

Soil Health Financial Assistance Program

Fiscal Year 2027 Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

Applications are due by 4 p.m. Central Time (CT) on August 31, 2026

07/03/2026

Minnesota Department of Agriculture
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Grant Overview.....	3
Grant Eligibility	6
Eligible expenses.....	7
Application Review Policies and Process	10
Contract and bidding requirements.....	15
Grantee website and publicity.....	16
Grantee obligation to inform.....	16
Grantee evaluation	17
Audits and record retention	17
Civil rights	17
Voter registration requirement	18
Right of Cancellation	18
EPA Statement	19
Soil Health Financial Assistance Program Background and Goals	19
Project Evaluation Profile.....	20
Application Questions	21
Current, prior and pending grants	25

Grant Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Fiscal Year 2027 Soil Health Financial Assistance Program, in accordance with [MINN. STAT. 17.134](#). Grant funds are available for purchasing and retrofitting equipment that will assist with implementing soil health farming practices. This grant program was established in 2022 to support healthy soil management practices in Minnesota. This program is administered by the Pesticide and Fertilizer Management Division, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA).

The program was established by the Minnesota Legislature to support healthy soil management practices by providing cost share for the purchase of soil health equipment. ([MINN STAT 17.134](#)). For the purposes of this proposal, soil health practices include, but are not limited to, practices that minimize soil disturbance, keep the soil covered, maximize plant diversity, maintain living roots, and integrate livestock. All information about the program is available on the program's [webpage \(www.mda.state.mn.us/soil-health-grant\)](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/soil-health-grant).

Applications will be accepted until August 31, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.

Funding availability

The MDA anticipates awarding up to \$5 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2027. Awards will be made using a competitive process.

One round of awards is planned, but if funding is not exhausted, a second request for proposals will be issued. Unsuccessful applicants from the first round can reapply if a second round is offered. Funding sources include Minnesota's General Fund ([2025 Minn. Laws ch. 34, art. 1, §2\(b\)](#)), Minnesota's Clean Water Fund ([2025 Minn. Laws ch. 36, art. 2, §2\(3\)\(j\)](#)), and the [Minnesota Climate Smart Food Systems \(CSFS\) Initiative](#).

Applicants may apply for up to 50% of their project's total cost with a minimum grant award of \$500 and a maximum grant award of \$45,000. Eligible applicants include individual farmers, producer groups, local government units (LGUs) and Tribal Nations. Applicants may only receive one Soil Health Financial Assistance Program grant in FY 2027. Unsuccessful applicants from the first round can reapply if a second round is offered.

Applicants should anticipate that grant contracts will have a start date of January or February 2027 and an end date of January or February 2028. We expect to notify selected grantees for this funding by January 2027.

If selected for an award, the grantee may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement is fully executed (signed by all parties) and the grant has reached its effective (start) date (whichever is later), and the grantee has been notified by the state's authorized representative that they may begin work. **Any expenses incurred or obligated prior to the effective date of the contract, including pre-ordering of equipment and supplies, are not eligible for reimbursement.**

Grant contracts are effective for one year. If requested by the grantee, contracts may be extended at MDA's discretion.

Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

The Department of Administration Office of Grants Management [OGM] [Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally show how the

grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities. Applicants with projects that are led by, impact, or serve Native American Tribal communities are encouraged to apply.

This grant supports individual farmers, producer groups, and local government units to purchase soil health equipment. The scoring criteria of this grant program prioritize:

- Beginning Farmers (farming for 10 years or fewer)
- Geographic diversity of grant awardees in Minnesota
- **Grant applicants that have not been previously awarded a Soil Health Financial Assistance Program grant**, as required under [MINN. STAT. 17.134\(3\)](#).
- Grant applicants who are certified or assessed and in the process of obtaining certification in the [Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program](#), as required under [MINN. STAT. 17.134\(3\)](#).

Grant outcomes will include improvements in access to soil health equipment and increased acres of soil health practices across Minnesota.

These priorities and the desired impacts/outcomes of grant projects are reflected in the [Project Evaluation Profile](#), which describes the scoring criteria and weight that will be used by reviewers to evaluate your application.

Timeline and deadlines

August 24, 2026, 4:00 p.m. CT Deadline to submit questions

August 31, 2026, 4:00 p.m. CT Applications due

January 1, 2027 Notification of decisions are made by this date

January/February 2027 Anticipated start date for projects awarded funding

How to apply

- Apply for the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program using our [online application system](#).
 - Grant applications must be received by **4:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on August 31, 2026**, to be considered for funding. Late applications will not be accepted.
 - If you're a new user, you need to create an account first. Use this how-to guide (PDF) to help set up your account.
 - Once logged in, select "2027 Soil Health Financial Assistance Grant."
 - After you have submitted your application, you will receive a confirmation email. Contact elaine.dorn@state.mn.us if you do not receive this email.
- Apply early so that there is enough time to receive technical assistance if needed.
 - It is best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
- We will accept only one application per entity type, e.g., farm, or political subdivision.

For help with the online application system:

- Call 952-312-9913 or
- Email elaine.dorn@state.mn.us or brad.jordahlredlin@state.mn.us and include "Soil Health Grant" in the subject line.

The MDA is not responsible for any technical or logistical problems resulting in the MDA not receiving the application on time. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that submission is received by the MDA before the deadline.

Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated. Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated.

The MDA reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.

By applying, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law. The applicant is responsible for all costs associated with submitting a response to this request for proposals (RFP).

How to submit questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Submit your question in writing before **4:00 p.m. Central Time on August 24, 2026.**
- Email elaine.dorn@state.mn.us or brad.jordahlredlin@state.mn.us with “Soil Health Grant” in the subject line.

