

Soil Health Mini Grants – Round 2

RFP Questions and Answers

Q: Can farmers apply for this funding directly or does our local Soil and Water agency apply for funding and then the farmer works through their agency?

A: Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity are local Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Interested farmers should contact their County District to notify them of their interest in Soil Health.

Q: Would this grant opportunity provide a means of purchasing a post pounder if it can justify EBM with grazing?

A: Equipment is eligible but must be part of a well defined implementation program. The proposal would need to include implementation and the cost of the equipment would be considered by reviewers under the cost effectiveness.

Q: Is contour farming an eligible practice?

A: The Soil Health Mini Grants do not restrict the practices that can be used, however, it is the responsibility of the applicant to build a case for how any given practice contributes to soil health improvement and to build it into a local initiative.

Q: On question #9 WHO is participating: are they asking for specific farmer's names? And if so, do you think we need a letter of commitment from each participating farmer?

A: The question reads: who will DO the project. Is the District implementing it, contractors, or farmers? The RFP states that if any of these people/organizations etc. are providing match, they need to submit a commitment letter.

Q: If we are applying for cover crop implementation for this grant, do we have to use NRCS-NY EQIP flat rate per acre reimbursement as we did with Ag. NPS, or can we determine our own reimbursement/incentive payment rate? Are there any requirements with choosing our own rate? We're looking at doing an incentive payment per acre for implementing cover crops, instead of a percentage cost share as in Ag. NPS.

A: While all implemented practices do require that they meet USDA NRCS standards, the Soil Health Mini Grants do not have any pre-established payment restrictions. Cost-effectiveness of the project accounts for 20% of the overall score and it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that all costs are reasonable.