

2024 Healthy Soils Program Incentive Grants Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. Who is eligible to apply to the Healthy Soils Program Incentive Grants?

Eligible applicants are over 18 years of age, and are California farmers, ranchers, agricultural business entities, nonprofit organizations functioning as an agricultural operation, or California Native Americans.

2. What are the minimum and maximum amounts for a grant award?

There is no minimum amount, only a maximum amount. The maximum grant award is \$100,000.00 per application with a unique tax ID.

3. What is the expected grant duration for an awarded project?

The official grant start date will be the date the grant agreement is fully executed, or the start date on the grant agreement, whichever date is later. This date will vary slightly from project-to-project. In general, all projects will have an implementation period of 3 years. The specific start and end dates will be listed within the executed grant agreement document.

4. How do the 2024 HSP Incentives Grants differ from previous years?

There are several updates to the program in this solicitation. CDFA recommends all potential applicants review the 2024 HSP Incentive Grants Request for Grant Applications (RGA), particularly the "Major Changes to the 2024 HS Program Incentive Grants" in front of the RGA.

5. Are cannabis or hemp cultivators eligible for HSP funding?

Cannabis cultivators are not eligible to apply for HSP funding, but hemp cultivators are eligible to apply for HSP funding.

6. How will the applications be reviewed?

Applications will be reviewed in the order of priority level, and within their priority

level, by submission date and time, as promptly as staff time allows. The review process may extend past the close of the solicitation period. Prioritization order for funding (refer to 2024 HSP Incentive Grants Request for Grant Applications for full details):

1. Applications benefitting SDFRs and Priority Populations
2. Applications from first-time applicants
3. Applications including multiple conservation management practices
4. All other applications that don't fall into criteria #1-3

Within each level of prioritization listed above, applications for projects in counties that are not within service areas of Healthy Soils Block Grant Recipients or of technical assistance providers will receive the first review within their priority category, as feasible. Counties that have limited access are Del Norte, Inyo, Lassen, Mariposa, Mono, Orange, Plumas, Sierra, and Trinity.

7. Who is considered a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher (SDFR)?

The [Farmer Equity Act of 2017 \(AB 1348\)](#) defines an SDFR as a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. A “socially disadvantaged group” means a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender discrimination. Neither the [USDA definition](#) nor the Farmer Equity Act include gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation in their covered groups. The covered groups include the following: African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

8. How is a “Priority Population” determined?

Priority Populations are defined in [SB 535](#) and [AB 1550](#). Projects that are determined to provide benefits to priority populations will be prioritized for funding. Projects benefitting Priority Populations will be identified automatically by the [CDFA HSP RePlan Tool](#) based on project location and pre-determined net criteria air pollutant emission reductions, consistent with the [CARB Healthy Soils Quantification Methodology and Co-Benefits Calculator Tool](#). Applicants can also visualize Priority Population locations using the [mapping tools provided by CARB](#).

9. How are “first-time” applicants defined?

The Healthy Soils Program will define a “first-time applicant” as an applicant who has not been awarded a grant and implemented practices for that grant through the Healthy Soils Program in a past solicitation.

10. How are “Applications with multiple conservation management practices” defined for prioritization?

These are defined as applications with project designs including more than one conservation management practice. To qualify for this prioritization, one type of practice cannot account for more than eighty percent (80%) of the total requested funding amount in a given project.

11. Are previous HSP Incentive Grants grant recipients eligible to apply for a grant?

Yes, but previous HSP Grant Recipients are not eligible to receive funds for implementing the same practice on the same field funded previously. However, a new landowner or lessee may be eligible to implement the same practice on the same field previously funded.

12. Are small farms eligible for HSP Incentive Grants?

Yes, the HS Incentives application process is open to all farms and ranches, there is no acreage minimum or maximum.

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

Projects must result in net GHG benefits (i.e., net reductions of GHG emissions) per the quantification methodology referenced in the 2024 HSP Incentive Grants Request for Grant Applications (RGA). The CDFA HSP RePlan Tool, which applicants will use to generate their project design, will automatically calculate a project’s net GHG benefits following that methodology (available here: <https://replan-tool.org/cdfa/>).