Questions and answers will be posted online on the [MDA Soil Health Grant page](#). You can also read answers to past questions on this webpage. The MDA will post responses to program questions on the Questions and Answers (Q&A) section of the [Soil Health Financial Assistance webpage](#) as we receive them. You can also read answers to past questions there.

MDA employees are not authorized to give advice on any applications. Applicants who solicit or receive advice from unauthorized MDA employees may be disqualified from eligibility for a grant award.

Application guidelines

- Use plain, easily understood language. Write for reviewers who are generally knowledgeable but may not have a thorough or deep understanding of your farming operation, organization, or soil health initiative.
- Answer all questions completely within the character limits specified in the grant application.
- Ensure your application is your own, a unique proposal designed to respond to the request for proposals (RFP).
- Make your budget realistic, include only eligible items, and clearly explain how the money will be spent.
- Review the [Project Evaluation Profile](#) included in this document on page 17 as it is used to score and compare grant applications.

Grant Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for this grant opportunity:

- Be an owner or lessee of farmland in Minnesota, a local government unit (LGU) authorized to farm in Minnesota, or a Tribal Nation.
- Be in good standing with the State of Minnesota:
 - No back taxes owed
 - No defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the last seven years
 - Acceptable performance on past grants with the MDA and other state agencies
 - Compliant with current state regulations.
 - Be appropriately licensed and compliant with current state regulations
 - Not debarred or suspended from doing business with the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
 - No criminal conviction of applicant or its principals related to grants in the state of Minnesota.
 - Registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State (farm entities /businesses entities)

Applicants eligible to apply include but are not limited to:

- Individuals (including farmers, farm operators, and farm entities)
- Local Units of Government (LGUs), municipalities, cities, towns, counties soil and water conservation districts and joint powers boards
- Tribal Nations

MDA employees and their spouses, farms, or businesses principally owned or operated by them are not eligible applicants and are not eligible to receive funds from this grant program.

Only one application per farm or farm entity, LGU, or Tribal Nation will be accepted.

All applicants (except Tribal Nations and LGUs) must provide proof of lease or ownership of land with their application. Applicants who own farmland need to provide a copy of their deed or USDA Farm Service Agency field records. Applicants who rent or lease the farmland where soil improvements will take place must include a copy of their lease agreement or USDA Farm Service Agency field records.

- Lease agreements must:
 - be in writing
 - be signed and dated by both parties
 - be prepared as a document that has numbered pages (handwritten documents will not be accepted).
 - signed by persons with the legal authority to do so.
- Lease agreements must also:
 - be in effect for the full period of the grant (typically 12 months). Updates to the lease agreement may be requested by MDA to ensure the equipment will be used throughout the grant period.

If offered an award, applicants who are renting or leasing farmland must obtain confirmation in writing that the landowner will accommodate the soil health practice proposed in the application and establish a lease agreement that will extend to or beyond the end date of the grant period.

Collaboration

Eligible applicants may and are encouraged to collaborate with other operations, but this is not required. If eligible organizations or operations are submitting a joint application, they must determine which individual, or entity will sign the grant contract agreement with the MDA and work directly with the MDA to meet grant reporting requirements. Note that this organization will receive a 1099 from the State of Minnesota for income tax purposes.

Eligible expenses

Grant applications must be for the purchase of equipment that will be used to establish, improve, or accelerate soil health. This equipment can be new or used. Parts and materials used to retrofit existing equipment (excluding tools that can be reused on another project) may also be eligible.

If we accept your proposal, we will reimburse eligible costs included in your project budget. You will have to submit documentation including invoices and proof of payment.

Equipment purchases must:

- Be used to improve or build soil health.
- Be completed in the 12-month term of the grant contract.
- Be used on farms in Minnesota.
- Be made after the contract is fully executed.
 - If any documentation submitted for reimbursement indicates that an invoice, sales order, purchase order, or purchase agreement of equipment, parts, or services took place prior to the effective date of the contract or the date the State obtains all required signatures, whichever is later, the purchase will be deemed ineligible for reimbursement.

The categories of allowable expenses include:

- Soil Health equipment
- Contractual costs for installation or retrofitting of equipment
- Examples of eligible expenses include but are not limited to purchase of new or used equipment that will aid the applicant in using soil health practices in a farming operation.
 - Air seeders
 - No till drill
 - Drop seeders
 - Broadcast seeders
 - Crimpers
 - Agricultural drones, drone trailers and up to two batteries to operate the drone.
- Purchase of materials to retrofit existing equipment to be used for soil health practices
 - Retrofitting a corn planter to function as a cover crop seeder
 - Conditioning strips for no till planting
 - Crimper modifications

If the MDA accepts your proposal, the MDA will reimburse eligible costs included in the MDA-approved project budget.

You must be invoiced and pay for all project materials and services between the contract start and end date listed in your grant contract agreement.

All work, including pre-ordering of equipment, contracting and all other work for the grant must be completed during the effective dates of the contract.

Invoices must clearly indicate when the item was purchased or when the service was performed. All requests for reimbursement must be documented and submitted to the MDA no later than 30 calendar days after the grant end date.

