

Organic growers: take another look at the new and improved Healthy Soils Program

You may think that as an organic producer already focused on healthy soils that you are ineligible to apply for a Healthy Soils Program Incentive Grant. Are you sure?

There are over **25 eligible practices**. Are you doing them all on as much acreage as possible? If you use cover crops or mulch, are you also applying compost or planting a hedgerow? Even if you are already implementing one or multiple eligible practices, you can try something new.

There is more money available in California's Healthy Soils Program than ever before (\$25.2 million), so it's a good time to take another look at the program and apply before June 26th. Here are some answers to common questions from organic growers.

➤ **Q: I am an organic row crop farmer. Am I eligible for the Healthy Soils Program?**

A: Yes! All California farmers, ranchers and Federal and California Recognized Native American Indian Tribes are eligible to apply, regardless of what you grow: row crops, vineyard, field and tree crops, nurseries, and livestock operations.

➤ **Q: I am already doing all the practices that make sense for my operation. Why should I apply?**

A: Some of the practices eligible for funding include compost application, cover cropping, prescribed grazing, mulch, reduced-tillage, hedgerows, riparian plantings and more. Are you applying them on all your fields? New this year, you can now do something you are already doing to a new, different field within the same or previously funded Assessor Parcel Number.

➤ **Q: I have already been awarded a Healthy Soils grant. Can I apply again?**

A: Yes, even if you already received a Healthy Soils Incentive grant, you could apply again as long as the new project does not involve practice(s) that have already been used on the fields included in your new proposal. In other words: you just have to do something new in a new place to be eligible.

➤ **Q: I don't own my land, I am leasing. Am I eligible?**

A: Yes, you can apply for a grant on land that you do not own, as long as you have documented landowner approval to implement the proposed practice(s) during the grant period (July 1, 2020-March 31, 2023). If you are a new tenant, you will need to provide the cropping and management practice history on the property for the past three years.

➤ **Q: I looked at the application before and it was complicated. Is it any easier now?**

A: The Healthy Soils grant application has been streamlined and it is now easier than ever to apply. Also, awards will be made on a rolling basis until June 26 or until the \$25.2 million in funding is spent.

➤ **Q: How do I find out more?**

A: Visit CalCAN's website: calclimateag.org/hsp or to see the application, visit CDFG's website: cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysouls