Summary Information

Federal Awarding Agency Name: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC)

Funding Opportunity Title: Notice of Funding Opportunity for NRCS’s Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials (On-Farm Trials) for Federal fiscal year (FY) 2020

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CIGOFT-20-GEN0010750

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 10.912, Environmental Quality Incentives Program

NRCS is announcing the availability of CIG On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials (On-Farm Trials) to stimulate the adoption and evaluation of innovative conservation approaches in partnership with agricultural producers. For 2020, applications are accepted from eligible entities for projects addressing at least one priority listed in this announcement. Up to $25 million is available for On-Farm Trials in 2020. NRCS anticipates that up to $10 million of On-Farm Trials funding in 2020 will be awarded to entities applying for the Soil Health Demonstration Trial (SHD) component. On-Farm Trials projects may be between 3 and 5 years in duration. The maximum amount for a single award in FY 2020 is $5 million.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 29, 2020.

SUBMISSIONS: Applications must be submitted electronically through grants.gov. Submissions must be received by the time and date due. See section IV.D of this document for more on how to submit an application.

The grants.gov electronic submission interface is called Workspace. Workspace is the standard method for organizations or individuals to apply for Federal grants in grants.gov. Workspace allows an applicant grant team to access and edit various forms within an application simultaneously. In addition, the forms may be completed online or as a PDF. An overview of Workspace can be viewed at grants.gov at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html

Please allow extra time to register in Workspace because there are several preliminary registration steps before an applicant can submit the application. To register, go to https://www.grants.gov, click on “Applicants,” then click on “Get Registered.” If you have completed a prior grants.gov application, you may already have completed the registration process.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, or audio tape) should contact the USDA TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).
FOR MORE INFORMATION: A webinar for On-Farm Trials applicants is scheduled for March 26, 2020 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time. Information on how to participate in the webinar will be posted on the CIG On-Farm Trials website at least seven days in advance. Questions about this announcement can be directed by email to nrcscig@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

CIG’s On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials is authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-8). The Secretary of Agriculture delegated the authority for the administration of EQIP, including CIG, to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). EQIP is funded and administered by NRCS under the authorities of CCC.

B. Overview

The purpose of On-Farm Trials is to stimulate the adoption and evaluation of innovative conservation approaches in partnership with agricultural producers. For 2020, NRCS is implementing On-Farm Trials through eligible entities, which in turn work collaboratively with NRCS and agricultural producers to implement innovative approaches on private lands. On-Farm Trials supports the implementation of innovative approaches that have a positive conservation effect but which, for any number of reasons, have not yet been adopted by producers.

On-Farm Trials funding is designed to provide technical and financial assistance to producers to help compensate for any risks associated with implementation of new conservation practices, systems, and approaches. Evaluation is a key component of On-Farm Trials to ensure that environmental, financial, and social (to the extent possible) impact of implementing innovative approaches are captured and disseminated.

NRCS intends to use the results of On-Farm Trials project evaluations and analyses to explore development of new or modification of existing NRCS business practices, guidance documents, technical tools, and conservation practice standards.

NRCS gives priority to projects that implement innovative conservation approaches that are applicable to a range of agricultural operation sizes and types.

The Soil Health Demonstration Trial (SHD) component of On-Farm Trials (priority 4 below) focuses exclusively on implementation of conservation practices and systems that improve soil health. Eligible entities receiving SHD awards agree to follow consistent soil health assessment protocols to evaluate the impacts of practice and system implementation.

C. On-Farm Trials Priorities:

Each year, NRCS identifies priority topics for On-Farm Trials. For 2020, On-Farm Trials applications must address one of the four following priorities. Proposals may address more than one priority, but each proposal must clearly identify a primary priority for the application to be
considered under. The priorities are: 1) Irrigation Management Technologies, 2) Precision Agriculture Technologies and Strategies, 3) Management Technologies and Strategies, and 4) Soil Health Demonstration Trials (SHD). For each priority area, a review panel will be established with expertise in a subject matter relevant to the priority. The primary priority selected by an applicant will determine which peer panel will review the application.

1. **Irrigation Management Technologies**

NRCS seeks On-Farm Trials applications that evaluate innovative water management systems that enhance a producer’s ability to monitor irrigation needs effectively, manage irrigation practices efficiently, and increase water savings. Innovative irrigation systems should focus on balancing producer needs with conservation benefits. Examples of innovative irrigation management technologies include—

- Technologies that measure plant distress or soil moisture and automate irrigation through regular reporting to a centralized system.
- Sensors that report data from weather stations or soil monitoring sensors to cloud-based systems and devices, allowing producers to assess irrigation needs remotely or from a handheld device.
- Innovative approaches that address barriers to adoption of irrigation management systems. These barriers may include substantial upfront costs of system installation, accessibility of systems (i.e., availability for purchase at mainstream retailers), ease of installation and the need for system customization.

2. **Precision Agriculture Technologies and Strategies**

NRCS seeks On-Farm Trials applications that evaluate innovative precision agriculture technologies that have been field-validated and have proven stakeholder support (stakeholders may include State departments of agriculture, land grant universities, water quality control entities, USDA, agricultural producers, scientists, or other similar entities). Innovations in this category should focus on technologies that provide accurate, real-time data to producers and increase their ability to efficiently manage nutrients and pests. Examples of innovative precision agriculture approaches include—

- Real-time sensors of crop canopy to adjust nutrient or pest management. Examples include sensors used to identify nutrient deficiencies, irrigation needs, or pest presence prior to visual indicators.
- On-the-go soil sensors to measure mechanical, physical, and chemical soil properties, and use real-time data to adjust application rates of fertilizers.

3. **Management Technologies and Strategies**

NRCS seeks On-Farm Trials applications that evaluate approaches to help producers improve management of production systems while achieving conservation benefits. Innovations should result in significant conservation benefits while potentially providing economic benefits to producers. Examples of innovative approaches under this category include—

- Enhanced nutrient management plans, including plans accounting for differences beyond yield potential and soil type, such as soil organic matter, soil biological activity, tillage
regime, field drainage/drainage management, irrigation management, and seasonal effects of weather events.

