

**California Department of Food and Agriculture**  
**2023 State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program**  
**(SWEET)**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**



## General Questions

1. Can an agricultural operation submit more than one application?

No, agricultural operations can only submit one application using a unique tax identification number. An agricultural operation is determined by its distinct legal business name, address and associated tax identification number provided in an application. Any entity that applies more than once will be disqualified from funding for the round.

2. Can an organization apply on behalf of the agriculture operation?

Yes, organizations may submit an application on behalf of the agricultural operation. However, the application must include the agricultural operation's legal business name, address, and tax identification number. If awarded, the grant agreement will be between CDFA and the agricultural operation.

3. What is the maximum duration for any proposed project?

The maximum project duration is eighteen months. Projects can be completed in less than eighteen months but cannot exceed this timeframe. Project activities cannot be conducted before the project start date indicated in the executed grant agreement.

4. When the agriculture operation is leasing land, does the landowner need to apply on behalf of the agriculture operation?

No, the agricultural operation can submit an application. It is the responsibility of the agricultural operation to comply with the terms of their lease agreement. CDFA encourages all applicants to notify the landowner of the proposed project. If awarded, CDFA will enter into a grant agreement with the agricultural operation. SWEET projects have an expected project life of 10 years.

5. The Request for Grant Applications states, "SWEET funding cannot be combined with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)." Can applicants apply to both SWEET and EQIP, and if awarded EQIP funding, withdraw their SWEET application?

Yes, applicants may apply to both programs. However, if awarded EQIP funding, applicants would not be eligible to receive SWEET funding on the same parcels for the same equipment. Applicants may indicate components funded by EQIP as matching funds.

6. Is there a minimum threshold for water savings **and** greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions?

Yes, 2023 projects must estimate water savings of a minimum of 1 acre-inch and estimate a minimum GHG reduction of 0.01 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per acre according to the tools provided.

7. Where can applicants find information regarding the 2023 SWEET Technical Assistance Workshops?

The SWEET website will have a list of all the Technical Assistance Providers & Workshops during the solicitation.

8. May applicants view examples of past projects funded by SWEEP?

A list of previously funded projects with project descriptions can be found on the SWEEP website in the “Resources” section, under “Past Solicitations”.

9. Is the information provided by applicants in the SWEEP application available to the public?

Information provided in the SWEEP application may be subject to a Public Records Act (PRA) request. Under the PRA, CDFA must make available public records upon request by the public. However, certain personal identifying information is generally exempt from disclosure. Note: CDFA will post basic information regarding all applications to the SWEEP public webpage. This information will include the agricultural organization’s business name, description of the proposed project, location, amount of funding requested, and amount of matching funds committed.

10. The RGA indicates that after the project is installed, water must be measured on site using flow meters. Is onsite measurement of Evapotranspiration (ET) considered an allowable method of water measurement in lieu of a flow meter?

No. Under Program Requirements in the Request for Grant Applications it states that proposed projects must include flow meters or demonstrate actual water use is measured with existing flow meters. Therefore, projects must include flow meters as a required method of water measurement.

11. For SWEEP priority funding, are women considered Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs)?

The Farmer Equity Act of 2017 identifies the following as socially disadvantaged groups: African Americans; Native Indians; Alaskan Natives; Hispanics; Asian Americans; and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. CDFA will reserve 25% of the funding for these groups. At this time, gender is not a factor in defining a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher.

12. Can an applicant apply to both CDFA's State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) and CDFA's Healthy Soils Program (HSP) for projects on the same APN(s)?

Yes.

## **ELIGIBILITY AND ALLOWABLE COSTS**

1. If an agriculture operation received a previous SWEEP grant award, may the operation apply for 2023 SWEEP funding?

Yes, an agricultural operation that received a previous SWEEP grant award may apply for 2023 funding. Proposed projects that will be installed on a previously-funded project site must build upon the past SWEEP project. Applicants must not remove a previously funded SWEEP project and replace it with a new project.

