

\$3.4 Million Will Go to Farmers and Ranchers in the Central Sierra to Improve Soil Health

The Placer, Amador, and El Dorado & Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts are administering \$4,000,000 in grant funding from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to fund a Healthy Soils Program for agricultural producers in the Central Sierra. This initiative aims to increase the implementation of conservation management practices that improve soil health, sequester carbon, and reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases. This funding will enable free technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers operating within Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Alpine counties.

This program prioritizes small-scale producers and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, but agriculture producers of varying sizes and backgrounds are welcome to apply. The foundation of the Central Sierra's agricultural community consists of small-scale producers and family farms, 16% of which are Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs). An estimated 50 on-farm projects will be chosen. To ensure more equitable distribution, the Central Sierra Healthy Soils Program has committed to dedicating at least 25% of the funding to support SDFRs, for which multilanguage assistance and services will be provided when necessary. Furthermore, the program's commitment extends to ensuring that each of the eight counties within the service area receives at least one awarded project. After meeting these criteria, further projects will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Examples of conservation practices include, cover cropping, compost application, rangeland planting, pollinator hedgerow installation, mulching, reduced/ no tillage, and more.

Visit www.centralsierrahsp.com to learn more about this program and to submit an interest form to receive technical assistance.