- Remote sensing technologies that assist in pesticide application.
- Differential pesticide spraying technologies.
- Technologies that reduce drift of applied pesticides.
- Nutrient recovery systems such as bioreactors and multistage drainage strategies to mitigate nutrient losses.
- Whole-farm nutrient budgets that account for all nutrient imports and exports of an operation.
- Edge-of-field monitoring for pesticides targeting commonly used active ingredients.
- Technologies maximizing role of smart machines (such as row robots, etc.) in weed control.

4. Soil Health Demonstration Trial (SHD)

The SHD are on-farm demonstrations of long-term, successful soil health management systems (SHMS) and/or production systems being transitioned to a SHMS, managed by agricultural producers.

An SHMS is a collection of management practices that focuses on increasing soil carbon levels and improving soil health by addressing all four soil health management principles: 1) minimize disturbance, 2) maximize soil cover, 3) maximize biodiversity, and 4) maximize presence of living roots. These principles, when implemented together, adaptively as appropriate for a given production system, will be synergistic and regenerate, build, and maintain soil health and the many ecosystem services soils provide. These principles can be generally applied in all production systems, but the specific combinations and applications of practices chosen to successfully implement the principles must be adapted to each production system, climate, ecosystem, and soil to effectively build healthy, functioning soil.

The objective of the SHD is to identify, document, and evaluate regionally successful approaches to, and outcomes of, adapting practices for transitioning to and adopting full SHMS in varied production systems.

SHD applications must indicate which of the four soil health management principles their project addresses (applications that address all four are highly desired), as well as identify at least one of the national SHD subpriorities below. All cover crops used must be identified by scientific or common name. Applicants are encouraged to address multiple national subpriorities, to the extent practicable.

**SHD National Subpriorities:**

- Transition to and adoption of full SHMS, adapted to regional production systems, meeting all soil health management principles.
- Cover crop management in water-limited systems (e.g. timing of termination) or in humid regions (e.g. slug control).
• Opportunities to integrate greater diversity in production systems, such as management for soil health in grazing land, including perennial vegetation in cropland systems, or integrated crop-livestock systems including manure application in SHMS.
• Design of SHMS with nutrient management adjustments for improved water quality, particularly to address concerns with dissolved reactive phosphorus.
• Design of SHMS for challenging cropping systems, such as high disturbance (e.g., potatoes and sugar beets), intensive vegetable, organic, or herbicide-resistant

Trials that compare SHMS to nearby production systems that do not meet SHMS principles are highly desired.

**SHD Evaluations and Study**

Projects funded under the SHD priority must meet additional evaluation requirements. Similar to the broader On-Farm Trials program, SHD projects must include a robust evaluation of the environmental, financial and social effects of implementing soil health management systems and practices.

Unique to SHD is the necessity of using common evaluation protocols and methods for assessing soil carbon changes and other soil health outcomes. Eligible entities must—

• Use NRCS standards in field and laboratory methods for soil carbon and other soil health indicator measurements. This does not preclude inclusion of additional measurements, beyond the identified NRCS data collection requirements. Awardees will collaborate with NRCS soil health experts to ensure consistency in field and laboratory methods.
• Work with NRCS Soil and Plant Science Division (SPSD) staff to verify the soil series on which the trial sites(s) is located.
• Collect current and historic management information from participating producers (tillage, crop rotation, nutrient and other input applications).
• Collect environmental and financial outcome data to include profitability (cost of production, current yield and historic yield where available) and other data as available such as effects of systems on infiltration rates, ground water recharge, plant available water, runoff, water quality, flooding, pest resilience, weather resilience, air quality, etc.).
• Develop summary information on social outcomes and profiles of participating producers with information about why management changes were adopted, and challenges and benefits of the changes.
• Provide details on how the information will be shared with producer communities, such as through on-farm field days and other activities, to facilitate broader adoption.
• Develop production and climate specific SHMS templates, that will be regionally relevant to future adopting producers, from On-Farm Trials that successfully implement a SHMS, especially in cases where a novel approach is used to address specific resource concerns or challenging conditions.

In addition, eligible entities are required to provide their evaluation to NRCS as part of an SHD study to be submitted to Congress, as required by the SHD statute. It is incumbent upon SHD partners to inform participating producers that geospatial, soil, conservation practice, and other information will be provided to NRCS and maintained in a confidential Federal database. None of this database information will be shared with the public (e.g., through public affairs or other communications materials) without a producer’s consent. Names of participating producers and any incentive payments received are subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

D. On-Farm Trials Evaluations

On-Farm Trials projects under all four priorities consist of two major components—on-farm implementation of innovative conservation approaches and evaluation of the effects. The evaluation component includes assessment of the environmental, financial, and to the extent possible, social effects of implementing the innovations. Awardees must work closely with participating producers to ensure that sufficient data are collected to analyze these effects and must also ensure that producer privacy is maintained throughout the project and dissemination of project results.

Applications must describe the evaluation approach proposed by eligible entities, including collection of baseline data, use of controls, and methods for assessing financial and social affects.

For economic and financial analyses, applicants are encouraged to consult the resources available at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/technical/econ/costs/.

An NRCS technical note on developing economic case studies is available at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/econ/data/?cid=nrcseprd1298423.

Social evaluations analyze the factors that go into a producer’s decision to implement conservation practices, systems or approaches, how that producer’s decision influences other producers, and any broader effects on communities.

Applicants must describe their capacity for carrying out On-Farm Trials evaluations. Applicants lacking this capacity are encouraged to partner with organizations and individuals with experience in carrying out On-Farm Trials. Evaluation methods and approaches are subject to negotiation prior to execution of the On-Farm Trials agreement. Applicants must identify in their budget documents the amount of On-Farm Trials funding proposed for evaluation expenses.

NRCS also anticipates working with On-Farm Trials awardees to determine the extent to which project evaluations and results can inform NRCS efforts to model the outcomes of conservation implementation.

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Funding available for On-Farm Trials in 2020 is $25 million. Up to $10 million of On-Farm Trials funding is intended for awards made under the SHD. The maximum amount of a single
award under either On-Farm Trials or the SHD is $5 million. The minimum award is $250,000. NRCS anticipates making between 15 and 20 awards.