Ineligible expenses

The following items are not eligible for reimbursement under this grant:

- **Any equipment or services purchased from a family member** as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 267(c)(4), including siblings, parents, grandchildren, children and spouses.
- Any equipment or services purchased from an entity with which you or your spouse or your domestic partner own an interest, or an entity of which you are an employee.
- Leased equipment.
- Expenditures incurred or obligated before the grant agreement is signed by all parties. Any payments made by the grantee before a grant contract agreement is fully executed are at the applicant's risk and not eligible for reimbursement; payments made after a fully executed grant contract may be eligible for reimbursement **If any documentation submitted for reimbursement indicates that an invoice, sales order, purchase order, or purchase agreement of equipment, parts, or services took place prior to the effective date of the contract or the date the State obtains all required signatures, whichever is later, the purchase will be deemed ineligible for reimbursement.**
- Expenses paid for with cash.
- **Costs related to shipping, freight, delivery, mileage, or transportation of goods or services.**
- General use equipment, including trucks, tractors, skid steers, and utility vehicles that are not specific to soil health improvement.
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services.
- Crop or pastureland
- Tillage equipment and attachments, except equipment for strip tillage
- Site treatment equipment (example: brush mowers)
- Stand-alone fertilizer application equipment (ex: fertilizer carts)
- Mowers
- Utility trailers
- Haymaking equipment
- Manure spreaders that are not low disturbance
- Tile drainage materials & equipment
- Pesticide application equipment
- Other equipment that does not have soil health as its primary purpose
- Labor and other expenses for repairs to equipment or supplies
- Expenses for maintenance or service calls to maintain equipment or supplies
- Construction and renovation of buildings and structures including structures to store equipment
- Labor incurred to establish a soil health feature or practice
- Labor incurred to retrofit or install parts on equipment

- Tools, equipment rental, facilities, and fuel needed for assembly and retrofit of equipment covered by grant funds
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or legal costs
- Refinancing existing debt
- Late payment fees, finance charges, bad debts, legal costs, or contingency funds
- Owner and employees' wages and benefits
- Advertising, public relations, entertainment, and amusement costs
- Donated or volunteer (in-kind) services. While these may be furnished to an applicant by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor, the value of these services is not an eligible cost
- Donations and in-kind contributions, including property and services, made by the applicant (regardless of the recipient)
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to comply with federal, state, local, or Tribal laws and regulations
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)
- General operating and overhead costs, including but not limited to:
- Drone registration and license fees and licensing and registration costs for other purposes. Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists or political contributions
- Parking or traffic violations
- Construction or improvements outside of the state of Minnesota.
- Investments to farmland no longer meet the grant program's eligibility requirements as owned or leased property.
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal, state, or local government funding or other grants.
- Projects which have already received funding from another federal grant, or subaward programs may not receive funding for the same activities and expenses. Projects receiving funding from another source, grant appropriation, or other contribution may not receive funding for the same activities and expenses.
- Purchases from vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement.

You must be invoiced for and receive all project materials and services between the effective start date and end date listed on your grant contract agreement. Any expenses incurred outside of this timeframe are not eligible for reimbursement.

The purchases listed above are not an exhaustive list. Other purchases not explicitly listed here may be deemed ineligible by the staff, external reviewers or the Commissioner.

Matching funds

The Soil Health Financial Assistance Program is a reimbursement grant for up to 50% of the project cost, not to exceed \$45,000. You must supply documentation for the total cost of the project to receive the awarded reimbursement amount showing payment for the full cost of the project to receive the awarded reimbursement amount.

A match is your contribution to the project that will not be reimbursed.

Documentation showing payment for the full cost of the project is required for grantees to receive the awarded reimbursement amount. After you pay the project's full cost, you are eligible for reimbursement of 50% of the project's cost up to your maximum grant award. Your matching funds will be 50% of project costs that are not reimbursed.

Sources of the matching funds include cash, loans, other grants, or liquid capital assets dedicated to the project. State grant funds cannot be used as matching funds, but non-forgivable loans from the state may be used as a match, such as the [Ag BMP Loan Program](#). Non-cash, in-kind matches of goods and services are not allowable.

The match cannot be committed to any other grant and must be an eligible and an approved project expense during the grant term. Ineligible expenses listed in this RFP cannot be applied as matching contribution. Proof of the match will be required with each reimbursement request.

Equipment or infrastructure cost:	Reimbursement %	Amount you may request from the grant program:	You are responsible to pay the remaining cost:
\$3,000	50%	\$1,500	\$1,500
\$40,000	50%	\$20,000	\$20,000

In the budget section of your application, you must identify the source of the match as a contribution from the applicant. The match cannot be committed to any other grant and must be an eligible and approved project expense during the project period. Ineligible expenses listed in this RFP cannot be applied as matching contribution. Proof of the match will be required with reimbursement requests.

Application Review Policies and Process

Review process

Funding will be awarded through a competitive process. During the first phase of the review process, MDA staff and external reviewers from relevant sectors will evaluate all eligible applications based on the criteria and weight in the [Project Evaluation Profile](#).

Reviewers and staff will meet and discuss the proposals and then recommend projects for whole or partial funding to the Commissioner of Agriculture, who reviews the recommendations and makes the award decisions. Reviewers, staff, and the Commissioner may consider geographic distribution, soil management practices, impacted acres, services to prioritized populations, capacity to perform the work, and other information when evaluating applications when making their decision. The MDA reserves the right to offer partial awards based on an assessment of the proposal, the pool of applicants, funding availability, or overall objectives of the grant program.

The timeline for the review process is listed in the Timeline and Deadlines section.

Pre-award capacity assessment

The MDA is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants, in accordance with [MINN. STAT. 16B.981, Subd.2-5](#), [OGM Policy 08-02: Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#) and [OGM Policy 08-06: Pre-award Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees \(PDF\)](#).

All applicants' capacity to perform work related to the grant will be evaluated as part of their response to this request for proposals (RFP).

Applicants being considered for an award will be contacted by MDA staff to submit additional documents prior to being approved by MDA for an award including:

- Information about the performance on current and previous state grants
- Certification that neither you nor your entity has been suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or with the federal government. See the [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#) and [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#).
- Certification that neither you, your entities nor any key personnel, board members, officers, executives, employees, or agents, and any individual with authority to access, manage or use grant funds has been convicted of a criminal offense relating to a State grant agreement.
- If identified for an award as a farm operator leasing the acreage, verification that the landowner agrees to the soil health practices identified in the proposed workplan and that the lease agreement will extend to or beyond the end date of the grant period.
- If identified for an award as a farm/business entity (LLC), documentation that the business is in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Disclosure of conflicts of interests.

