



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Kristie Garcia
Director of Public Affairs, New Mexico Department of Agriculture
kr Garcia@nmda.nmsu.edu
Office: 575-646-2804
Cell: 575-339-5011

Feb. 1, 2023

**NMDA accepting Healthy Soil Program grant applications from
Individual Applicants beginning Feb. 17**
Webinar to assist applicants set for Feb. 28

[Haga clic aquí para la versión en español.](#)

LAS CRUCES, N.M. – The New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) is accepting grant applications – specifically from Individual Applicants – for its Healthy Soil Program from Friday, Feb. 17 until Friday, April 21.

Potential Healthy Soil Program grant applicants include Individual Applicants and Eligible Entities. This grant application period is open only to Individual Applicants, which include individuals, businesses and nonprofits engaged in farming, ranching or other forms of land management.

Grant funding may be used for on-the-ground projects in New Mexico that focus on one or more of the five soil health principles: keeping the soil covered; minimizing soil disturbance on cropland; maximizing biodiversity; maintaining a living root; and integrating animals into land management.

Individual Applicants must have completed conservation planning to apply for a Healthy Soil Program grant. NMDA advises Individual Applicants to contact their local service center of the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service to initiate the conservation planning process.

NMDA strongly recommends that Individual Applicants make themselves known as soon as possible to their soil and water conservation districts (SWCD) or pueblo, tribe or nation that will serve as their project sponsor.

“Conservation planning and project sponsorship are essential to the individuals, businesses and nonprofits applying for Healthy Soil Program grants,” said New Mexico Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte. “Conservation planning reveals to land managers what exactly is occurring on their land related to soil health, and project sponsorship from an

SWCD or tribal government ensures the grantee has support while they implement their project.”

NMDA will host a webinar on Tuesday, Feb. 28 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. to demonstrate how Individual Applicants should complete the online application for a Healthy Soil Program grant. Registration is required to attend this webinar. Related information is available on the [NMDA website](#).

Applications are due by 12 p.m. (noon) on Friday, April 21. Applications must be completed and submitted online. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

Visit the [NMDA YouTube channel to watch a video about how the NMDA Healthy Soil Program helped an Individual Applicant](#) with a farm in eastern New Mexico.

The grant application period for Eligible Entities will open April 11. Eligible Entities are defined in the 2019 Healthy Soil Act as “local governmental [entities] with proven land management capacity to support healthy soil” and include pueblos, tribes, and nations; acequias; land grants; soil and water conservation districts; and New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service. NMDA will also accept grant applications from other local governmental entities that manage land.

The Healthy Soil Program was created in the 2019 Healthy Soil Act. The act’s purpose is to promote and support farming and ranching systems and other forms of land management that increase soil organic matter, aggregate stability, microbiology and water retention to improve the state’s soil health, yield and profitability.

Visit the [NMDA Healthy Soil Program web page](#) for more information, to subscribe to program updates and to prepare to apply for a grant.

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Please bookmark the new NMDA website: NMDeptAg.nmsu.edu

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @NMDeptAg

YouTube: NMDeptAg

LinkedIn: New Mexico Department of Agriculture



CUTLINE: Carlsbad farmer Lucas Middleton is a current Healthy Soil Program grantee. His project involves planting cover crops to break up compacted soil, as well as to integrate organic matter, in his pecan orchard. The New Mexico Department of Agriculture is accepting grant applications – specifically from Individual Applicants – for its Healthy Soil Program from Friday, Feb. 17 until Friday, April 21. (Photo courtesy of Lucas Middleton)



CUTLINE: Railyard Park Conservancy in Santa Fe is a current Healthy Soil Program grantee. The nonprofit is utilizing the grant to remove weeds and cover the soil's surface with organic matter – all by way of goats grazing. The New Mexico Department of Agriculture is accepting grant applications – specifically from Individual Applicants – for its Healthy Soil Program from Friday, Feb. 17 until Friday, April 21. (Photo courtesy of Railyard Park Conservancy)



CUTLINE: Regeneration Farm & Toots' Shady Grove Orchard in Albuquerque is a current Healthy Soil Program grantee. The multi-faceted project involves covering soil with mulch and living mulch, as seen here. The New Mexico Department of Agriculture

is accepting grant applications – specifically from Individual Applicants – for its Healthy Soil Program from Friday, Feb. 17 until Friday, April 21. (Photo courtesy of Regeneration Farm & Toots' Shady Grove Orchard)