



Washington State Organic and Sustainable Farming Fund

Overview

Tilth Alliance is accepting applications from farmers who seek financial assistance in support of projects that improve the economic viability, social impact, environmental sustainability and overall resiliency of their farm business. The goal of this grant program is to support organic and regenerative agricultural practices as a means to improve soil health, increase biodiversity, conserve water, sequester carbon, reduce GHG emissions and mitigate climate change; projects that further these objectives will be considered for an award.

Statistics The following table provides a snapshot of WSOSFF grants awarded since the program originated in 2015.

Year	Number of Applicants	Number of Projects Awarded	Percent of Projects Awarded	Total Ask	Total Awarded	# Underserved	% Underserved	# Certified Organic or transitioning	# Practicing Organic	Acreage in production Largest	Acreage in production Smallest	Acreage in production Average	Acreage in production Median
2015	38	33	87%		\$265,833								
2016	57	46	81%	\$490,245	\$503,195								
2017	58	27	47%	\$508,211	\$163,144								
2018	90	37	41%	\$1,297,323	\$405,511			37	52	2600	0.25	46	4.25
2019	101	38	38%	\$1,246,743	\$350,000			42	56	530	0.125	28	5
2020	79	42	53%	\$910,564	\$399,929			28	51	14093	0.25	200	5
2021	93	35	38%	\$777,725	\$251,763			32	14	8000	0.25	168	5.25
2022	62	34	55%	\$505,753	\$249,873			24	10	640	0.5	33	8.5
2023	125	62	50%	\$1,049,723	\$501,344	107	86%	36	16	1100	0.5	31	5
2024	116	67	58%	\$ 955,413	\$550,196	98	84%	48	67	268	0.18	15	4
Totals	819	421	51%	\$7,741,700	\$3,640,788								

Map of Projects (through 2024):

[Washington State Organic & Sustainable Farming Fund - Tilth Alliance](#) (Once there, scroll to bottom of page)

Funding Levels

Individual Farm Business Projects: grant requests can be made up to \$10,000.

Collaborative Projects*:

Two farm businesses working together on a shared project that will benefit both businesses can request up to \$15,000. Collaborative projects that will benefit three or more farm businesses can request up to \$20,000. Only one application is required but all participating farms must include their information

*Please refer to question 12, "What are Collaborative Projects" in the FAQ for more information and guidelines.

Basic Farm Establishment Grant: Farmers establishing a farm business in a new location can request up to \$5,000 in grant funds to procure basic supplies*.

*Please refer to question 13, "What is a Basic Farm Establishment Grant" in the FAQ for more information and guidelines.

Note that an individual farm business is not eligible to receive more than \$20,000 over a five-year period.



Funding Terms

- Proposals should have objectives that are realistically achievable in a 12-month period (April-March). The total granted amount must be spent by April 30th of the year the grant is awarded.
- Budget should be well-justified and explain project expenses in detail. Matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project (if any) must be clearly listed.
- Multi-year projects or those exceeding the maximum allowed request will not be funded. We recognize the importance of multi-year projects but cannot guarantee funding for projects beyond a single year.
- The amount granted (whether in part or in full) will depend on the size of the applicant pool and available funding.

Eligibility

This grant program is open to all Washington State farmers who:

- ✓ Currently employ or are adopting practices that follow regenerative, sustainable, and/or organic principles (this includes conventional farms that are transitioning into organic, sustainable, or regenerative production).
- ✓ Have at least two years of farming experience.
- ✓ Are seeking to implement, sustain, improve and/or expand upon their sustainable, organic or regenerative practices.

-Non-profit farms with the mission of providing free food to low-income families or communities are eligible.

-Non-profit farms with produce sales greater than \$10,000 per year are *not eligible*.

-Previous grantees are eligible to apply for another grant but *priority will be given to new applicants*.