If the MDA determines that the applicant has substantial risks that inhibit its ability to perform the required duties under the grant contract agreement, then the MDA may either request more information for the purpose of satisfying the concerns, develop a risk mitigation plan to protect the interests of the state, or not award the grant.

Award notice

The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing.

Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98 Subd. 2-3](#) and [OGM Policy 08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to give impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties, including when grantees or applicants are an employee or spouse of an MDA employee.
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

An example of a conflict of interest would be a vendor writing an application (beyond providing budget details, bids, or quotes) for the applicant when the vendor stands to profit from the grant award.

In cases where a conflict of interest is in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan,

disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract agreement.

Privacy notice and data classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence. However, only completed applications will be considered for a grant; incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the [Minnesota Government Data Practices Act](#) as private or nonpublic, although some or all the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified not public by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited to MDA staff and contractors with a valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per [Minnesota's statute](#) on grants ([MINN. STAT. 13.599](#))

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in application responses (except trade secret information, see below) becomes public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will generally be public data after the evaluation process is completed.

Procedure for claiming protection of trade secrets:

Trade secret information is classified as not public data. In order to qualify as trade secret information, the data in question must be provided to the MDA by the affected person (i.e. the data must be about the applicant) and otherwise meet the legal definition found in [statute](#). In order for an applicant to assert trade secret protection for data submitted as part of this application: the applicant must: 1) clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that the applicant believes to be trade secret information; 2) describe what efforts the applicant takes to maintain the secrecy of the data; and 3) adequately explain how the data derive(s) independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons. Merely asserting trade secret protection does not, in and of itself, classify the data in question as not public; determining what data meet the definition of trade secret information is ultimately the legal responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data identified as trade secret information by an applicant will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data does not meet the definition of trade secret information, the data in question will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

All persons, businesses, and individuals applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must comply with applicable laws. Under the law titled [Right of Setoff, MINN. STAT. 270C.65, subd. 3](#)), a grantee consents to disclosure of its social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies, and state personnel

involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws which could result in action requiring a grantee to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

Requirements for Grant Recipients

Grant Contract Agreement

Before beginning work or obligating/incurred expenses on grant project(s), the applicant, who was offered an award, must formally enter a fully executed grant contract agreement with the MDA. The grant contract agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grant contract agreement templates are available for review on the [OGM Forms and FAQs webpage](#). The MDA reserves the right to adjust these templates.

Upon approval of an application, completion of the pre-award risk assessment, and before beginning work on the grant project(s) and incurring any grant expenses, the applicant must:

- Register as a vendor in SWIFT, the state's accounting system, or confirm that the information in SWIFT is still correct. The name used in the grant application must be the same name used to register in SWIFT and must remain the same throughout the grant period. Submit other required documentation within 15 days of award notification.
- Read and sign a grant contract agreement within 30 calendar days of being sent to the grantee. Failure to sign the contract within 30 calendar days may result in the award being rescinded.

You cannot begin work on grant activities – including pre-ordering or contracting or incurring any other obligation to pay grant expenses – until a fully executed grant contract agreement is in place and you have been notified by the State's Authorized Representative that work may start.

A fully executed grant contract agreement is one that has been signed by all parties and reached its start date, whichever is later. You must comply with the conditions and the grant contract agreement, and you will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the grantee duties and compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements including data privacy, budget compliance and reporting.

Some changes may become necessary during your project. Many of these changes require pre-approval from the MDA. Some may require an amendment to the grant contract agreement.

Grantees must agree in their contract agreement not to sell the equipment purchased with the Soil Health Financial Assistance Grant for a period of ten years beginning at the execution date of the grant agreement as required under the [Soil Health Financial Assistance Program statute](#).

Accountability and Reporting

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to monitor progress on state grants by requiring grantees to submit written progress reports at least annually until all grant funds have been expended and all the terms in the grant contract agreement have been met. A final report will also be required at the completion of the project and additional information about the long-term impact may also be collected for up to three years after the grant period.

The MDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements throughout the grant.

Grantees will be required to provide evidence of progress together with each request for reimbursement and may be requested to provide additional information about the long-term impact for up to three years after the grant period. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past-due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

Failure to regularly report, respond to surveys, and promptly respond to information requests may impact the grantee's ability to secure future funding from the MDA or other state agencies.

Information submitted in any report or survey will be classified as public data. If the grantee considers any information in the report to be trade secret, the grantee may request that the trade secret information be kept confidential and must specifically label that information. The MDA will notify the grantee if a public records request is made for the information claimed as protected by the grantee.

Monitoring and site visits

The MDA monitors grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required time frame, to collect data on outcomes, determine if financial procedures are followed accurately and appropriately, and/or verify purchases made with grant funds.

All grantees who purchase their equipment from a private seller will receive an in-person site visit and inspection. All other grantees will receive a monitoring visit at MDA's discretion.

Monitoring visits are typically done in-person at the project site but may also be done via phone or video conferencing and may include review and discussion of financial and program information (sometimes called "desk audits"). All grantees must provide expense receipts, invoices, and any other documents requested by the state.

