

# 2021 Healthy Soils Program (HSP) – Incentives Program Frequently Asked Questions

## General

**1. Are applications going to be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis?**

Yes, applications will be accepted and reviewed from the date the [2021 HSP Incentives Program Request for Grant Applications \(RGA\)](#) is released until all funds are expended, or by February 25, 2022, whichever comes first.

**2. Does CDFA charge an application fee to submit a grant application?**

CDFA does not charge an application fee to submit a grant application.

**3. Is there a minimum amount for a grant?**

No, there is only a maximum amount per application.

**4. Is the maximum grant award \$100,000 per applicant or per application?**

The maximum grant award is \$100,000 per agriculture operation with a unique tax ID.

**5. What is the maximum grant duration for any proposed project?**

The maximum grant duration will be from the date when the grant agreement is executed to March 31, 2025. Grant funded project activities cannot be conducted before the grant agreement is executed or after March 31, 2025.

**6. Are recipients who were awarded previous HSP funding eligible to apply for 2021 HSP funds?**

Yes, grant recipients awarded previous HSP funding are eligible, as long as the new grant application will not implement previously existing practice(s) on the fields that are part of the 2021 proposal.

**7. How soon will an HSP practice be eligible for funding if it was previously implemented?**

An HSP practice may become eligible for funding if one year has passed since the practice was last implemented.

**8. What is the definition of a Priority Population?**

Please refer to [page 21 of the RGA](#).

**9. Whom does the term socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFRs) apply to?**

It applies to the primary applicant listed on the application who would sign the payee data record. See [page 20-21 of the RGA](#) to learn more about SDFRs.

**10. Are small farms eligible for HSP Incentives grants?**

Yes. The HSP Incentives application is open to all farms and ranchers. There is no acreage minimum or maximum.

**11. Can one grant application include two or more farms?**

Grant applications can include multiple farms. However, the same agricultural operation cannot be included in multiple applications.

**12. Is there a minimum Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction that a project must achieve?**

There is no minimum GHG reduction per project. All GHG reductions achieved through a project must be quantifiable using the HSP Quantification Methodology (QM) Tool. Refer to the current CARB Quantification Methodology and Tools for details at: [www.arb.ca.gov/cci-resources](http://www.arb.ca.gov/cci-resources).

**13. Do grant recipients need to wait to get reimbursed until all practices in their project are completed?**

CDFA will pay for each practice that is implemented and verified as completed on an ongoing basis throughout the grant agreement term.

**14. Who should be considered as Cooperating entities?**

Cooperating entities are organizations an applicant will be working with to plan and/or implement the proposed project, including, individuals/companies who provide cost share.

**15. When applicants are leasing land, does the landowner need to apply on behalf of the applicant organization?**

Landowners do not need to apply on behalf of the applicant organization.

However, when leasing land, applicants must have documented landowner approval to implement the proposed practice(s) for the entire three years of the grant agreement term. Applicants are responsible for obtaining the consent of the lessor and ensuring that project implementation does not violate the lease agreement(s). Landowner consent must be uploaded as an attachment in part 4 of the electronic grant application. It is the responsibility of the agricultural operation to comply with the terms of their lease agreement(s). CDFA encourages all applicants to notify the landowner of the proposed project.

**16. Is newly leased land where the applicant does not have the past three year's cropping and management history eligible to be included in a project?**

The applicant must provide best available cropping and management practice information about the operation and clearly indicate the time-period of the lease to justify lack of information as part of their application.

**17. Is newly purchased fallow land with no farming history in the past three years eligible?**

Fallow land that was previously cropland and has been inactive recently is eligible for inclusion within an HSP project. However, natural fallow lands being converted to cropland are not eligible.

**18. If an applicant intends to change crops during the course of a proposed project, is the project eligible for funding?**

Yes, changing crops is eligible. If applicant already implements crop rotation at the time of application, this should be explained clearly within the application.

**19. What is the difference between funds requested, cost share, and total budget?**

Funds requested is the amount of 2021 HSP Incentives Program funding requested from CDFA and must not exceed \$100,000; this constitutes the grant budget. Cost share is optional and is the amount of matching funds and in-kind contributions committed to the project during the grant term. The sum of 'funds requested' and 'cost share' is the total cost of project.