Funding Priorities

- Projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sequester carbon, reduce tillage, increase the climate resilience of the farm, improve on-farm soil health, preserve and/or create wildlife habitat, protect and preserve water quality, increase biodiversity, reduce off-farm inputs and/or result in environmentally safe waste management practices.
- Projects that involve resource sharing (i.e. Will more than one farm benefit from the project? Can the knowledge, and resources acquired through the grant be shared with others?)
- Conventional farmers who want to transition to organic, sustainable, or regenerative practices, whether certified or not.
- Projects led by or that emphasize working with women, BIPOC, veterans, immigrants, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.



Funded Topics

Ideal projects will address at least one of the bulleted topics above while also creating new revenue streams or reducing costs, improving quality of farm life and operations, and/or improving the economic sustainability of the farm.

Example topics (for illustration only, not an exhaustive list):

Proposals on these topics are <u>likely</u> to receive consideration:	Proposals on these topics are <u>not likely</u> to be considered:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals that implement NRCS Climate Smart Practices from the Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF) Mitigation Activities List for FY2025 • Composting, improving soil health, erosion prevention • Conserving and restoring natural habitat, protection of native pollinators • Production and/or use of renewable energy • Integrated Pest Management planning • Adoption of Organic/regenerative farming practices • Tillage reduction • Reducing off-farm inputs and/or farm waste • On farm seed saving and increasing availability of regionally adapted seed stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fossil Fuel powered equipment • Refrigeration projects* • High tunnels • General operating funds, farm staff labor • Cover Crop Seeds <p><i>*unless accompanied by a robust justification and explanation of sustainability including renewable energy or recycling plan as appropriate</i></p>

Proposal Writing Guidelines

All submissions must:

- Not exceed the designated word limits
- Follow the format provided in the application document
- Provide a clear rationale and demonstrate a significant need for the project
- Provide measurable outcomes and impacts and explain specifically what you hope to accomplish with the funds.

Please note that proposals that include multiple projects will not be considered.

Application Instructions:

1. Complete the grant application form.



2. Obtain two letters of support from agricultural peers, mentors, educators, or community organizations, **to be submitted with your application, preferably as a single document.** Letters should directly reference the applicant's name, farm name(s), and project title.
3. Submit completed application, including the grant application form and the two letters of support by email or mail to Rae Russell <raerussell@tilthalliance.org>. ***A response email will be sent within 3 business days of your submission to confirm receipt of your application. If you do not receive this email, please email raerussell@tilthalliance.org.***

Review Process

The primary audience for your proposal is the grant review committee which will evaluate applications and make award recommendations. This group is composed of Tilth Alliance staff members, farmers, and other agricultural professionals. All reviewers will score applications individually in the following categories:

- **Climate Impact:** Does the proposed project have the potential to increase soil health and carbon sequestration, reduce GHG emissions, or improve climate resilience?
- **Environmental Impact** - Does the proposed project have the potential to significantly decrease the negative environmental impacts of the farm, restore degraded natural resources, and improve overall environmental performance?
- **Farm Business Impact** - Will the proposed project significantly contribute to the success and livelihood of the farm business?
- **Justification** - Is the budget reasonable and well-justified? Is the proposed project feasible given the duration and resources?

Tilth Alliance staff will make final grant award decisions using application scores as a baseline. In addition to application scores Tilth Alliance staff will look across the entire scope of proposals to consider geographic distribution, comparative impact, variability of project types, range of crops, and number of applications from underserved populations when making final grant award decisions.

Final Reporting Requirements

Unless other arrangements have been made, grant recipients are required to provide a project final report within 30 days after the end of the grant period. The Final Report should describe how funds were utilized, what the overall impact of the grant was, how this impact was measured (metrics), and to what extent the original project objectives were met.

*Report due 30 days post grant period unless additional arrangements are made. Send to raerussell@tilthalliance.org

The report should include the following:

- Details on how funds were spent as well as actual cost of the project vs. original budget.
- A description of the overall impact of the project (including metrics where applicable), including to what extent the original project objectives were met.
- Project challenges and successes from the recipient's perspective.
- Completed questionnaire, narrative about how the grant has furthered your operational goals.
- Photographs are highly encouraged.