No Sale for 10 years

Applicants receiving a grant award are prohibited from selling the equipment purchased with grant funds for a period of ten years, beginning at the execution date of the grant agreement as required under the [Soil Health Financial Assistance Program statute](#). Exceptions to this requirement may be made by the Commissioner for unforeseen circumstances, such as death or farm sale. MDA reserves the right to require verification that the equipment has not been sold throughout the ten-year period. Verification could include an attestation that the equipment has not been sold, a dated photo of the equipment, a site visit, and/or another method determined by the MDA.

Payments

Grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The MDA will review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date, and the latest grant progress report before approving payment.

When submitting expenditures for reimbursement you must include proof of payment and proof of purchase, you will be asked to sign an attestation certifying that the proof of payment and proof of purchase documents are true, complete, and accurate.

Requests must include two types of proof for each expense: proof of purchase (e.g., invoices, itemized receipts, etc.) and proof of payment (e.g., cleared checks, credit card statements, bank statements, etc.). Ineligible items and their cost must be clearly delineated in the proof of purchase. Additional details can be found in the SHFAP Reimbursement Guide, which will be shared at time of award.

Grant payments will not be made on grants with past-due progress reports or if required documentation related to the invoice or financial reconciliation is missing, unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

All requests for reimbursement must be submitted to the MDA no later than 30 calendar days after the grant end date.

The MDA will hold back the final 10% of each grant award until the grantee demonstrates completion of their project, including completion of reporting. Reporting documents can be submitted as soon as the equipment has been used for the soil health activities outlined in the grant application or up to 12 months after the contract start date, whichever comes first. The MDA may request that grantees who have not completed the soil health activities outlined in the grant may be requested to return any grant funds.

Grant payments may be used to fulfill federal and state tax liabilities or may be withheld until the grantee has paid any tax liabilities (MINN. STAT. 270C.65, Subd. 3 and other applicable laws).

Contract and bidding requirements

All grantees must follow the State's bidding requirements when buying supplies or services based on their entity type and the cost of the purchase.

Political subdivisions and municipalities

Grantees that are political subdivisions or municipalities must use these guidelines:

- A. Municipalities are required to comply with the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law ([MINN. STAT. 471.345](#)).
- B. The grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules, as applicable ([MINN. STAT. 177.41](#) through [MINN. STAT. 177.50](#)).
- C. Municipalities and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government (See [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#)) and [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#).
- D. The Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts.

Nongovernmental entities

Grantees that are nongovernmental entities, including businesses, nonprofits, and individuals, must use these guidelines:

- A. Any services and/or materials that are expected to cost \$100,000 or more must use a formal notice and bidding process.

- B. Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three verbal quotes or bids or be awarded to a targeted vendor.
- C. Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two verbal quotes or bids or be awarded to a targeted vendor.
- D. The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to ensure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:
 - 1) [Office of State Procurement- Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged, and Veteran-Owned Vendor \(TG/ED/VO\) List](#)
 - 2) [Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business \(MCUB\) Program Directory](#)
 - 3) [Central Certification \(CERT\) Directory](#)
- E. The grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing their actions and the actions of its employees (if applicable) for the selection, award, and administration of contracts.
- F. The grantee must maintain support documentation of the purchasing or bidding process used to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single source bid, if applicable.
- G. Notwithstanding the above, the MDA may waive bidding process requirements when:
 - 1) Vendors included in the response to a competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or
 - 2) It is determined there is only one reasonably able and available source for such materials or services and that the grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.

The grantee and any subrecipients/subcontractors must comply with prevailing wage rules, as applicable ([MINN. STAT. 177.41](#) through [MINN. STAT. 177.50](#)). The grantee and any subrecipients/subcontractors must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government. See [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#).

Grantee website and publicity

All grant projects must publicly credit the MDA and EPA funding in all public communications, presentations, and printed materials and include that information on the grantee's website. Additionally, grantees with a website must clearly post on their website the names and contact information for the grantee's leadership and the employee(s) or other person(s) who directly manages and oversees the grant contract agreement on behalf of the grantee (the authorized representative) ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 5 \(d\)](#)).

Grantee obligation to inform

Throughout the term of the grant agreement, the grantee has an ongoing responsibility to:

- Immediately notify the State if the grantee, its Authorized Representative, key personnel, board members, officers, executives, employees, agents, or any individual with authority to access, manage, or use grant

funds—is suspended or debarred from doing business with the State of Minnesota or the federal government; or is convicted of a criminal offense related to a State grant agreement.

- Obtain prior written approval from the State's Authorized Representative before making any changes to the approved budget or work plan incorporated into the Grant Contract Agreement.
- Provide notice to MDA of changes in landownership or other eligibility criteria.
- Secure pre-approval in writing from MDA includes switching vendors that are named in the grant contract and purchasing equipment or supplies that are not included in the approved budget.

Grantee evaluation

Prior to the closeout of the grant, the MDA will evaluate the performance of all grantees. The evaluation will include the purpose of the grant; the amount provided to the grantee; an appraisal of the grantee's timeliness, quality, and overall performance in meeting the terms and objectives of the grant; if the grant was terminated; and any concerns with the grantee's use of State funds. Evaluations of the grantee's performance for grant contract agreements greater than \$25,000 must be provided by the MDA to the Minnesota Department of Administration in accordance with MINN.STAT. 16B.98, subd. 12. Evaluations are considered public data MINN.STAT. 13.599.

Audits and record retention

The grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the commissioner of administration, the MDA, the state auditor, the attorney general, and the legislative auditor as appropriate ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 8](#)). This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant contract agreement end date, approval of all final reports, or the required period of time.

to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Grantees are responsible for the retention of documents and records relevant to their grants. Grantees should maintain a project file containing copies of all invoices, receipts, proofs of payment, reimbursement requests, important correspondence with the MDA, progress reports, and any other documents associated with the project. Upon request by state or federal agencies, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of the records saved in their project file.