**20. What are the acceptable or recommended rates for calculating in-kind contributions for labor and property? For the purposes of determining cost share, does property refer to equipment or land use?**

Costs for in-kind contributions should be based on what it would cost to pay someone for the labor or property. Property can refer to either equipment or

land use. Cost for in-kind labor contributions must be reasonable and consistent with fees in the marketplace for the same or similar services.

**21. Can you give an example of timing in which 3 soil samplings would be covered (initial test and 2 follow up samplings)?**

Soil organic matter content test results are required (1) prior to practice implementation, (2) one year after practice was implemented for the first time, (3) two years after practice was implemented for the first time, and (4) three years after the practice was implemented for the first time. So, time for soil sampling depends on which practice an applicant has selected and when he/she starts to implement the practice.

**22. Is Whole Orchard Recycling applicable to vineyards?**

No.

## Grant application

**23. Can applicants view, edit, or delete documents once they have been submitted?**

No, once the application is submitted, the applicant will no longer be able to make changes.

**24. Will applicants receive a confirmation once their application has been submitted?**

Yes, applicants will be notified of the receipt of their application through an automated system-generated email.

**25. If an applicant submitted an application that was not reviewed favorably for funding, can the applicant re-submit a new application if the application submission period is still ongoing?**

Yes.

**26. If an applicant intends to submit multiple grant applications, does the applicant need to create more than one log-in to upload each grant application to the program's submission website?**

No, an applicant intending to submit multiple grant applications only needs to create one profile on the application website. The same profile may be used for multiple grant applications. However, each grant application must be created

and submitted separately.

**27. Why is the APN required in the grant application?**

Assessor's Parcel Numbers or APNs are the primary mechanism by which CDFA tracks the implementation of practices on a farm, such as where exactly projects are implemented, and if they continue to meet location-related requirements during the grant duration. Applicants must note that this information could be made available to the public if requested.

**28. Who should be listed as the primary contact person or alternate contact person in Application Part 4 - Applicant Information?**

The primary contact person is the application organization representative that will sign the contract and/or serve as the leader for the project. The alternate contact person can be the Project Manager of the application organization that will serve as the day-to-day contact for the project. Applicants are required to provide two different contacts for each application as this is the only contact information CDFA will have for grant applications.

**29. Do I need to know what my soil organic matter is before applying to the HSP program?**

To prepare for your application, the applicant does not need to know the soil organic matter content. The CDFA HSP RePlan Tool will identify if the fields/APNs selected are eligible for compost application and Whole Orchard Recycling. If the project is selected for funding, the recipient will need to take soil samples prior to practice implementation, one, two, and three years after practice implementation and send the soil samples to a soil analytic laboratory to analyze for soil organic matter content.

**30. For practices that require planting of cover crops, herbs, shrubs or trees, is it necessary to provide names of plant species at the time of application? What if I would like to choose a different plant later?**

Yes. Applicants have the option to select the names of recommended plant species from the NRCS California eVegGuide or enter the names of plants of their choice, in the CDFA HSP Re-Plan Tool. Changes can be made after receipt of grant award; however, the Grant Recipient must notify CDFA and get prior approval through a revision in project scope of work before planting.

**31. Are only NRCS-prepared Conservation Plans considered allowable as part of the**

### **HSP application?**

Conservation Plans provided as part of the HSP application can be prepared by an NRCS specialist, or, an NRCS-trained individual or entity, a certified Crop Advisor, a certified Professional Soil Scientist, or a certified Professional Agronomist.

## Technical assistance

### **32. What resources are available to help farmers apply for the HSP Incentives grant?**

Yes, please visit our HSP Incentives website located here: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthypoils/IncentivesProgram.html> for a list of helpful resources. The HSP program also has technical assistance providers (link: [https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthypoils/docs/2021\\_HSP\\_Incentives\\_TAP\\_workshops.pdf](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthypoils/docs/2021_HSP_Incentives_TAP_workshops.pdf)) that can provide one-on-one application help to farmers/ranchers for free.

### **33. If a technical assistance provider is submitting a grant application on behalf of an agriculture operation, how will the technical assistance provider be identified in the grant application?**

The application system allows a technical assistance provider to identify for each application they have helped submit.