

**Responses to Comments Received on the CDFA Healthy Soils Program  
Comment Period: October 25, 2018 - November 8, 2018**

Comment	Response
Advance payments up to 25 percent for project expenditures for a three-month period can be requested for projects in Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) and Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDACs) only. Many SDG farmers do not fall in these communities and need help.	HSP award recipients may be eligible for 25% advance payments.
Soil health language on data collection needs in HSP Demonstration Projects.	Language has been added to the HSP Demonstration Projects Request for Grant Applications (RGA).
Prioritize SDGs same way for HSP as SWEEP.	Language has been added to the HSP Incentives Program and Demonstration Projects RGAs.
Payout for no till needs to be increased. It's so low there's no incentive to begin no-till management on an operation unless you're already intending to. The program also lists the possibility of advanced payment but I was told by the CDFA staffer this isn't possible.	The current standard-payment rate for implementation of no-till is based on USDA NRCS EQIP payment rate; CDFA offers double the payment rate of NRCS. Additionally, HSP award recipients may be eligible for 25% advance payments.
Not support Type A Research projects	Same comment submitted in comment letter dated September 11, 2018. Response to comment was provided by CDFA. Type A projects allow for future consideration of new practices in HSP for which existing published peer-reviewed scientific data are insufficient.
Not support treatment and control fields in demo projects	Same comment submitted in comment letter dated September 11, 2018. Response to comment was provided by CDFA. Control fields are necessary to show the differences and benefits achieved by implementation of HSP practices on the farm.
Increase type B award amount.	Same comment submitted in comment letter dated September 11, 2018. Response to comment was provided by CDFA. CDFA may evaluate suggestions on other award amounts for future rounds of funding. Comment letters dated September 11 and November 8, 2018 did not include a proposed grant award amount or supporting information for evaluation.
Increase compost application rates and allow one time higher application of compost.	Same comment submitted in comment letter dated September 11, 2018. Response to comment was provided by CDFA. The practice of one-time application of higher rates of compost has been proposed as a Type A Demonstration Project practice for data collection and research, to facilitate publication of additional scientific data on this topic and to address nutrient management concerns associated with the application of larger quantities of compost.
Change outreach requirements/remove requirement for 120 attendees.	Same comment submitted in comment letter dated September 11, 2018. Response to comment was provided by CDFA. Number of attendees is critical to increase the level of deliverables by demonstration projects. SMART goals are currently allowed and encouraged, however minimum number of attendee requirement must be met. Number of required attendees was reduced from 300 to 120 in response to previous public comments collected through public meetings of the Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel.
Meeting 120 attendees for dairies is tough, there are only 85-90 dairies in the area	120 attendees required by CDFA HSP Demonstration Projects grants can include farmers and ranchers in addition to dairymen.
Allow on-farm produced compost	On-farm produced compost is eligible for funding in the 2018 HSP and must meet program requirements listed in the HSP Incentives Program and Demonstration Projects RGAs.
Pleased to see the increased budget items to realistically reflect current market prices for supplies, consider a labor and equipment rental portion of the budget worksheet.	Thank you for the comment of support. USDA NRCS EQIP Payment Rates for practices include labor costs.