Civil rights

The Minnesota Department of Human Rights enforces the state human rights law that prohibits discrimination in public services because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or public assistance status. For more information or to file a complaint, contact:

Griggs Midway Building
540 Fairview Ave North, Suite 201
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-539-1100 (local)
1-800-657-3704 (toll free)
info.MDHR@state.mn.us (email)
<https://mn.gov/mdhr/> (website)

Affirmative action and non-discrimination policies

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, familial status, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified ([MINN. STAT. 363A.02](#)). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship ([Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500](#)).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the [Minnesota Human Rights Act](#).

Grantee must not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex age or disability ([40 CRF Part 7](#)).

Voter registration requirement

The grantee will provide voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee ([MINN. STAT. 201.162](#)).

Grantee evaluation

Prior to the closeout of the grant, the MDA will evaluate the performance of all grantees. The evaluation will include the purpose of the grant; the amount provided to the grantee; information about the grantee's timeliness, quality, and overall performance in meeting the terms and objectives of the grant; if the grant was terminated; and any concerns with grantee's use of State funds. Evaluations of grantee performance for grant contract agreements greater than \$25,000 must be provided by the MDA to the Minnesota Department of Administration ([MINN.STAT. 16B.98, subd. 12](#)). Evaluations are considered public data ([MINN. STAT. 13.599](#)).

Right of Cancellation

This request for proposals (RFP) does not obligate the MDA to award a grant. The MDA reserves the right to cancel this request for proposals (RFP), if in the best interest of the program, agency, or the State of Minnesota. The State also reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this request for proposals (RFP). The State does not intend to award a grant contract agreement solely on the basis of any response made to this request for proposals (RFP) or pay for information solicited or obtained.

EPA Statement

This grant program is funded in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement 66.046 to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does the Environmental Protection Agency endorse trade names or recommend the use of commercial products mentioned in this document, as well as any images, video, text, or other content created by generative artificial intelligence tools, nor does any such content necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Soil Health Financial Assistance Program Background and Goals

The Soil Health Financial Assistance Program was established to advance soil health in Minnesota's agricultural industry ([MINN. STAT. 17.134](#)). The Soil Health Financial Assistance Program stands out among other financial assistance opportunities because it allows producers, groups of producers, Tribal Nations, and LGUs to be reimbursed for equipment purchases. The primary goal of the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program Grant is to encourage agricultural producers to implement soil health practices by offsetting the costs of obtaining the equipment necessary to successfully engage in these practices.

Project Evaluation Profile

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
Proposed equipment addresses goals of the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program Grant Applicant clearly articulates how the equipment they plan to buy will help start, improve, or expand soil health practices in Minnesota.	Yes/No
Grant request impacts a Highly Vulnerable Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA). Applicant will use the equipment in a highly vulnerable DWSMA and has provided verification by uploading FSA maps along with their application. (5 pts)	5
Diversity, equity, and inclusion Applicant is a beginning farmer (farming 10 years or fewer) or for LGUs and Tribal Nations, applicant prioritizes beginning farmers (10pts)	10
Applicant readiness, budget, economic outcomes Applicant: - Includes a budget that clearly details costs, including those not covered by the grant (5 pts) - Clearly explains the importance of this grant to purchasing the equipment (5 pts)	10
Conservation Planning and Multiple Benefits - Applicant's operation is actively certified through the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP), or for Tribal Nations and LGUs, organization assisting producers with whole farm conservation planning through the MAWQCP (25 pts) - Applicant's operation is assessed and working towards certification in the MAWQCP (20 pts)	25
Equipment is identified as having a high benefit to soil health. - The equipment being purchased will benefit soil health on the applicant's operation (15 pts) - The equipment being purchased will allow the applicant to incorporate a new or expand an existing soil health practice on their operation (15 pts) - Explanation of how equipment will be used relates to at least one of the five Principles of Soil Health: Keep the soil covered, minimize disturbance, keep living roots in the ground, diversify rotations, integrate livestock (15 pts)	45
Cost Efficiency Ratio <i>Up to 25 points are possible – grant request divided by the impacted acres. If a ratio falls on the threshold between two points, award the higher point value.</i> 75:1 or greater (5 pts) 25:1 – 75:1 (10 pts) 10:1 – 25:1 (15 pts) 5:1 – 10:1 (20 pts) 5:1 or less (25 pts)	25
Total	120

Application Questions

Applicant contact information

- Applicant first name
- Applicant last name
- Mailing address
- Mailing city
- State
- Zip code
- Applicant telephone
- Applicant email
- Minnesota county where applicant is located
- Minnesota counties where acreages for soil improvement is located

Applicant type

This application is being submitted by an:

- Individual
- Entity/Business
- Group
- Local Government Unit (LGU)
- Tribal Nation

Authorized representative

If awarded a grant, the person that will sign the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program Grant contract agreement for this organization is the Authorized Representative. This is often yourself or other leadership in your operation/organization.

- If awarded a grant, would you accept the grant as an individual, farm entity, LGU, or Tribal Nation?
 - Individual
 - Entity/Business
 - LGU
 - Tribal Nation
- If choosing farm entity, LGU or Tribal Nation, are you authorized to sign the contract agreement for your organization/entity? (Yes/No)
 - If no, please share the full name, telephone, and email for the authorized representative.
 - Authorized Representative's first name
 - Authorized Representative's last name
 - Telephone
 - Email

Who should the grant agreement be issued to?

If awarded a grant, in what name and address should MDA draft your grant agreement contract? This could be the individual named as the authorized representative, or it could be your entity/business name. The name used in the grant application and named as the grantee in the grant contract must be the same name used to register in SWIFT, the state's accounting system.