NRCS accepts proposals for projects of 3 to 5 years in duration. The standard agreement (funds awarded via a Grant agreement) length is 3 years, but eligible entities may request that projects last up to 5 years to support: 1) adaptive management over multiple crop years, and 2) adequate data collection and analysis to support evaluation of innovative approaches.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Entities

As defined in the On-Farm Trials statute, eligible entities are limited to—

- Private entities whose primary business is related to agriculture;
- Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with experience working with agricultural producers; and,
- Non-Federal government agencies.

Numerous entity types may qualify under one or more of these categories, including state, county, city or township governments; Federally recognized Native American tribal governments; nonprofits with 501(c)(3) status; and institutions of higher education (private, public, and state run). Institutions of higher education may qualify as either NGOs or private entities whose primary business is related to agriculture.

On-Farm Trials-eligible entities must have access to a sufficient number of producer participants in order to facilitate implementation of On-Farm Trials of conservation practices and systems on private lands. NRCS encourages On-Farm Trials applicants to partner with private sector entities that may provide access to producers without a history of working with NRCS.

B. Producer Eligibility

Any producer receiving an On-Farm Trials incentive payment must meet the EQIP’s eligibility requirements listed in 7 CFR Section 1466.6(b)(1) through (3):

- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions (7 CFR Part 12).
- Be a person, legal entity, joint operation, Indian Tribe, or Native corporation who is engaged in agricultural production or forestry management or has an interest in the agricultural or forestry operation as defined in 7 CFR Part 1400.
- Have control of the land involved for the term of the proposed contract period.

In addition, producers receiving On-Farm Trials incentive payments must meet the adjusted gross income requirements under section 1001D(b)(1) of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill).
C. Incentive Payments

On-Farm Trials awards must include incentive payments disbursed to agricultural producers on whose land a trial is being carried out. These payments compensate producers for adopting and evaluating new conservation approaches. Incentive payments may be comprised of foregone income, land rental, conservation implementation-related equipment, construction costs, evaluation costs, or other considerations necessary to facilitate effective execution of an on-farm trial. Any land rental or equipment rental/depreciation costs must be adequately justified. Incentive payments are paid directly to agricultural producers from entities receiving On-Farm Trials awards—producers do not enter into contracts with NRCS.

On-Farm Trials applications must include the overall amount of incentive payments the eligible entity intends to offer, an estimate of the overall number of producers that may receive an incentive payment, the total amount of incentive payments an individual producer may receive, and provide details on the composition of the incentive payments.

The following provisions apply to On-Farm Trials funding:

- NRCS requires eligible entities to work with local NRCS staff to ensure that all producers receiving an On-Farm Trials incentive payment are EQIP eligible, meet the adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation, and meet highly erodible land and wetlands conservation provisions PRIOR TO disbursement of incentive payments.
- Section 1704 (a)(3) of the 2018 Farm Bill states the Secretary may waive the AGI limit on a case-by-case basis, if the Secretary determines that environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected as a result of such waiver. On-Farm Trials awardees may request AGI waivers for producer payments once their project commences.
- Entities receiving On-Farm Trials awards are required to submit producer information and amounts of incentive payments made to the individual annually. This is required by the On-Farm Trials statute.
- On-Farm Trials incentive payments do not count toward a producer’s EQIP payment limitation under the 2018 Farm Bill.
- Section 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-2, prohibits duplicative payments. Entities receiving an On-Farm Trials award are responsible for ensuring that incentive payments are not provided to a producer for a conservation practice, system or approach for which the producer has already received, or is contracted to receive, funding through another NRCS or USDA program.

D. NRCS Responsibilities

Successful On-Farm Trials projects require close collaboration and partnership between awarded entities and NRCS. NRCS will designate a technical contact to serve as the main technical liaison between NRCS and the awardee. Additional NRCS staff are likely to be engaged in On-Farm Trials projects.

NRCS is required to provide technical assistance (TA) to each On-Farm Trials project. At a minimum, NRCS is required to ensure that participating producers are EQIP eligible and in
compliance with the Farm Bill’s AGI and highly erodible lands and wetlands conservation provisions. In addition, NRCS is responsible for ensuring that On-Farm Trials projects and activities comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

NRCS will work with awarded partners on On-Farm Trials evaluation methodologies and review project results for possible inclusion into NRCS publications and technical documents.

E. Partner Contributions

A minimum contribution of 25 percent of the total Federal award requested is required in the form of value-added contributions that leverage and complement the potential NRCS investment in each project. Contributions can be any combination of cash and in-kind contributions. Magnitude, significance, and the type of partner contributions factor into the project evaluation criteria listed above in section V.A. Examples of value-added partner contributions include TA (above and beyond TA funded by NRCS), producer outreach and education, communications activities, staff training and capacity building, environmental monitoring, and project evaluation activities.

F. Technical Assistance

As part of their project budget, On-Farm Trials applicants must include the portion of their proposed award amount that would go toward TA. TA refers to all activities required to implement innovative conservation approaches on farm or ranch land. TA activities include conservation planning, design and engineering, and quality assurance and verification.

The On-Farm Trials evaluation criteria in section V.A. of this notice make clear that NRCS gives preference to partner entities that are able to wholly supply the implementation TA for On-Farm Trials projects, either on their own or through working with technical service providers (TSPs) or other qualified entities and individuals.

Applications must identify the individuals or entities providing TA services and furnish their qualifications. If these individuals or entities are not certified TSPs or NRCS-certified conservation planners, applications must provide sufficient evidence that the individuals or entities are qualified to carry out implementation activities.

G. Historically Underserved Producers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers

NRCS encourages applicants to engage with and include the participation of historically underserved producers and veteran farmers and ranchers in On-Farm Trials projects. In addition, NRCS encourages applicants to consider partnerships with organizations that work with historically underserved producers and veteran farmers and ranchers and have access to networks of these producers. The definition of historically underserved and veteran producers are available at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/cig/.

For the FY 2020 On-Farm Trials competition, substantive inclusion of these special groups of producers is given priority consideration as part of the evaluation criteria listed in section V.A.
H. SAM.gov Exclusions Database

Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted, or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program (2 CFR 200.205(d)).

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

For technical issues with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Awarding agency staff cannot support applicants regarding Grants.gov accounts.

There is no preproposal process for this announcement. All standard forms necessary for On-Farm Trials application submission are included in the grants.gov application package.

A. Executive Order (EO) 12372

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.”