2. If the applicant’s land is currently irrigated without any on-farm energy sources (e.g., water is delivered to the farm from surface water supplies and distributed to the crop by gravity), is the project eligible for funding?

Yes, this type of project may be eligible if nitrous oxide emission reductions can be calculated from the online SWEEP Project Assessment Tool. All applicants must be able to estimate GHG reductions due to on-farm energy use reductions, fuel conversions related to water pumping, or N<sub>2</sub>O reductions that result from a change in crop or irrigation method. Applicants must use the CDFA-provided tools to estimate if the proposed project will result in on-farm GHG emission reductions.

3. If preparation or elements of an irrigation system are already completed or installed, is an application for reimbursement of that system eligible?

No. Funding can only be used to implement projects after a grant agreement is executed between CDFA and an agricultural operation. Grant funds cannot be expended before the project term in the executed grant agreement. In addition, funding cannot be utilized as reimbursement for a previous installation or to cover maintenance and operation costs of any existing system.

4. If an agricultural operation will convert crops during the course of a proposed project, is the project eligible for funding?

Yes. Agricultural operations converting crops during the course of a proposed project are eligible. Agricultural operations must demonstrate in the application the proposed project will result in GHG reductions and water savings to be considered for funding. Note that SWEEP grant funds cannot cover the cost of crop conversion. SWEEP grant funding must be used for allowable project costs directly related to the irrigation or water distribution system.

5. If an applicant has not been awarded a SWEEP grant but already has drip irrigation, may they receive funding for soil moisture or plant health monitoring if still capable of estimating GHG reductions from the proposed project?

Yes. Projects must both reduce GHG emissions and water use.

6. Are cannabis farmers eligible for SWEEP funds?

Medical and recreational cannabis is excluded from funding.

7. Is a project that improves the efficiency of a diesel pump eligible for funding or does the SWEEP program require that an applicant convert to an electric pump?

Improving the pump efficiency of a diesel pump, either through a pump retrofit or by replacing the pump with a more efficient pump, can reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the pump and could be funded through SWEEP. Additionally, fuel conversions are also eligible. The applicant must use the SWEEP GHG calculator tool to estimate the benefits of the retrofit, pump replacement or fuel conversion.

8. Does the SWEEP program have an income cap to determine applicant eligibility?

CDFA does not collect income information from SWEEP applicants. SWEEP does not have an income cap to determine eligibility.

9. Can SWEEP funds be used to pay for an electric utility interconnect when converting to an electric engine and/or use of solar energy?

Yes, an electricity interconnection fee is an allowable cost for a SWEEP project.

10. May an applicant apply to SWEEP for land leveling to improve irrigation distribution uniformity when a field is flood irrigated?

The SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool allows an applicant to estimate a water savings benefit from land-leveling when flood irrigation is used. Therefore, an applicant may apply for funding for this practice.

11. Are school gardens and community gardens considered eligible 'agricultural operations'?

The SWEEP program does consider K-12 school districts eligible for funding along with community gardens. These types of applicants are subject to all program requirements and

must be able to demonstrate water savings and GHG reductions using the SWEEP calculators. University research institutions are not eligible for SWEEP funding.

12. Can SWEEP funds be used to switch from a groundwater well pump to a surface water pump, provided that reliable surface water is available?

Yes, SWEEP funding may be used to facilitate the use of surface water. An applicant would input the pump efficiency test from the existing ground water well and fill out the related information in the "pre" column of the SWEEP GHG calculator. The new proposed surface water pump information will go in the "post" column of the calculator.

13. Are operations within a city using municipal or recycled water eligible?

The SWEEP Request for Applications outlines the types of individuals and organizations that are eligible for SWEEP funding. "California farmers, ranchers and Federal and California Recognized Native American Indian Tribes are eligible to apply. The irrigation project must be on a California agricultural operation. Agricultural operations within a city are eligible to apply for SWEEP although they will need to demonstrate that their proposed project will reduce water use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the proposed irrigation system using the SWEEP calculator tools.