Please note that the name and address on the grant contract must match the name and address under which you make your equipment purchases, so please think ahead. For example, if you will purchase your equipment under the "Smith Farms LLC," you should answer "Smith Farms LLC" for this question.

Provide the address of the operation headquarters for each operation involved in the proposal.

- Name
- Address
- County

Attestations and Verifications

Attestation for Eligibility

Confirm that the following statements apply to you and your organization. You must respond "Yes" to all the statements or add further explanation for your response to be eligible for this grant. If your project is recommended for a grant award, you will need to sign a certification for some of these statements.

- Are you a current Minnesota resident or organization entity authorized to farm in Minnesota? (Yes/No)
- For individuals: Are you the principal operator or do you have authority to apply on behalf of the organization/group? (Yes/No)
- For Entities/Businesses, LGUs and Tribal Nations: I warrant that I have the authority to apply to this grant opportunity on behalf of my organization, and no other application is being submitted from this organization. (Yes/No)
- Are you or your spouse employees of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture? (Yes/No)
- Office of Grants Management (OGM) Policy 08-04: *Grant Contract Agreements and Grant Award Notifications* requires that agencies must not award a grant to a vendor or grantee that has been suspended or debarred from doing business with the State of Minnesota or with the federal government. By answering "yes," I warrant that neither I or my organization have been suspended or debarred from doing business with the State of Minnesota or with the federal government. (Yes/No)
- I understand that State of Minnesota requires that its agencies cannot award a grant to a vendor or grantee that has been convicted of a criminal offense relating to a State grant agreement. By answering "yes," I warrant that applicant's key personnel, board members, officers, executives, employees, agents, or any individual with authority to access, manage, or use grant funds are not convicted of a criminal offense related to a State grant agreement. (True or False) Minn. Stat. 16B.991 Subd. 1
- **The MDA is unable to reimburse for equipment purchases from a family member, including siblings, parents, grandchildren, and spouses.** Family member is defined as found in Internal Revenue Code, Section 267(c)(4). (Yes/No) Do you acknowledge this statement? (NA for LGU or Tribal Nations)

- **The MDA is unable to reimburse for any work that is performed prior to the grant agreement effective date or the date the State obtains all required signatures, whichever is later.** Do you acknowledge this statement? (Yes/No)
- **I attest and acknowledge that any documentation submitted for reimbursement which indicates that an invoice, sales order, purchase order, or purchase agreement of equipment, parts, or services took place prior to the effective date of the contract or the date the State obtains all required signatures, whichever is later, will be denied** (Yes/No)
- I attest and understand that all information supplied in this application is true, correct, and reliable to the best of my knowledge. (Yes/No) I attest and understand that the submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject me and my organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available by law. (Yes/No)
- I attest and understand that the supporting documentation for the claims and assertions made within this application is available to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for its review. (Yes/No)
- I attest and understand that receiving public funds as a consequence of false representations constitutes an act of fraud. (Yes or No)
- I acknowledge and understand that if I purchase an agricultural drone and apply restricted use pesticides (RUPs), I am responsible for meeting all applicable Minnesota pesticide certification and licensing requirements. (Yes/No)
- I attest to the best of my knowledge that no other application is being submitted by others for the same acreage identified in this proposal (Yes/No)
 - If you respond no, please add additional information about other applications.
- I attest neither the applicant nor its employees, agents, or family members have received a Soil Health Financial Assistance grant from MDA including spouses, grown children/in laws sharing in the operation or same acreage identified in this proposal. (Yes/No)
- I attest the items proposed in this grant application are not being reimbursed by any other state or federal award (Yes/No)
 - If you respond no, please list other sources of funding anticipated to pay for the items included in this grant application.
- I attest I have not received or applied for additional grant programs to pay for the goods and services in this grant application. (Yes/No)

Good Standing

Confirm that the following statements. You must respond “True” to all the statements to be eligible to apply for this grant. If your project is recommended for a grant award, you may need to sign a certification for some of these statements.

All applicants

- The applicant does not owe the State of Minnesota any back taxes and has not defaulted on any State of Minnesota backed financing in the last seven years. (True or False)
- The applicant is compliant with current state and federal regulations. (True or False)

Farm entities/businesses

- The farm entity registered and in good standing with the Minnesota of the Secretary of State (SOS) or is not required to maintain a registration with the SOS. You can verify that you are registered and in good standing by searching for your entity’s name on the [SOS website](#).) (True or False)

Farm entities (Individual LLCs) Local Unit of Government, Tribal government

- The applicant's current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have not been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. A principal is defined as a public official, a board member, or staff (paid or volunteer) with the authority to access funds provided by this grant opportunity or to determine how those funds are used. (True or False)

State Employees

Attest to the following statements. If your project is recommended to receive a grant award, you may need to disclose additional information.

Individuals and Farm Entities (Individual LLCs)

- Are you, your spouse or domestic partner employees of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture or a farm or business principally owned by one of them? (Yes or No)
- Is the applicant a State of Minnesota employee, spouse or domestic partner of a State of Minnesota employee, or a farm entity or business principally owned by one of them? (Yes or No)
 - If yes, list their name(s) and role(s) in the applicant's organization.

Farm entities (Individual LLCs) Local Unit of Government, Tribal government

- Does the applicant's leadership, board of directors, or governing body include any Minnesota Department of Agriculture employee or their spouses/domestic partners? (Yes or No)
 - If yes, list their name(s) and role(s) in the applicant's organization.

Project Summary

As you answer the following questions, please keep the Five Principles of Soil Health in mind:

- Keep the soil covered
- Minimize disturbance
- Keep living roots in the ground
- Diversify rotations
- Integrate livestock

Please briefly describe your farming operation. (200 characters, including spaces). (NA for LGUs).