B. Content and Format

Applications must contain the content, format, and information set forth below to receive consideration for funding. Submit a separate application for each project if submitting more than one. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. Applicants must submit a single copy of the application in the following format:

- Each page must be on numbered, letter-sized (8½” x 11”) paper using a white background that has one-inch margins; and
- The text of the application must be typed, single spaced, black, and in a font no smaller than 12-point.

Applications that are incomplete or fail to comply with the required content and formatting requirements will not be considered for funding.

1. Cover Page (1 page maximum).

On a single page, provide the following information:

- The applicant entity name.
- The project title.
- The duration in months.
- The amount of On-Farm Trials (Federal) funding requested.
- The amount of non-Federal contributions committed.
- The applicant’s technical contact (usually project director).
- The applicant’s administrative contact (usually contact at grants office or project manager working under a project director; NRCS will use the applicant’s technical and administrative contacts identified as the primary applicant contacts throughout the life of the project, unless notified of personnel changes).
• The geographic location of the project (list States and as specific county/directional location as possible).
• The national priority that is addressed by the project. List one priority from section I.(B) above. If the proposal addresses more than one priority, you must select a primary priority for your application to be considered under. The priority that you select will determine the panel that will review your application. For each priority area, a review panel will be established with expertise in subject matter relevant to the priority.
• A brief description (1–3 sentences) of the innovative conservation approach or approaches that are the focus of the project – this should be a concise and persuasive description.
• A description of the cropping systems/agricultural operation type(s) targeted for participation, number of producers, etc.
• A brief description of the evaluation approach proposed for the project.

2. Abstract (1 page maximum)
A brief project description.—Describe in nontechnical language the issue or problem, the project’s goals and objectives, the innovative approach to be employed (including the role of participating partners, if applicable), the anticipated conservation and economic (and social, if possible) benefits of the field trials and how the benefits will be evaluated.

Standard Form (SF) 424, “Application for Federal Assistance” and instructions to complete it are included in the application package posted on grants.gov.

4. Project description (15-page maximum)
The project description must include the following information in order:
   a. Project Background.—Describe the innovative conservation approach subject to the project’s On-Farm Trials. Provide a short history of the development of the conservation approach (cite significant publications). Describe any challenges to broad adoption of the approach by agricultural producers.
   b. Project Objectives.—Describe the project’s purpose and objectives. Describe how On-Farm Trials and the project evaluation will advance the cause of broader adoption of the innovative approach in question.
   c. Project Methods.—Describe clearly the methodology of the On-Farm Trials.
   d. Geographic Location and Size of Project or Project Area.—Identify the geographic location and the relative size and scope (e.g., acres, farm types, demographics, etc.) of the project area. Provide a map.
   e. EQIP Eligible Producer Participation.—Estimate the number of EQIP eligible producers proposed to participate in the On-Farm Trials. Describe whether these producers have been identified or the process that will be carried out to identify and attract producer participation.
f. **Project Action Plan and Timeline.**—Provide a bulleted list of project actions, timeframes, deliverables and associated milestones through project completion. Applicants should develop their timelines based on a project start date of January 1, 2021.

g. **Project Management.**—Give a description of how the project will be organized and managed, including a description of project partners. Include a list of key technical and administrative personnel, their experience managing Federal awards, and their anticipated contributions to the project. Also, include a description of how communication will be structured within the project team to ensure effective project management. Do not include resumes or CVs.

h. **On-Farm Trial Evaluation.**—Describe the methodology proposed to evaluate the environmental and economic (and social, if feasible) results of the On-Farm Trials. Describe the individuals and entities scheduled to carry out the evaluation.

i. **Benefits or Results Expected and Transferability.**—Identify the expected results and benefits derived from the project. Identify project beneficiaries (i.e., agricultural producers by type, region, or sector; historically underserved producers and communities; rural communities). Forecast the lasting impact of project results.

j. **Communications.**—Describe how the results will be communicated to producers and stakeholders through communications and outreach activities.

k. **Graphics.**—Pictures, charts, graphs, and similar items count towards the 15-page maximum.

l. **References, Bibliographies, and Citations.**—If included, do not count towards the 15-page maximum.

5. **Assessment of environmental impacts**

On-Farm Trials projects are subject to NEPA. Each On-Farm Trials project involves on-the-ground conservation activities undertaken by partners and agricultural producers. Prior to any ground-disturbing activities related to an On-Farm Trials project, the awardee must work with the local NRCS field office to complete an environmental evaluation (EE) related to each individual producers’ conservation activities under the project. Based on the outcome of the EE, the project may proceed as planned, proceed under an alternative designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse impacts, or awardees may be required to prepare and pay for preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) should the EE find that an EA or EIS is required.

In addition, should the outcome of the EE require it, a National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 review and consultation by NRCS State or area office with consulting parties (such as the pertinent State historic preservation officer and federally recognized Indian Tribes) may be required prior to the implementation of project activities that have the potential to impact cultural resources. The NHPA review and compliance in accordance with section 106 of NHPA and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 must be completed by NRCS and applicants may be required to pay for any cultural resource surveys needed for NRCS to assess On-Farm Trials project effects. More information on the applicants role in NHPA Section 106 process can be found at [https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/section-106-applicant-toolkit](https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/section-106-applicant-toolkit).
Consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and/or the National Marine Fisheries Service under the section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is also required for projects that may affect listed species or destroy or modify critical habitat. The ESA consultation in accordance with section 7 of the ESA and implementing regulations at 50 CFR Part 402 must be completed by NRCS. More information on the section 7 consultation process can be at https://www.fws.gov/endangered/what-we-do/consultations-overview.html.


The budget portion of the application consists of two parts, as described below:

a. Standard Form (SF) 424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs.”—The SF-424A is included as part of the application package posted on Grants.gov. Section B, Item 6, Column 1 should reflect the agency funds, and Column 2 should reflect the applicant’s matching funds. This form is the summary budget for the project. See “Instructions for Completing SF 424A” located in the “Related Documents” tab of this announcement on Grants.gov.

b. Detailed Budget Justification.—Appendix A of this funding announcement includes guidance on developing a budget narrative as well as a sample budget narrative. Applicants must use this format, both the table and narrative. By standardizing the budget narrative of the proposal, NRCS is hoping to improve transparency and improve peer panel reviewers’ ability to understand applicants’ budgets quickly and efficiently.