14. Can GHG emission reductions that are not related to on-farm irrigation be considered in a SWEEP application?

The scope of the SWEEP GHG quantification methodology is limited to emissions due to on-farm irrigation systems. Applicants must be able to estimate GHG reductions due to on-farm energy use reductions, energy conversions related to water pumping or N<sub>2</sub>O reductions that result from a change in crop or irrigation method. Benefits from carbon sequestration and GHG emission reductions from tractors are examples of GHG emission reductions that are not included in SWEEP. Agricultural operations may be interested in other programs available that address these. Here are a few programs to consider: CDFA's Healthy Soils Program, California Air Resources Board's (CARB's) FARMER program, and CARB's Carl Moyer program.

15. Can a non-agricultural operation, such as a park or golf course, apply for a SWEEP grant?

No, the project needs to be located on an agricultural operation as defined by the Food and Agricultural Code 77911. Parks and golf courses are not considered agricultural operations under this code.

16. Can an applicant apply for funding for a renewable energy installation if the system will have other uses applied to it than the irrigation pumps?

Yes, an applicant may receive funding for a renewable energy installation with other uses (e.g., residential) as long as irrigation pumping is included in the energy use that is offset or provided energy by the renewable energy installation. Applicants will provide baseline energy use records to substantiate that irrigation pumps are major contributors to the energy demand.

## **APPLICATION PLATFORM QUESTIONS**

1. Does the "Applicant Information" requested in the application need to be the agricultural operation's information?

Yes, the “Applicant Information” must include information specific to the agricultural operation, such as the legal business name, unique tax identification number, and contact information. If awarded, CDFA will need this information to enter into a grant agreement with that agricultural operation.

2. May applicants enter the latitude and longitude of their APN to answer the "Address or Nearest Cross Streets" section in the application?

No, the applicant needs to provide either the location address or the cross streets. The latitude and longitude are also required to be put in the application.

3. What attachments are required to be submitted in the application?

A list of required attachments is in Appendix A of the 2023 SWEEP Request for Grant Applications.

4. Is an applicant able to save an application as a draft even if all the required questions are not completed?

Yes, an applicant may save their application at any time after the application is initiated. To save the application, scroll to the bottom of the application questions and click “Save Draft”.

5. Is there a specific naming convention required for application attachments?

Yes, there is a specific naming convention for attached files. The naming convention is listed below each of the upload fields in the application portal. It consists of the five-digit application ID number, found when creating an application, followed by the name of the file. For example, “1234567-2023-SWEEP-Budgetworksheet”.

6. When using the SWEEP Irrigation Savings Assessment Tool, if the applicant’s current crop is not listed in the drop-down menu what crop should the applicant select?

If the current crop is not listed, the applicant should select the crop that is most similar to the present crop in terms of water use. The applicant is encouraged to provide a justification of the chosen represented crop in the application questionnaire.

## **WATER AND ENERGY USE DOCUMENTATION**

1. What is required for estimating on-farm water use?

Applicants have two options for estimating on-farm water use. They can use the Excel based SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool or the web-based SWEEP Project Assessment Tool. To estimate water use and applicant must know the current irrigation method, project location, and the crop type.

2. Can applicants use and attach other on-farm water use records to calculate baseline water use and projected water savings?

No, applicants are required to use the Excel based SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings or the web-based SWEEP Project Assessment Tool to estimate the pre-project baseline water use and estimate the potential savings from the project. The applicant can provide additional information water use information in the application.

