

## Office of Sustainability Climate Action and Resilience 2024 Healthy Soils Initiative Grant Program Overview

*Use this form as a reference before inputting the information on Wufoo. Remember to also attach your project budget when submitting your application through Wufoo.*

### **Overview & Goals**

The Healthy Soils Initiative is a collaborative, multi-departmental grant program offered by Boulder County's Parks and Open Space Agricultural Division and the Office of Sustainability, Climate Action, and Resilience. Funding available for 2024 totals \$1,000,000. The target audience is agricultural producers who farm or ranch on privately owned land or leased BCPOS agricultural property. The Boulder County Commissioners and county staff believe the power of partnership and consistency across departments will elevate the impact and reach of this new program. This focused and scaled approach to soil health incentivization is a key step towards systems-level change within Boulder County's agricultural lands. The outcomes of this grant program will be a more climate-resilient, income-equitable, productive, and localized food system. A smaller version of the existing [Sustainable Food and Agriculture Fund](#) will still be available in 2024 focused on education, market infrastructure, processing, and frontline farm workers.

This funding opportunity will be available for use in 5 categories of soil health based on the [USDA's NRCS principles to improve soil health](#):

1. Increasing soil surface cover
2. Increasing plant diversity
3. Increasing livestock integration
4. Minimizing soil disturbance
5. Keeping a live root in the ground

To help producers identify conservation practices with the greatest potential for positive soil health impacts and to connect them with technical resources to support implementation, applicants are recommended to complete the Colorado STAR field evaluation form, which can be made available by contacting the Boulder Valley and Longmont Conservation Districts at [bldrvalleyandlongmontcds@gmail.com](mailto:bldrvalleyandlongmontcds@gmail.com). [Saving. Tomorrow's. Agricultural. Resources.](#) is a fast, free, and simple tool to evaluate conservation practices at a field scale. STAR is available for annual row crops, specialty row crops, root and tuber crops, alfalfa hay, non-alfalfa hay, and orchards and vineyards.

### **Funding**

There will be a total of \$500,000 available:

- Eligible projects must be between \$40,000 and \$100,000 in total budget.

### **Award Criteria**

Funding will be awarded based on the following criteria.

- Enrollment in the Colorado STAR program
- Clearly stated goals and objectives
- Feasibility of execution
- Scalability of practice
- Impacts on historically underserved producers.

- Agricultural innovation
- Located in Boulder County

Optional/Bonus Points:

- Enrollment in Farm Service Agency, and certification of highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation compliance
- Buyer engagement
- Willingness to partner with Zero Foodprint for additional funds

**Ineligible Uses of Funds**

Funds may **not** be used for the following purposes:

- Repayment of existing debt, or pre-existing tax liens or obligations
- Payment of organizational overhead exceeding 15% of proposed project budget
- Legal fees
- Loan or bank fees
- Subsidization of existing contracts
- Funds for start-up business
- Labor for existing programs
- Travel

**Application Deadline**

**APPLICATION(S) MUST BE RECEIVED BY 11:59 P.M. MST on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Any application received after the deadline will not be considered.**

All submissions must be placed through the Healthy Soils Initiative Website via Boulder County.

**General Conditions**

All materials submitted will become the property of Boulder County and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds and any information submitted or generated is subject to public disclosure requirements.

The County reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the application, to accept or reject any or all applications received, to grant full or partial funding of any request, and/or to cancel all or part of this solicitation at any time prior to awarding funds. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis, and no requests will be considered outside the standardized application and review process. There is *no appeals process* for applications not accepted for funding.

**Funding Awards**

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review process. For successful applicants, funds will be available for expenditure only after a funding agreement between Boulder County and the applicant is signed and executed. Funds must be expended during the grant period of 12 months Boulder County will not be liable for any project costs incurred prior to the legal execution of the funding agreement, unless mutually agreed upon in writing. Unused funds are not available for other uses.

Boulder County reserves the right to revoke any funding award for which a funding agreement is not executed, due to delays on the part of the applicant, within two (2) months of the award. **Funded programs/projects must be initiated within three (3) months of execution of the agreement, or funds may be withdrawn, unless specific written approval is granted for delays due to extenuating circumstances.**

**Reports, Monitoring, and Payment Schedule**

Boulder County reserves the right to monitor funded projects and to receive timely and pertinent information on status and progress. A schedule for report submittals or other necessary documentation will be established in consultation with Boulder County staff. Failure to submit reports shall invalidate the applicant for further funding requests for three years and may result in fund withdrawal.

**NOTE: Funds will be reimbursed based on proper documentation of receipts and invoices billed specifically to the individual or organization that is listed within the signed funding agreement. Typically, reimbursement checks take 4-6 weeks to arrive to the grantee.** Funds must be used in accordance with the final budget upon which the application was based. All publicity or promotional materials concerning the project must recognize boulder county funding including news releases, feature stories, public service announcements, brochures and product literature produced during the term of this Agreement.

**\*\*Please note\*\*** the County reserves the right to fund all or a portion of each request. All funds awarded must be spent in calendar year 2024.

**Office of Sustainability Climate Action and Resilience**  
**2024 Healthy Soils Initiative Grant Application**

<b>Applicant Name:</b>
<b>Full Business Address:</b>
<b>Number of acres this applies to:</b>
<b>Type of land (irrigated/dryland):</b>
<b>Soil Health Principles you are trying to address (check all that apply):</b>

- Minimizing soil disturbance
- Increasing plant diversity
- Soil surface cover
- Continual living plants
- Livestock integration

**Summarize your project in one sentence:**

**In 250 words or less, please describe what you would like to accomplish and how you believe this funding will help you achieve success:**

**Please check the box(es) on the barriers you hope to overcome with these funds:**

- Economic
- Water & irrigation
- Education & experience
- Trying new practices
- Infrastructure
- Pest Pressure

**Please describe in 250 words any impacts from your project that would benefit people fitting the [USDA's definition of historically underserved](#) producers:**

Optional: [Please complete third party InClimate verification](#) to assess if you meet 50% average medium income (AMI). To complete your AMI Verification, follow the link, create an account, and complete the form.

If completed and you meet 50% of county AMI, points will be added toward your application evaluation score. All information collected by InClimate will be protected and private. The county will only be provided with information that says whether or not applicants qualified.

**Funding amount requested:**

**Please provide a line-item description of what your budget will be spent on:**