Note: Please include $3,000 in the budget for project travel required for the project. These funds are required and can be part of the Federal portion, the applicant’s contributions, or a combination of both. Any additional travel required for completion of the project must be considered additional to this $3,000.

C. Funding Restrictions

On-Farm Trials funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law or approved in writing by the authorized Departmental officer in advance of incurring such costs:

- Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
- Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant (pre-award costs);
- Costs which lay outside the scope of the approved project and amendments thereto;
- Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
- Compensation for injuries to persons or damage to property arising out of project activities;
- Consulting services performed by a Federal employee during official duty hours when such consulting services result in the payment of additional compensation to the employee; and
- Renovation or refurbishment of research or related spaces, the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such spaces, and the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.
This list is not exhaustive. For more details, refer to 2 CFR 200.

Profit is not an eligible project cost. Therefore, any funds awarded to for-profit entities must be used for reimbursement of award-related direct costs only.

1. **Prohibition on Administrative (Indirect) costs.**
   - By statute, On-Farm Trials funds may not be used to pay for administrative (indirect) expenses of an eligible entity. Direct administrative expenses required for completion of an On-Farm Trials project (e.g., filling out required reports, organizing partner meetings, etc.) are allowable costs in accordance with 2 CFR 200.412 – 200.415.
   - Applicants may count any unrecovered indirect costs as part of their partner contributions. Unrecovered indirect costs means the difference between the amount charged to the Federal award and the amount which could have been charged to the Federal award under the recipient's approved negotiated indirect cost rate (2 CFR 200.306(c)). If an applicant intends to count unrecovered indirect costs as partner contributions, a copy of the applicant’s current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) must be provided with the application. Indirect costs may not be recovered under an expired NICRA. However, when considering claiming unrecovered indirect costs, please keep in mind that there is a preference for direct funding over in-kind contributions (e.g., unrecovered indirect costs).

2. **Dissemination of On-Farm Trial Results**
   On-Farm Trials awardees are required to:
   - participate in at least one event (e.g., conference or workshop) during the grant period where the awardee presents on the activities of the project.
   - submit a fact sheet (no longer than two pages) summarizing the results of the On-Farm Trials, written in plain language for use in public settings.
   - host an event at the end of the project (e.g., a webinar, field day, training event, etc.) in conjunction with NRCS, to disseminate results of the On-Farm Trials.

3. **Contributions**
   A minimum contribution of 25 percent of the total Federal award requested is required in the form of value-added contributions that leverage and complement the potential NRCS investment in each project. Partner contributions may be committed by the applicant, project partners, or both and can be a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions identified in the project budget must be quantifiable, verifiable, and necessary to accomplish program activities.

Contributions must be committed at the time of application submission. Project partners (other than the lead applicant) must provide commitment letters for all cash and in-kind matching contributions. Commitment letters must be signed by the authorized organizational representative of the contributing organization and the applicant organization and must include—

- the name, address, and telephone number of the project partner,
- the name of the applicant organization,
- the title of the project for which the contribution is made,
• the dollar value of the contribution, and
• a statement that the contributor commits to furnish the contribution during the grant period. A sample commitment letter is included as part of the application package on grants.gov.

The value of applicant contributions to the project is established according to Federal cost principles. Applicants should refer to 2 CFR 200.306 for additional guidance on matching funds, in-kind contributions, and allowable costs.

4. **Letters of support**

Letters of support for the project from individuals or entities that are not project partners may be submitted and should be placed at the very end of the application package.

Support letters from NRCS employees are not necessary. State conservationist reviews are a component of the On-Farm Trials review process.

5. **Risk Review Documentation**

NRCS may request additional documentation from selected applicants in order to evaluate the financial, management, and performance risk posed by awardees as required by 2 CFR 200.205. Based on this risk review, NRCS may apply to a CIG award special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed.

C. **DUNS Number and SAM Registration**

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR Section 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR Section 25.110(d)) is required to—

• Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application;
• Provide a valid unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number) in its application; and
• Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award, application, or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. NRCS may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant complies with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant does not fully comply with the requirements when the NRCS is ready to make a Federal award, NRCS may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

All Non-Federal Entities (NFEs) must obtain a DUNS and register in SAM prior to registering with Grants.gov. NFEs are strongly encouraged to apply early for their DUNS number and SAM registration.

• Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.—A Dun and Bradstreet DUNS number is a unique, nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for
identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. CIG applicants must obtain a DUNS number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform or by calling 1-866-705-5711.

- System for Award Management (SAM) Registration.—SAM is the official Federal system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registry, Federal Agency Registration, Online Representations and Certifications Application, and Excluded Parties List System. To register, go to: https://www.sam.gov/SAM/. The Federal Service Desk is available for registration assistance and can be contacted through the “Help tab at the website listed above.

D. How to Submit an Application

Applications must be submitted through the Grants.gov web portal by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 29, 2020.

Submitting an On-Farm Trials application through www.grants.gov requires a number of tasks. There are several preliminary registration steps before an applicant can submit the application. To register in the grants.gov system, go to www.grants.gov, click on “Applicants,” and then click on “Get Registered.”

If you have completed a prior grants.gov application, you may already have completed the registration process.

Please allow sufficient time to register in grants.gov, and for possible system delays. An overview of Workspace can be viewed through grants.gov at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html.

Below are instructions for accessing the forms necessary to complete an application in grants.gov:

- Go to www.grants.gov.
- Select the “Applicants” tab.
- Select the “Apply for Grants” heading.
- Click on “Get Application Package.” Follow all steps.
- All necessary forms are included within the grants.gov “Application Package.”
- Provide the “Funding Opportunity Number” listed on page 1 of this announcement or return to https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html.

Applications not received by the submission due date and time will not be accepted. All applications must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described in this announcement. Grants.gov provides instructions for submitting the required application items through the portal. An application’s receipt date and time will be determined by the respective system-generated documentation of receipt date and time (grants.gov provides date and time stamps for all proposals submitted through the portal).

NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or website problems related to grants.gov or emailed submissions. If you encounter issues with grants.gov, please contact the grants.gov help desk at (800) 518-4726 or email at support@grants.gov. The applicant assumes
the risk of any delays in application submission through grants.gov and therefore is encouraged to submit your application early to ensure there is time to work out unforeseen issues.

E. Due Date

Proposals must be received 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 29, 2020. Grants.gov provides date and time stamps for all submitted applications. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application receipt.

F. Acknowledgement of Submission

Grants.gov provides receipt of application submissions.

G. Withdrawal

Proposals may be withdrawn by written notice at any time before award execution. A letter on official letterhead must be signed by the applicant or an authorized representative and emailed to the inbox listed in Section VII. of this notice (nrscig@wdc.usda.gov).

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Proposals will be screened initially for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this announcement. Incomplete or noncompliant proposals will be eliminated from competition prior to initiation of the peer review process.

A. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

1. Risk Criteria Evaluation.—In accordance with 2 CFR 200.205, NRCS will review risk posed by applicants. This screening process includes—

   • Confirming the applicant does not have an active exclusion in SAM precluding it from eligibility receipt of an award (i.e., suspended or debarred; see 2 CFR Part 180 and 7 CFR Part 417).
   • Confirming the applicant does not have adverse information located in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS).

2. Proposal Evaluation Criteria.—The technical peer review panels use the following criteria, using a 100 point scale, to evaluate applications:

   Project Purpose, Innovation and Scientific Approach (25 points)
   • The project purpose is compelling and the rationale is explicit for why On-Farm Trials of the innovative approach are needed.
   • The design and implementation of the project, including the method for determining the structure of incentive payments, is sound and based on accepted scientific methodology;
   • The innovative conservation approach(es) tested has applicability for a range of ag operation sizes and types.
   • SHD ONLY—all soil health assessments and methodologies are consistent with NRCS-approved assessments and methodologies.
• SHD ONLY—priority consideration given to proposals that address more than one soil health management principle.

Project Management (30 points)
• Project management staff has experience managing a Federal financial award and working on the ground with agricultural producers, and requisite experience managing similar projects.
• Applicant has agreed to be responsible for all technical assistance required to implement innovative approaches with producers. Proposal includes qualifications of identified entities and individuals providing technical assistance to producers.
• The budget is justified and reasonable, and expenses allowable.
• Proposal includes substantial value-added contributions from the applicant and partners to leverage the NRCS On-Farm Trials investment.
• The project engages historically underserved producers to participate in On-Farm Trials.

Evaluation Approach (20 points)
• A scientifically robust evaluation plan is described that incorporates the assessment of economic and social (to the extent possible) outcomes in addition to environmental benefits.
• There is a plan for development of communications products related to project outcomes, and a plan for meaningful dissemination of project results to agricultural producers and stakeholders.

Project Outcomes (25 points)
• Project results are likely to lead to development of new or modification of existing NRCS business practices, guidance documents, technical tools, and conservation practice standards.
• Project results and evaluation are likely to result in more widespread adoption of the approach.

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals that pass the initial screening are then evaluated using a three-part process:
• Technical peer review panels composed of subject matter experts evaluate the proposals. Proposals are evaluated against the On-Farm Trials Proposal Evaluation Criteria above.
• NRCS State Conservationists in the States where On-Farm Trials work is proposed evaluate the relevant proposals for ethical concerns and duplication of effort, and provide review comments.
• The NRCS Chief makes the final award selections.

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

NRCS anticipates announcing On-Farm Trials and SHD selections through a USDA press release in September 2020. Applicants should plan their projects based on a project start date of January 1, 2021.
VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Federal Award Notices

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants can expect to receive official notification by email from NRCS staff. Awardees may not begin their project until a fully executed grant agreement has been signed by both NRCS and the awardee. The notice of Federal award form (ADS-093) signed by the authorized agency official is the only authorizing document, and will be provided electronically to the applicant’s authorized official.

Unsuccessful Applicants

Applicants whose proposals are not selected for funding will receive feedback on their proposal. This evaluation will be emailed to the technical and administrative contacts listed in the proposal within 90 days of the announcement of On-Farm Trials selections. Please do not contact NRCS requesting application feedback prior to the end of this 90-day period.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All project funds will be used in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and NRCS’ General Terms and Conditions Grants and Cooperative Agreements. A copy of the General Terms and Conditions Grants and Cooperative Agreements document may be obtained by emailing the contact listed in Section VII below.

C. Patents, Inventions, and Copyrights

Allocation of rights to patents, inventions, and copyrights shall be in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200. This regulation provides that small businesses normally may retain the principal worldwide patent rights to any invention developed with USDA support. In accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, this provision will also apply to commercial organizations for the purposes of CIG. USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal use, reserves the right to require the patentee to license others in certain circumstances, and requires that anyone exclusively licensed to sell the invention in the United States must normally manufacture it domestically. With regard to copyright, the grant recipient may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and was developed, or for which ownership was acquired, under an award. USDA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes and to authorize others to do so.

All tools produced must meet the accessibility of Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) requirements as specified in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d) as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220). Specifically, subsection 508(a)(1) requires that when the Federal Government procures EIT, it must allow Federal employees and individuals of the public with disabilities comparable access to and use of information and data that is provided to Federal employees and individuals of the public without disabilities. All EIT that is subject to the 36 CFR 1194 standards will have a Section 508 acceptance test and will be validated upon acceptance. All maintenance for EIT that requires upgrades, modifications, installations, and purchases will adhere to the Section 508 standards
and 36 CFR 1194. Email the inbox below in Section VII with specific questions with regard to the applicability of this section.

D. Reporting

Reporting details are included in the fully executed grant agreement. Reporting generally includes electronic submission of semiannual progress reports, annual financial status reports, and a final report.

If the Federal share of any agreement awarded under this opportunity notice may include more than $500,000 over the period of performance, recipients must also comply with the post award reporting requirements reflected in Appendix XII of 2 CFR Part 200 —Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

Applicants that receive awards pursuant to this opportunity and any sub awardees must comply with the reporting requirements described at 2 CFR Part 170, unless an exception applies. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with those requirements. A list of exceptions can be found at 2 CFR 170.110(b).

VII. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT:

Potential applicants may contact NRCS with questions. The email address below is accessed by multiple people, so someone will respond even if others are unexpectedly absent during critical periods.