3. What supporting documentation is required to establish baseline GHG emissions?

For any irrigation pumps impacted at the project location, applicants are required to attach actual, on-farm energy use records (e.g., utility bills, actual fuel receipts, and/or field operational

logs) covering at least twelve months of pump energy use for the prior irrigation and growing season

4. Can an applicant use an average of water use or energy use over several years to address crop rotation?

The water use value should correspond with the principal crop selected to estimate water savings in the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool. The web based SWEEP Project Assessment Tool does allow for the user to input crop types over a three year period to accommodate for crop rotation. The energy use value may be averaged over several years. The most representative value should be used for the SWEEP GHG emission calculator and documentation must be submitted to substantiate the values used in accordance with the ARB quantification methodology.

5. Are applicants required to use a pump efficiency test to complete the SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool or SWEEP Project Assessment Tool? If yes, how recent must the pump test be? The applicant must determine overall pump efficiency to complete the Excel based SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool or the web-based SWEEP Project Assessment Tool. If this data is available through means other than a pump test, such as manufacturer's guarantee or a third-party irrigation system auditing procedure, the applicant must substantiate the information used to complete the calculator with documentation. The pump test should be representative of current operations. The pump test may be from previous growing seasons (no earlier than 2021) provided no modifications have been made to the pump subsequent to testing the equipment.

6. Is a pump efficiency test required even if changes to the pump(s) are not a part of the project?

Yes, applicants must determine pump efficiency for all the pumps (including booster pumps) that service the irrigation system in order to complete the required SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool or the SWEEP Project Assessment Tool.

7. If an applicant rotates crops on an annual basis or has multiple crops, what should be included within the required calculator tools?

Applicants may choose one principal crop that most represents the project. Additionally, the SWEEP Project Assessment Tool does allow for three years' worth of crop data to best assess the tool.

8. If an applicant is multi-cropping on the same parcel, should they enter the sum of water use on all crops?

Applicants may enter their principal crop water use on the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool or find the average water use by computing multiple SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tools. If the applicant chooses to use the web-based SWEEP Project Assessment Tool, they can input three years worth of cropping information for parcels that are in rotation. Additionally, the web based tool allows for an applicant to identify sections of a field that are used for a specific crop.

9. When inputting the total fuel or electrical use within the estimation tool, should applicants include the sum of the kilowatt hours and/or gallons over the year?

Yes, applicants should include the sum of the year.

10. Do applicants complete the SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool per APN or per pump?

The "input" tabs on the SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool are to be completed per pump.

11. How do applicants complete the Excel based SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool if they are not changing or replacing pumps?

Applicants should complete the pre-project information and carry over the same information for post-project. GHG can still be reported/achieved using the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool information.

12. If an applicant has more than five pumps, how should they complete the SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool or the web-based SWEEP Project Assessment Tool?

The SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool and SWEEP Project Assessment Tool allows up to five "inputs" (five pumps). If more input tabs are needed, then applicants must complete and attach another SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool or SWEEP Project Assessment Tool to their application. Note: Applicants should not copy an input tab to create more than five tabs on one SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool.

13. If a well pump has recently been installed, are pump efficiency tests still required?

Yes, pump efficiency tests are required for all applications. If it is a new pump, the manufacturer likely has efficiency data you may use. Another option could be to consult a local irrigation company to conduct a pump efficiency test of the new pump.

14. For new pumps (i.e., pumps to be installed as part of a SWEEP project), will applicants need to submit pump efficiency tests?

For new pumps (pumps to be installed as part of the SWEEP project), applicants may include manufacturer pump specifications as opposed to a pump efficiency test.

15. The SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool requires an input for acreage. Should applicants include total acreage farmed or total acreage impacted by the proposed SWEEP project?

Applicants should include the total acreage impacted by the proposed project.

16. On the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool, is there space to enter in multiple crops affected by the proposed project?

For double cropping, multiple crops, or crops grown in rotation select one principal crop and run the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool only once. The online SWEEP Project Assessment Tool does allow for multiple crops and/or crop rotation.

17. Do flow meters have to be internet enabled (i.e., capable of reporting via computer) or is an analog meter acceptable?

