

Healthy Soils Program

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.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture recently released a draft Request for Grant Applications for the upcoming 2020 Healthy Soils Program. Here are the important updates to the program from last year:

Rolling program deadline: The CDFA will start accepting applications in early February on a rolling basis for 4 months, or until the funds run out. 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 do most of these practices for 3 years, or to have finished your plantings within 3 years

Upcoming Workshops:

February 13, 2020
9 am - 11 am
Cooperative Extension
Kern County
1031 S. Mt. Vernon Ave
Bakersfield, CA 93307

[REGISTER HERE](#)

February 14, 2020
9 am - 11 am
Cooperative Extension
Tulare County
4437-B S. Laspina St.
Tulare, CA 93274

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Technical Assistance:

Please contact UC Cooperative Extension specialist Shulamit Shroder at sashroder@ucanr.edu or 661-868-6218 for questions or to help with the application.

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 apply compost at the following rates for 3 years:

Crop Type	Compost Type	Short tons/acre
Annuals	Higher N (C:N < 11)	3-5
Annuals	Lower N (C:N > 11)	6-8
Perennials/Trees	Higher N (C:N < 11)	2-4
Perennials/Trees	Lower N (C:N > 11)	6-8
Rangelands	Lower N (C:N > 11)	6-8

- 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 will open in February.

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. However, a cost-share of materials or in-kind labor will strengthen your application.

Check out 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.