Email: nrcscig@usda.gov

USDA-NRCS
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Room 5242
Washington, DC 20250

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

On-Farm Trials proposals are considered to be confidential information. Proposals are not shared with individuals or entities seeking public disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) without the consent of the applicant. More specifically, Executive Order 12600 and USDA FOIA regulation 7 CFR Section 1.12 require the NRCS to provide notice to applicants that a third party has requested copies of their business information, requires NRCS to consult with applicants regarding any release of their records.
B. Notice to Applicants

The Federal Government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of this announcement. Only authorized Federal officials can bind the Federal Government to the expenditure of funds.

C. U.S. Department of Agriculture Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at https://www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

Email: program.intake@usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.
NOTE: This appendix includes guidance on developing a budget narrative, as well as a template budget table and budget narrative. To ensure consistency in proposals and proposal reviews, applicants are required to use this budget table and narrative format in their proposals. An Excel spreadsheet and editable document version of these files are located on the CIG On-Farm Trials website at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/cig/?cid=nrcseprd1459039.

Creating a Budget and Budget Narrative

1. A CIG budget narrative has two parts:
   - A table totaling all major budget line items (the major line items on the SF 424A are: salary, fringe, travel, supplies, equipment, contractual, construction, other, and indirect costs) by year. The table includes subcategories listed below each line item, giving a clear breakdown of project costs. The table should contain both Federal and non-Federal portions of the project budget.
   - A written narrative that aligns with the budget table. It should provide descriptive details on the items listed in the table for both the Federal and non-Federal portion of the table.

2. Level of Detail:
   A budget narrative outlines project details sufficient to allow reviewers to evaluate the integrity of the proposed spending and clarifies project intent. The level of detail for each line item may vary, but applicants should consider the following:
   - Personnel.—The description should include the general function or major tasks of each major team member and their time commitment to the project. There should be a total cost listed for each project team member by year. If a project contributor has not yet been hired, the position title can be provided in lieu of a name. If available, details on cost should be included such as percent of time, rate of pay, and estimated hours.
   - Fringe Benefits.—This should appear separate from Personnel in the budget. The fringe benefit rate for each individual receiving benefits and how the rate was calculated should be provided alongside the total amount of funds provided per year to that individual.
   - Travel – This should include the reason for the travel, the team members expected to travel, and the major costs (transportation, lodging, meals or per diem, etc.) associated with each type of travel should be outlined. Derivation of costs estimates should be provided (e.g., Federal General Services Administration per diem rates, university guidelines, etc.).
   - Supplies.—The general supply categories that will be charged should be listed. For instance, if the team will be doing soil health monitoring, items such as soil sampling supplies, or instruments for measuring samples should be included. Smaller supplies (e.g., workshop printouts and markers) need not be broken down by individual units but larger supplies should be described with unit cost and intended use.
   - Equipment.—This includes only tangible personal property over $5,000 per unit with a lifetime over one year. Within this narrative, explain the reason for purchasing/renting
any equipment. If equipment will be purchased, the type of equipment and supplier should be described, what it will be used for, who will be allowed to use it, why it is needed, and how long it will be used. The project should also identify what will be done with the equipment once the project is over. If rented, the rental cost must be justified. Specific 2 CFR 200 provisions apply to equipment that equals or exceeds $5,000 in value.

- **Contractual.**—If contractors will be doing multiple tasks for the award, separate line items should be used. If a contractor will just be serving one project function, is not considered part of the project team, and will not require a subcontract, a simple description of the contracted work is enough. Be sure to identify the name of the contractor (if known), the method of procurement, and the scope of work for the services if not in the proposal narrative.

- **Other.**—This is a general line item that covers expenditures that do not fit in other categories. This is where sub-awards should be placed. This category often includes fees like laboratory analysis/rental costs. Be sure to identify what individual costs and provide sufficient description to justify the costs.

- **Indirect.**—Either a current NICRA or *de minimus* rate should be identified. Note that indirect costs are not permitted to be charged to the Federal portion of CIG On-Farm Trials budgets but unrecovered indirect costs may be counted as partner contribution.

- **Program Income.**—If the awardee plans to accrue income from grant-supported activities (e.g., workshop registration fees collected), this program income must be estimated. Other examples of program income include fees for services performed and the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award.

3. **Additional Guidance:**

- **Sub-budgets** are not required for contractors or sub-awardees. Please give details on the contractor or sub-awardee costs in the “Contractor” section of the budget. Be sure to identify and include separate NICRA paperwork and percentages when a contractor’s rate differs from the awardee’s rate.

- **Budget narratives** should not include information included in other parts of the proposal.

- **While drafting the budget,** keep in mind that an agreement amendment is not required for post-agreement budget changes of 10 percent or less (of the total project budget, Federal and non-Federal portions). However, all budget changes do require notice to NRCS contacts and submittal of updated budget documents as necessary.

- **All figures in the budget** must be rounded to the nearest dollar.
Sample budget table—a downloadable Excel spreadsheet of this budget table is available here.

### FEDERAL BUDGET

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
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### NON-FEDERAL BUDGET

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TOTAL: $826,145 (58%)  
TOTAL: $595,500 (42%)
SAMPLE BUDGET NARRATIVE

NAME OF Awardee
Project Title
PROJECT TOTAL: $XXX
Federal Portion: $XXX
Non-Federal Contribution: $XXX

1. FEDERAL BUDGET:

a. Personnel

Tom Smith, Project Director, full time, 50% paid by Federal funds, will advise the project team, assist with demonstration plot establishment, data collection and analysis, and participate in project field days. Year 1: $45,000; Year 2: $45,000; Year 3: $45,000

Mary Johnson, research technician, 50 % time (6 calendar months) for three years, 50% paid by Federal funds. Establish the field and demonstration plots, function as the project manager, coordinating sub-award work, drafting reports and publications, and participating in all project field days. Year 1: $15,000; Year 2: $15,000; Year 3: $15,000.

Undergraduate students, paid hourly. Support is requested for three undergraduate students to assist with fieldwork (emergence counting, soil sample collection, planting, harvest, etc.) in each year of the project. These students will be employed approximately 4 months during the summer at $14/hr and 30 hr/week. Year 1: $26,880; Year 2: $26,880; Year 3: $26,880.

