



Washington State Organic and Sustainable Farming Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the purpose of the Washington State Organic and Sustainable Farming Fund (WSOSFF)?

WSOSFF provides grants to fund high impact on-farm projects and practices that will reduce the environmental and/or climate impacts of farm operations. Examples include projects intended to:

- Improve on-farm soil health
- Increase the climate resilience of the farm
- Reduce green-house gas emissions
- Increase Biodiversity
- Reduce the use of off-farm inputs
- Reduce Tillage
- Protect and preserve water quality and natural habitats
- Sequester carbon
- Support the transition to Certified Organic or Certified Regenerative Organic
- Support the adoption of an organic/regenerative farm management plan
- Improve the efficiency and/or effectiveness of farms that currently operate in compliance with an organic/regenerative management plan, whether Certified or not

Farms owned and/or operated by under resourced or underserved communities receive additional weight during the review process.

2) What will WSOSFF not fund?

- a. WSOSFF will **NOT** fund Organic Certification Costs.
- b. WSOSFF will **NOT** provide grants to organizations that primarily provide support services to farmers.
- c. WSOSFF will **NOT** fund equipment powered by fossil fuels.
- d. WSOSFF funds may be used to cover *contractual* labor costs for specific project work that falls outside the regular operations of the farm. **Project funds CANNOT be used to pay wages to owners, employees, or interns of the farm.**
- e. WSOSFF is intended to help cover the cost of specific investments that will lead to the outcomes listed above. Grants cannot be used to fund farm overhead or contribute directly to net farm revenue.

- f. WSOSFF grants are intended to have immediate impact. Therefore, funds are not available for projects that will not yield results within the timeframe of the grant cycle.

3) Is this a competitive grant program?

- a. Yes, in 2024 we were able to fund about 58 percent of the proposals we received with partial and full funding.
- b. The following table is a breakdown of awards by year:

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								

4) I have received a grant before. Am I eligible to apply again?

Yes. Each individual farm business is eligible to receive up to two grant awards over a five-year period. Please note: While previous grantees are eligible to apply, ***priority will be given to new applicants and award amounts will be subject to funding availability.*** Repeated applications must be non-consecutive (ie take a one-year break between asks)

5) Is partial funding available?

Yes, projects can be partially funded ***if the project can easily be broken down into specific components or if additional funds are available to meet the project budget.***

6) Are non-profit farms eligible?

WSOSFF grants are primarily intended to improve environmental outcomes and operations of farm businesses. However, certain categories of non-profits that are directly engaged in farming are eligible to apply including non-profits providing free food to low-income families or communities.

Non-profit farms with produce sales greater than \$10,000 per year are **NOT** eligible. Non-profits who primarily work in support of farmers are **NOT** eligible to apply.

7) I operate a cannabis farm. Am I eligible to apply?

Although it is legal in the state of Washington to grow marijuana with certain permits, cultivation of these plants is currently still illegal at the federal level.

Therefore, currently, Tilth Alliance is not able to fund projects related to marijuana or CBD production. However, cultivation of hemp fiber may be considered.

8) Are individual farm businesses allowed to submit multiple applications?

No, the review committee will only consider one application per farm business per year.

9) Are multiple projects allowed within one application?

No, only one project per application is allowed. For example, if a farm is seeking funding for a hedgerow planting and a solar project, they can only submit an application for one or the other, not both.

10) Are multi-year grants available?

Not currently. Funds will be awarded in April 2026 and must be spent by April 30, 2027.

11) Are matching funds required?

Matching funds are not required for this grant but are greatly appreciated and encouraged.

12) What are Collaborative Projects?

- a. A Collaborative Project is a single project that is designed to benefit more than one farm. For example, a grant might be used to purchase a piece of equipment that will be shared by one or more farms. Like any other WSOSFF funded project, Collaborative Projects must have direct on-farm impact for all farms who participate in the grant application.
- b. There must be a single point of contact for the project and a single grant application for the Collaborative Project, but each farm must provide the farm information asked for in the application.
- c. Groups of two farm businesses may apply for up to \$20,000
- d. Groups of three or more farm businesses may apply for up to \$25,000

13) What are Basic Farm Establishment Grants?

- a. This grant is intended to aid in establishing new farms committed to utilizing organic practices.
- b. Farms applying for this grant must be three acres or less in size.
- c. The applicant must have a minimum of two years farming experience working for a farm business (either as an employee or for themselves). A maximum of \$8,000 can be applied for in this grant category. Basic Farm Establishment Grant awardees may not apply a second time for this level of funding. All subsequent asks must be for Individual or Collaborative funding levels.
- d. The grant is intended to fund the purchase of basic supplies necessary to establish a farm. This may include but is not restricted to:
 - i. Drip Tape, hoses, irrigation controls and other irrigation supplies
 - ii. Hand Tools such as Hoes, Pitchforks, Broad forks, Shovels, Rakes, Post Pounders, Snips, Harvest Knives, Push Seeders, etc
 - iii. Wash & Pack Supplies

- iv. Row Cover
- v. Tarps and Landscape Fabric
- vi. Electric Netting
- vii. Compost, Soil Blocks, and Seed Trays
- viii. Low Tunnels and Cloches
- e. Requests for the following items are NOT eligible:
 - i. Fossil fuel powered equipment, including flame weeders
 - ii. General operating funds, or staff labor
 - iii. Lease Payments
 - iv. Certification Costs
 - v. High Tunnels

Tips for writing a competitive proposal:

- Read all the instructions carefully. Submit all components together, be mindful of the word limits, and follow the format of the application document. Applications that are missing key components will be disqualified.
- This is a competitive grant program. Successful proposals are straight-forward, make a clear request for what project funds will be used for, are well thought out including contingency plans if things don't go as planned, and include measurements of project impact.
- Using exact or precisely estimated numbers in the budget demonstrates a well-researched proposal that uses project funds efficiently.
- If farming on leased land, we highly recommend including a letter of support from the landowner or indicate landowner buy-in on the project elsewhere in proposal. Please indicate the term of your lease within your grant narrative.
- The goal of this grant program is to support as many farm businesses as possible. If partial funding of the project is feasible, indicate in the proposal the highest priority for project components to fund and how the project can still be carried out with partial funding.

**Questions? Email is the best way to reach our team- contact us at
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