

## Healthy Soils Program Now Accepting Applications

Thinking about improving your soil this year? The Healthy Soils Program give grants up to **\$100,000** to California farmers and ranchers to incorporate conservation agriculture techniques that improve your soil health and sequester carbon.

As of February 27, 2020, the California Department of Food and Agriculture is now accepting grant applications at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysouls/incentivesprogram.html>.

### Deadline

The CDFA will start accepting applications on February 27 on a first-come, first-served basis until **June 26**. You can submit an application and find out within 6 weeks if it is approved. If they don't approve it, you can edit and resubmit it before the submission window has closed.

### Project Timeframe

3 years, beginning in Fall 2020. The CDFA wants you to implement most of these practices for 3 consecutive years, or to have finished your plantings within 3 years.

### Application Assistance

Please contact UC Cooperative Extension specialist Shulamit Shroder at [sashroder@ucanr.edu](mailto:sashroder@ucanr.edu) or 661-868-6218 for questions or help with the application.

### Eligible Practices

Healthy Soils has payment rates per acre for 30 different practices. Here are a few examples of eligible practices:

- Cropping practices:
  - These practices improve the soil's water-holding capacity, stability, and organic matter content. You must implement these practices for 3 years. They include:
    - Cover crops
    - Mulching
    - Nutrient management
    - No till or reduced till
- Compost application practices:
  - Compost can be applied to annual crops, vineyards, orchards, or rangeland. Compost can be purchased or produced on-farm. You must spread compost 3 years in a row.



- Whole orchard recycling:
  - This is a new practice for the 2020 Healthy Soils Program. Instead of burning or hauling off the orchard you need to replace, you can chip the trees and incorporate the chips into the soil.
- Herbaceous and woody cover establishment:
  - These are practices that use grasses, trees, or shrubs to decrease wind and water erosion and keep nutrients in the soil. You must finish your plantings within the 3 years of the program. Practices include:
    - Hedgerow planting
    - Riparian forest buffer
    - Windbreak establishment
- Grazing land practices:
  - These practices improve grazing quality, decrease erosion, and increase carbon sequestration. They include:
    - Prescribed grazing
    - Range planting
    - Silvopasture



## How to Apply

The online application portal is now open at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/incentivesprogram.html>.

The grant process includes a web-based application consisting of a series of questions that can be saved and returned to before submitting.

Note: There is no longer a cost-share requirement for this program.

Check out [http://ciwr.ucanr.edu/Programs/ClimateSmartAg/Healthy\\_Soils\\_Program\\_HSP/](http://ciwr.ucanr.edu/Programs/ClimateSmartAg/Healthy_Soils_Program_HSP/) and <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/IncentivesProgram.html> for more information on the program and how to apply.