Total Personnel: Year 1: $86,880; Year 2: $86,880; Year 3: $86,880

b. Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits paid by Federal funds is 50%. Fringe benefits rates are as follows: 35% for faculty and permanent staff; 7 percent for student hourly employees.

c. Travel

Funds are requested to support travel for plot preparation and data collection trips, and travel to four field days within the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Estimated 5,000 mi/yr at a rate of $0.60/mi. Year 1: $3,000; Year 2: $3,000; Year 3: $3,000.

Funds are requested for overnight hotel stays at demonstration plot locations at the State hotel rate of $90/night, 4 times per year ($360/yr). Year 1: $360; Year 2: $360; Year 3: $360.

Funds are requested in the second and third year for three individual trips each year to scientific conferences based on the following estimates: Lodging - 3 nights x $150/night ($450); Per diem $50/day x 4 days ($200); Transportation: Airline travel to conference location - $400/flight + ground transportation - $50 + parking at airport - $30 ($480). Year 2: $3390; Year 3: $3390.

Total Travel: Year 1: $3,360, Year 2: $6,750, Year 3: $6,750.
d. Equipment - none

e. Supplies

Field and lab supplies: Funds are requested for the purchase of soil temperature and moisture probes and data logging systems ($2,000). Funds are also requested to purchase weed suppression technologies, seeds, and irrigation supplies for field plots ($6,000). Funds are also requested for various lab supplies and sampling equipment ($3,000). Total Supplies: Year 1: $4,000; Year 2: $4,000; Year 3: $3,000.

f. Contractual/Subaward

Three contractors:

Contract with Super Non-Profits ($219,000).

Personnel:
Elizabeth Smith will oversee the outreach to farmers. She will work 80% time all 3 years of the project, 75% covered with Federal funding. She will oversee all elements of this part of the project, including contacting and recruiting farmers, organizing outreach events such as field days and on farm assistance.

Tom Jones will spend 20% time providing technical assistance to community-based organizations that support producers. 50% will be covered with Federal funding.

Supplies:
Workshop supplies: this will include basic supplies such as poster-boards, tapes, etc. to support the workshop. Year One and include $2,600 for educational materials / publications, printing and copying; and $400 for meeting supplies (paper, pens, pencils, markers, flip charts, easels, etc.) annually.

Contract with Amazing Graphics and Marketing ($5,000)
Marketing team will use innovative digital marketing tools to reach producers and help gain interest. Team will develop graphics and video production to support program recruitment and teaching tools.

Contract with Innovative Technology ($30,000)
Contractor will help develop online tools to assist producers with conservation practices.

Total Contractual: Year 1: $83,000; Year 2: $85,500; Year 3: $85,500

g. Construction - None requested

h. Other

Farmer Incentive Payments.—An incentive of $100 an acre will be given to farmers to adopt the cover crop practices described in the project. This effectively pays rental cost. A few other costs, such as seed costs, will be given to farmers, but will not be part of the incentive payment. Estimated 20,000 acres will be enrolled in this project. Year 1: $50,000; Year 2: $100,000; Year 3: $50,000.
Sample Testing & Analysis.—Basic nutrient testing and soil health testing will be done annually for all plots. Roughly 20 samples a year at $250/sample ($5,000/year).

Total Other Costs: Year 1: $55,000 Year 2: $105,000; Year 3: $55,000.

2. NON-FEDERAL BUDGET:

a. Personnel
Tom Smith, Project Director, full time, 50% paid by non-Federal funds, will advise the project team, assist with demonstration plot establishment, data collection and analysis, and participate in project field days. Year 1: $45,000; Year 2: $45,000; Year 3: $45,000.

Mary Johnson, research technician, 50% time (6 calendar months) for 3 years, 50% paid by non-Federal funds. Establish the field and demonstration plots, function as the project manager, coordinating sub-award work, drafting reports and publications, and participating in all project field days. Year 1: $15,000; Year 2: $15,000; Year 3: $15,000.

Total Personnel: Year 1: $60,000; Year 2: $60,000; Year 3: $60,000.

b. Fringe benefits
Fringe benefits paid by non-Federal funds, 50%. Fringe benefits rates are as follows: 35% for faculty and permanent staff.

c. Equipment
Field equipment rental. This is match donated by the partner community groups (see in-kind letter.) Will provide all farming equipment (tools, planters, harvesters) for on-farm demonstrations. Year 1: $2,000; Year 2: $500; Year 3: $500.

d. Supplies - none

e. Contractual/Subaward
Contract with super nonprofits ($91,000).
Personnel:
Elizabeth Smith will oversee the outreach to farmers. She will devote 80% of her time all 3 years of the project and 25% of her time will be non-Federal. She will oversee all elements of this part of the project, including contacting and recruiting farmers, organizing outreach events such as field days and on farm assistance.

Tom Jones will spend 20% time providing technical assistance to community-based organizations that support producers. This time covered by non-Federal funds is 50%.

Half time admin support to help support program facilitation.

Other:
Workshop rental space will be donated by contractor, with an estimated value of $100 per day. Year 2: $2000; Year 3: $2000.

Soil Conservation District

The local soil and water conservation district will support the project by helping to build partner relationships with local producers. Year 1: $10,000; Year 2: $10,000; Year 3: $10,000.

Subaward with Unknown University

Dr. Mark Gibbs will provide oversight for all the out-of-State work. He will dedicate 10% time commitment to the project. (Salary and Fringe $15,000/year).

One post-doctoral candidate yet to be determined will give 50% time to the project and will develop all field and lab methodologies for the project. (Salary and Fringe $30,000/year).

Total Contractual: Year 1: $105,000; Year 2: $107,000; Year 3: $107,000.

f. Construction - None requested

g. Other Costs:

General Services.—Web development, printing, accounting, administrative, and project management, $15,000. Roughly $5,000 will be spent each year.

Publication Costs.—Funds are requested for the development and publication of various materials including extension publications, costs associated with peer reviewed journals in addition to costs associated with copies of brochures made in house. Year 1: $1,000; Year 2: $2,000; Year 3: $2,000.

Legal Fees.—Community support groups will pay all legal fees regarding the research of any legal implications on the project. $4,000 annually.

Total Other: Year 1: $10,000; Year 2: $11,000; Year 3: $11,000.