The flow meter does not have to be digitally connected. It can be an analog meter.

18. Is a flow meter required as part of a SWEEP project?

Yes, a flow meter is required to measure water usage. Flow meters are allowable costs.

19. Is motor efficiency included in the quantification methodology?

Motor efficiency is not included in the quantification methodology (available at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cci-quantification>). Instead, overall pumping efficiency (OPE) will be reported as an input on the tool.

20. How should discharge pressure at the gauge be reported?

Discharge pressure at the gauge should be reported in pounds per square inch (psi), if available. If it is reported as "discharge height," convert this number from feet to psi.

21. What is friction loss based on?



Friction loss is based on the function of the pump. If the pump is used to extract groundwater from a well, it is a well pump and applicants would use 10. If the pump is used to pressurize surface water (or otherwise increase the pressure of the water in a system), it is a booster pump and applicants would use 5.

22. Is switching from electric to solar power automatically a reduction in GHG emissions? Switching from electric power to solar power could lead to a reduction of GHG emissions. It is up to the applicant to show a reduction of GHG emissions in their GHG calculator.

23. What should an applicant do if the calculator tools do not do an adequate job representing the reduction in GHG emissions and water use?

Applicants should complete the calculator tools to the best of their abilities, and then explain their expected and other information used to determine water savings and GHG emissions in the appropriate box in the application.

24. How can an applicant determine the level of Irrigation Water Management when completing the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool?

The SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment tool includes an instructions tab. This tab describes how to complete the tool and provides information that may help the applicant complete the tool including definitions of the Irrigation Water Management levels and links to identify soil type, baseline, township, and range.

25. Can an applicant include more than one APN in a SWEEP application with different pumps operating on the APNs?

Yes, applicants may request funding for more than one APN and more than one pump but should only submit one application. Each pump that will be impacted by the proposed SWEEP project must be included on a separate tab on the SWEEP GHG Calculator Tool. Pump tests will need to be provided for each pump impacted by the proposed project.

26. On the SWEEP GHG Calculator tool, does the pumping depth refer to the Standing depth or Drawdown depth?

The SWEEP GHG Calculator tool includes a definitions tab which defines the Pumping Depth as the depth of groundwater. The applicant should use the fall depth, if available.

27. If a pump services multiple locations, but the applicant is only applying for irrigation improvements on one of the APN's/locations, how would one fill out the Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool and the GHG Calculator Tool?

To complete the SWEEP Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool and SWEEP GHG Calculator tool, use the acreage of the area impacted by the project. Provide support and clarification within the application.

28. How does stormwater capture factor into water savings?

The irrigation water savings assessment tool does not account for stormwater capture and use and does not estimate any water conservation from these measures. The irrigation water savings assessment tool only estimates a potential reduction in applied water from a change in irrigation system or irrigation water management level.

29. How do water savings and GHG emissions reductions factor into the funding of the proposals?



The Request for Grant Applications describes how CDFA will select projects for funding. Technical reviewers evaluate and score applications based on several criteria including the estimated levels of water savings and GHG emissions reductions (per acre). During technical review, the estimated water savings and estimated GHG reductions are each worth 15 points out of 50. Following project scoring, applications are sorted for funding based on score, level of water savings per acre and then level of GHG emissions reductions per acre.

30. If the applicant is using an electric pump that is on the same meter as other electrical appliances, is it required that the applicant isolate the electricity usage for the pump in order to use the electricity use value in the GHG calculator?

No, it is not required that the applicant isolate the electricity usage of the irrigation pump. An explanation of other energy uses of the meter should be included in the energy use narrative of the application questionnaire.

31. Can an applicant who has recently purchased land use energy records from a previous landowner?

Yes, energy records must be consecutive, inclusive, and from the prior growing season.

## **PROJECT DESIGN**

1. Is there a specific format required for the project design?

No, there is not a specific format required for the project design. Refer to the Request for Grant Applications for requirements about what information should be displayed on a project design.

