGRAM  
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7. Q. What is the process for me to get paid?

A. The process is listed below in chronological order.

- i. Finish implementing the practice(s) in your project for the project year.
- ii. Email your CDFA HSP project manager the implementation documents for verification.
- iii. Your project manager will review the documents and notify you if the practice implementation was verified or if additional documents or clarifications are needed for the verification.
- iv. Within 1-2 weeks after verification is completed, the grant analyst will email you the invoice for the reimbursement for you to sign.
- v. You sign and the invoice and send the signed invoice back to the grant analyst.
- vi. The grant analyst will review and process the invoice. It may take 45-90 days for you to receive the payment from the date when the grant analyst receives the signed invoice.

8. Q. Who do I ask for help for project implementation?

A. You can always contact your project manager for any questions you have.

If you have questions other than program requirements regarding project implementation, please reach out to CDFA-Funded Technical Assistance Providers and/or University of California Cooperative Extension Climate Smart Agriculture Community Education Specialists in your area, they can help you for free.

Click the links below to find their names and contact information at:

[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/2021\\_HSP\\_Incentives\\_TAPs.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/docs/2021_HSP_Incentives_TAPs.pdf)

<https://ciwr.ucanr.edu/Programs/ClimateSmartAg/TechnicalAssistanceProviders/>.

**Links for important information:**

[Soil Sampling Protocol for Soil Organic Matter Analysis](#)

[CDFA Recommended Soil Test Laboratories](#)

[Instructions on How to Take Geotagged Photos](#)

[CalRecycle Certified Composting Facilities by County](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
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