What equipment do you plan to buy? Please review the eligible and ineligible equipment descriptions on pages 6-8 of the Request for Proposals to be sure the equipment you are applying for is not ineligible. *(500 characters, including spaces)*

What specific soil health practices will this new equipment allow you to implement? For example, seeding cover crops, no-till planting, low-disturbance manure application, etc. *(500 characters, including spaces)*

Please describe why this new equipment will improve soil health on your operation. OR for Tribal Nations and LGUs, please describe why this new equipment will improve soil health in your area. *(1,500 characters, including spaces)*

Will this be different from your current management? If so, please explain what you will change, improve, or do differently compared to your current system. *(1,500 characters, including spaces)*

Readiness, budget, and economic outcomes

Current, prior and pending grants

- Have you or your farm previously received any grants from the MDA? (Yes/No)
 - If yes, list your previous awards including grant program name, award amount, and date.
- Have you or your farm been awarded a grant from the other Minnesota state agencies? (Yes/No)
 - If yes, list your previous awards including grant program name, award amount, and date.
- Do you have a current grant or pending grant(s) with MDA, the state of Minnesota or from any source for a similar purpose? (Yes/No)
 - If yes, briefly describe any pending or awarded grant applications for this purpose including funding source, grant purpose, date, and amount awarded (where applicable).

Grant request

- Total cost (*number only*)
- Total grant request (The grant reimburses for up to 50% of the first \$90,000.) Maximum award \$45,000, minimum award \$500 (*number only*)

Budget

Create a budget using the example format below. Do not attach bid sheets or quotes from vendors in lieu of providing a budget in this format. You may also upload a budget as an Excel or Word file. See the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program RFP for examples of eligible and ineligible expenses.

Online Application Example:

Item, Quantity, Cost Per Unit, Total Estimate, Source of Estimate

No till planter – new, 1, \$73,000, \$73,000, ABC Implement Dealer

Excel or Word file Example:

Item	Quantity	Cost Per Unit	Total Estimate	Source of Estimate
No till planter – new	1	\$73,000	\$73,000	ABC Implement Dealer

Budget narrative

(1,000 characters, including spaces)

Justify your budget and explain how you plan to pay for your equipment.

- Explain how you plan to pay for your project (financing, other grants, private investment, personal investment, or organization funds, etc.) and explain the importance of this grant to purchasing your equipment.

Equipment or cost:	Reimbursement %	Amount you may request from the grant program:	You are responsible to pay the remaining cost:
\$10,000	50%	\$5,000	\$5,000
\$15,000	50%	\$7,500	\$7,500

When do you expect to purchase your equipment? *(150 characters, including spaces)*

Impacted Acres

On how many acres annually will the equipment purchased or retrofitted with funds from this grant be used?
(Number only)

No equipment purchases before contract execution.

I understand that any equipment pre-ordered, invoices or purchased prior to my contract execution date (after funding notifications are made) will be ineligible for reimbursement under the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program. (Yes/No)

Land Ownership (required documentation)

- Do you own all or some of the land that will be benefit by this grant (soil health improvement)?
 - If yes, please upload a copy of your deed or USDA Farm Service Agency field records.
- Do you lease all or some of the land that will be benefited by this grant (soil health improvement)?
 - If yes, please upload a copy of the lease agreement(s) or USDA Farm Service Agency field records.

Lease agreements must:

- be in writing
- be signed and dated by both parties
- be prepared as a document that has numbered pages (handwritten documents will not be accepted).
- signed by persons with the legal authority to do so.
- Lease agreements must also:
 - be in effect for the full period of the grant (typically 12 months). If the lease agreement must be updated during the grant period, updates may be requested by MDA to ensure the equipment will be used throughout the grant period.

Note: Documents can be uploaded in PDF, Word, or PNG formats.

Beginning Farmer Status

Are you a beginning farmer (farming 10 years or fewer)? OR for LGU and Tribal Nations, does your entity/organization/soil health initiative prioritize beginning farmers? (Yes/No)

If yes, please explain. *(250 characters, including spaces)*

Conservation Plans & Multiple Benefits

MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program Participation

Is your operation actively certified or assessed and working towards certification with the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP)? OR for LGUs, will the equipment further whole farm conservation planning and implementation through MAWQCP? (Yes/No)

MN Ag Water Quality Certification Program Status

If yes, please explain. Indicate your MAWQCP certification status (certified, applied and assessed, or applied and not assessed yet). If you are working towards MAWQCP certification but have not been certified yet, please provide the date you applied and the name of the certifier you are working with. If you are neither certified nor have applied for certification, type "NA." (500 characters, including spaces)

Highly Vulnerable Drinking Water Supply Management Area

Will this equipment be used in a highly vulnerable Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA)? If you select "yes" you must upload proof below. Please provide FSA maps showing the parcels you farm that are located within a highly vulnerable DWSMA. You can locate highly vulnerable DWSMAs using the Minnesota Department of Health's online [Source Water Protection Web Map](#). (Yes/No)

Proof for highly vulnerable DWSMA points

You **must** upload FSA maps or other proof that you farm parcels located in a highly vulnerable DWSMA to claim points if you answered "yes" above. File Size Limit: 4 MB

(Optional) Supporting Documentation

You may attach up to three letters of support from someone other than yourself (e.g., Lender, Farm Business Management Instructor, Extension Educator, Consultant, Partners in a Soil Health initiative, Ag Retailer, etc.) Each letter can be no longer than two pages in length. Examples of supporting documentation may include:

- Letters of commitment written by financial institutions or other organizations that will be providing funding through loans or credit.
- Letters from your financial institutions indicating you have sufficient cash reserves to fund this project.
- Letters or documents from your agronomist or conservationist.