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

Landowners do not need to apply on behalf of the applicant. If leasing land, applicants must provide written approval from the landowner. If the lease term is shorter than the grant term, lessees should provide a written statement from the landowner that lease renewal will be discussed in good faith. Applicants must lease, own, or otherwise control the fields where project activities are proposed to occur for the entirety of the project duration. CDFA is providing a Landowner Agreement Template for applicant use, available on the HSP Incentive Grants webpage: www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthyoils/IncentivesProgram.html.

Grant Application

15. How do applicants submit an application?

CDFA uses an online application platform for the 2024 HSP Incentive Grants grant solicitation. The Amplifund application portal link can be accessed through the HSP Incentive Grants webpage at:

www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/IncentivesProgram.html. Applicants must create a user account to submit a grant application. Email is the primary form of communication at CDFA, so please ensure that the email used for the application is accurate and up to date for getting in contact with the applicant. Please double-check that applicant information is entered accurately and spelled correctly, as it can help determine eligibility for an award. Incorrect information may result in award disqualification.

To ensure that applicants submit their proposals successfully, CDFA strongly encourages all applicants to comply with the computer system recommendations provided by Amplifund:

- Use Chrome, Firefox, Edge or Safari;
- Avoid using an iPad, iPhone or similar mobile device;
- Save work often, as the system will time out periodically, and any unsaved work will be lost.

CDFA cannot guarantee that the Amplifund system will be compatible with particular browsers or operating systems.

16. How do I find my application ID number?

Your application ID is located in the URL of your application browser. The ID is the 5-digit number at the end of the URL. For example, if your browser shows the following while filling out your application, then 12345 is your application ID: <https://www.gotomygrants.com/Public/OportunityApplications/ApplicationForm/12345>.

17. How do applicants create their project design?

Applicants will go to the CDFA HSP RePlan Tool webpage (<https://replan-tool.org/cdfa/>) to create their project design and will download the RePlan reports in Excel and PDF files. The applicant will then upload both the RePlan Excel and PDF files into their application in Amplifund.

18. Can applicants view, edit, or delete documents once the application has been submitted?

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

19. How is an application disqualified from funding?

An application can be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

- Project doesn't meet program requirements. General examples include:
 - A building, parking lot or road inside a field should be cut out, but was left as part of the field.
 - Total estimated GHG reductions are zero or a negative value.
- Applicant doesn't meet applicant eligibility.
- Application funding request exceeds the maximum allowable funding of \$100,000.
- Application is incomplete, with one or more of the questions necessary for administrative review left unanswered, or with a required attachment that is missing, blank, unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable.
- Application includes activities outside the grant term.
- Applicant that would receive grant funds is not located in California with a physical California business address.

20. If an application is not selected for funding, can the applicant reapply if the application submission period is still open?

CDFA will notify all applicants by email regarding the status of their grant application, whether it is disqualified, awarded, or remains unawarded at the end of the award allocation process. If CDFA notifies an applicant during the solicitation period that their application was disqualified, the applicant is allowed to resubmit an application for consideration within the solicitation period. CDFA will treat a resubmission as a new application received at the later date and will review it through the normal administrative and prioritization processes. There is no cap on the number of resubmissions.

Because of the prioritization and administrative review system put in place for this solicitation, higher-priority applicants, such as SDFRs, may receive the most rapid response and may therefore have the greatest opportunity for resubmission, and successful progression through administrative review within the solicitation period.

21. 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, the project location, the field's ownership, and whether a practice can be implemented. Applicants must note that selected information, such as the project APNs, could be made available to the public if requested.

Technical Assistance

22. Are there resources available to help potential applicants apply for an HSP Incentives grant?

Yes, please visit the HSP Incentive Grants webpage located at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/IncentivesProgram.html> for a list of application materials and resources. The Healthy Soils Program funds technical assistance providers that can provide free, one-on-one application help to potential Incentive applicants. Contact information for these technical assistance providers has been posted under the "Technical Assistance Resources" header on the HSP Incentive Grants webpage.

23. If a technical assistance provider is assisting in submitting an application on behalf of an applicant, will the technical assistance provider be identified in the grant application?

There will be questions in the application where the technical assistance provider can be identified and provide organizational information. This information may assist in prompt and effective communication for project award processes, or for resubmission in case an application is disqualified.