2. Can agriculture operations request funds for the cost of the project design?

No, funding can only be requested and utilized for project implementation during the project term. The agriculture operation is responsible for any costs associated with the project design.

## **BUDGET WORKSHEET**

1. Where can applicants download the Budget Worksheet? Applicants can download the Budget Worksheet (attachment) from the Request for Grant Applications and on the CDFA SWEEP website <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/sweep/> under "Application Materials".

2. Can a bid from an irrigation company be attached in lieu of the budget worksheet?

No, the Budget Worksheet is a required attachment. Applicants must download, complete and attach the Budget Worksheet in the application platform. The budget worksheet can be downloaded from the Request for Grant Applications or by accessing CDFA's SWEEP website [www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/sweep](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/sweep) under "Application Materials".

3. Are products not directly related to irrigation such as sprayers, wind machines, frost protection, and dairy parlor flushing, allowable cost?

No, SWEEP funds cannot be used for products that are not directly related to irrigation. SWEEP funding must be specifically directed toward crop irrigation projects that conserve water and reduce GHG emissions from irrigation. Refer the Request for Grant Applications for a list of unallowable costs.

4. Should vendor quotes be included as attachments?

If the proposal includes request for funding a renewable energy system, a quote for the renewable energy system must be attached and must include the total size of the proposed system (kW). If other quotes are relevant as supporting documentation for the costs listed in the Budget Worksheet, those vendor quotes may be attached in the application. However, quotes for components other than renewable energy are not required.

5. If a contractor provides an estimate with costs for Supplies and Equipment within Labor, do those costs need to be broken down per item and listed within the appropriate budget categories?

Yes, only costs for labor should be included within the Labor category of the Budget Worksheet. The 2023 SWEEP Budget Worksheet combines both supplies and equipment in the same category.

6. In light of inflation rates, supply and labor shortages, how can applicants account for potential price uncertainty when developing their budget?

SWEEP asks applicants to itemize their budgets as best they can. If the project is awarded funding and there are changes to the costs of items when the project term begins, SWEEP staff will work with recipients to complete line-item shifts or budget change to adjust the budget accordingly. However, CDFA cannot increase the SWEEP award. Increases in costs will be offset by finding savings within the project or by increasing matching funds.

7. How many years will SWEEP cover software subscription costs?

Only subscription costs incurred during the grant term of 18 months may be requested in the Budget Worksheet. Subscription costs that extend beyond the grant term are unallowable costs. Applicants may indicate these in the matching fund section of the budget.

## **MATCHING FUNDS**

1. Are matching funds required?

No, matching funds are not required. However, CDFA strongly encourages applicants to provide matching funds.

2. What information should an applicant include in the matching funds written documentation?

Matching funds documentation, often written as a letter, should confirm the contribution source, type and amount of the contribution, as well as include activities that will be conducted in support of the project. Account statements or other financial documents relating to the matching contributions are not required.

3. If elements of an irrigation system are installed before the grant term of the proposed project can those costs be considered matching funds?

No, elements of an irrigation system installed before the grant term of the project are not considered matching funds.

4. Can funding from another state or federal grant program be considered match?

Yes, funding from another state or federal grant program can be considered match as long as it is expended during the grant term. However, awardees cannot use funding from both SWEEP and NRCS EQIP for the same components on the same APN.

5. Where can applicants find information about previously funded SWEEP projects, including the amount of Matching Funds projects have contributed?

Applicants may find information about previously funded SWEEP projects on the SWEEP website.

6. If the project costs more than the grant award amount, can the recipient finance the remaining balance?

Any cost above the amount awarded will need to be covered by the Recipient. Please list only the allowable costs on the budget for reimbursements, and any unallowable costs should be listed in the "Matching" category.

7. Is there a minimum amount required for matching funds?

There is no minimum requirement for matching funds. Matching funds are encouraged, but not required.