

## **CDFA Program Updates for RMAC – January 5, 2024**

### **HEALTHY SOILS PROGRAM (HSP)**

Background: HSP has two components: the HSP Incentives and the HSP Demonstrations. The incentives project type provides financial assistance for the implementation of conservation management that improves soil health, sequester carbon, and reduce GHG emissions. The HSP demonstration project type funds on-farm demonstration projects that collect data and showcase conservation management practices, creating a platform for the adoption of these practices. HSP funds conservation management practices occurring on crop land, orchard or vineyard and grazing land.

Update: Since 2016, CDFA has invested \$125.5 million into the HSP, funding 1,500 projects that span 130,000 acres across the state. For the 2021 solicitation awarded project, most projects were for orchard and vineyard agricultural systems. In Spring 2023, CDFA began piloting the distribution of HSP incentives via a block grant structure, as opposed to direct-to-producer grants; however, the program set aside approximately \$11 million through direct-to-producer HSP Incentive Grants. The solicitation is anticipated to open January 22, 2024. Applications are not currently being accepted for HSP Demonstration Grants, however [2023 awarded projects](#) can be viewed on the website.

Relationship to Range Management: There are numerous practices, particularly those for grass lands, that apply to range management. Some examples of these would be prescribed grazing, range planting, riparian forest buffer, etc. (See [2024 HSP Incentives RGA](#) for more information)

### **ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (AMMP)**

Background: AMMP provides financial assistance for the implementation of non-digester manure management practices. GHG emissions reduction is the primary goal of AMMP, however project co-benefits include the reduction of toxic air pollutant emissions, improved soil health, and odor reduction. Projects must be located on a commercial California dairy or livestock operation to be eligible for funding. Project categories that are supported by the program are pasture-based management, alternative manure treatment and storage, solid separation, conversion from a flush to scrape manure collection system in conjunction with treatment and/or storage. (See 2023 AMMP RGA for more information) Funded practices so far have been solid separation (63%), compost bedded pack barn (26%) and flush-to-scrape (11%). Most of the projects are located within the Central Valley.

Update: As of September 18, 2023, 76 percent of AMMP's 139 incentive projects have been completed. CDFA just completed its first round of solicitation for the program. The 2023 solicitation awarded \$21.41 million in grant funding to 31 projects. A second round of solicitations will take place in 2024, the grant term for this solicitation is expected to begin in March 2024. Both 2023 and 2024 solicitations are funded using \$48 million from the Budget Act of 2022 (Livestock Methane Reduction) and \$20 million from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (AB 179). The program is not currently accepting applications.

Relationship to Range Management: Practices funded through AMMP can be implemented on grazed lands.

### **BIOLOGICAL CONTROL PROGRAM/NOXIOUS WEEDS GRANT PROGRAM (NWGP)**

Background: CDFA has an Integrated Pest Control Branch housed within its Plant Health Division. Within this branch, the Biological Control Program helps minimize the economic and environmental impact of

noxious invasive weeds and exotic insect pests by facilitating the importation and establishment of their co-evolved natural enemies. The program operates statewide.

NWPG awards competitive grant funding to California counties for the implementation of an integrated weed management plan. Applicants must be a County Agricultural Commissioner. NWGP supports the implementation of weed control and weed mapping projects in California that result in permanent, annual, and measurable work product (map or plan) and/or weed reductions. NWGP funds cannot be used for pre-commercial or new technology development.

Update:

Biological control program—There are currently several on-going projects targeting 18 invasive pests. CDFA's Plant Health Division maintains an updated list of active projects for pests and weeds on [its website](#).

NWGP—During the 2023 solicitation, NWGP provided \$2 million in grant funding for 49 projects. (See [2023 awarded counties](#) for more information) The program is not currently accepting applications. As of January 2, 2024, CDFA has hired Trevor Fox as a Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist. Trevor will be handling the Weed Management Area and Noxious Weed Grant activities going forward.

Relationship to Range Management: Noxious weed management on rangelands is an important part of NWGP priorities. Program goals include (but are not limited to) increasing the profitability of cropland and rangeland, reducing the fire hazard and fire control costs in the state, protecting the biodiversity of native ecosystems, and increasing water supply and flow.

#### **DAIRY DIGESTER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (DDRDP)**

Background: DDRDP provides financial assistance to California dairy operations and digester developers for the implementation of anaerobic dairy digesters that result in long-term GHG emissions. DDRDP co-benefits include water quality protection through double-lined ponds, and above-ground or below-ground digester vessels.

Update: Since 2015, CDFA has helped fund 131 digester projects, awarding more than \$200 million in grants and generating more than \$430 million in matching funds. 2023 DDRDP solicitation is now closed, applications are under review and awards have not been announced.

Relationship to Range Management: DDRDP is a program designed for dairy producers to install dairy digesters on their dairy operations. DDRDP does not address rangeland management practices.

#### **STATE WATER EFFICIENCY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (SWEEP)**

Background: SWEEP provides financial assistance to farmers to implement irrigation systems that reduce greenhouse gases and save water on California agricultural operations. SWEEP focuses primarily on technological upgrades to irrigation systems and creation of new irrigation systems. Eligible projects include soil moisture monitoring, drip systems, switching to low pressure irrigation systems, pump retrofits, variable frequency drivers, and installation of renewable energy to reduce on-farm water use and energy. Most projects funded in 2021 solicitation are in the central valley.

Update: As of May 2022, SWEEP has awarded over \$123 million in grants, funding 1,111 water efficiency projects covering 168,000 acres. SWEEP 2023 solicitation is currently paused due to budget uncertainties. Updates on the status of SWEEP will be posted to the [program website](#) as well as available through the email subscription list.

Relationship to Range Management: There is no direct connection to rangelands. Projects must occur on agricultural operations defined as a row, vineyard field and tree crops, commercial nurseries, nursery stock production, and greenhouse operations producing food crops or flowers as defined in Food and Agricultural Code section 77911. California farmers, ranchers, and California Native American Tribes are eligible to apply.

### **MILK AND MEAT SAFETY PROGRAM**

Background: The Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch (MDFS) conducts regulatory food safety activities at all sectors of the dairy industry from farm to table, including inspections of dairy farms, bulk milk pickup tankers, milk processing plants, industry milk testing laboratories and manufacturers of single service dairy containers. MDFS also collects samples of milk, milk products, products resembling milk products and water supplies for laboratory testing to ensure compliance with bacterial and compositional requirements, responds to consumer complaints and food safety incidents, and initiates impounds and product recalls to protect public health as warranted. In addition, sanitation ratings by MDFS personnel who have been trained and evaluated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) certify milk supplies and milk plants for federal approval to ship Grade-A dairy products in interstate commerce.

Update: No relevant updates.

Relationship to Range Management: The Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch does not have any direct engagement with rangeland management issues. There are some organic dairy farm operations in the state that utilize pasture as part of their overall feeding systems, but management of those resources is outside of our specific program's purview.

### **ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY – LIVESTOCK PROGRAM**

The Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division is currently responding to an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Response to this outbreak requires full attention from the AHFSS team. CDFA will provide RMAC with programmatic updates on the Livestock Program when HPAI response slows.