



# How **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES** apply for NMDA's Healthy Soil Program grants

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co-leads

# Welcome and Housekeeping

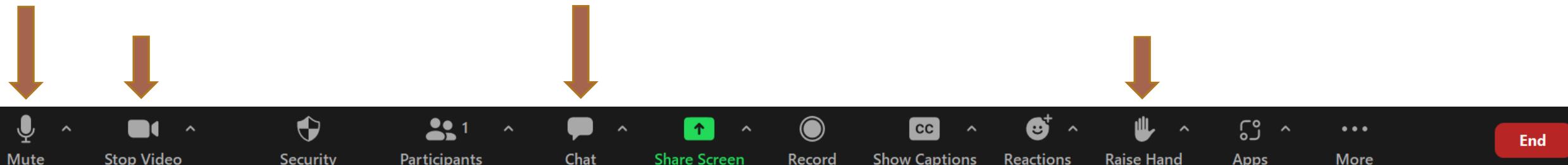
We invite you to **introduce yourself in the Chat**, noting:

- The name of your **Eligible Entity**
- Whether your Eligible Entity manages land for **crops, grazing, or another purpose**

**During** the presentation, please stay on **Mute**, keep your **Video** off, and type questions in the **Chat**

**After** the presentation, you can use the **Raise Hand** feature, then unmute to ask your question

These slides and a captioned recording will be posted soon on our Eligible Entity web page



# Agenda

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- **Who** can apply
- **When** and **Where** projects can happen
- **What** projects are eligible
- **How** and **Where** to apply for NMDA's Healthy Soil Program grants as an Eligible Entity



# WHO can apply for NMDA's Healthy Soil Program grants

## 1. ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

- New Mexico's "local **governmental** [entities] with proven land management capacity to support healthy soil":
  - Pueblos, tribes, and nations
  - Acequias
  - Land grants
  - Soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs)
  - NMSU Cooperative Extension Service
  - Other governmental parties meeting the above definition of an Eligible Entity
- **Application period:** January 16-**March 20, 2026, at 12 p.m. (noon)**
- **Awards of up to \$100,000.00** (including mileage + 15% administrative fee, both of which NMDA pays to the Eligible Entity itself)

## 2. INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS

- New Mexico's **non-governmental** parties that are *directly engaged in farming, ranching, or another form of land management*:
  - Individuals
  - Businesses
  - Nonprofits
- Application period: January 16-**March 20, 2026, at 12 p.m. (noon)**
  - Note the separate **conservation planning deadline of February 20**
- Awards of up to **\$24,999.99** (including mileage + 15% administrative fee, both of which NMDA pays your Project Sponsor)

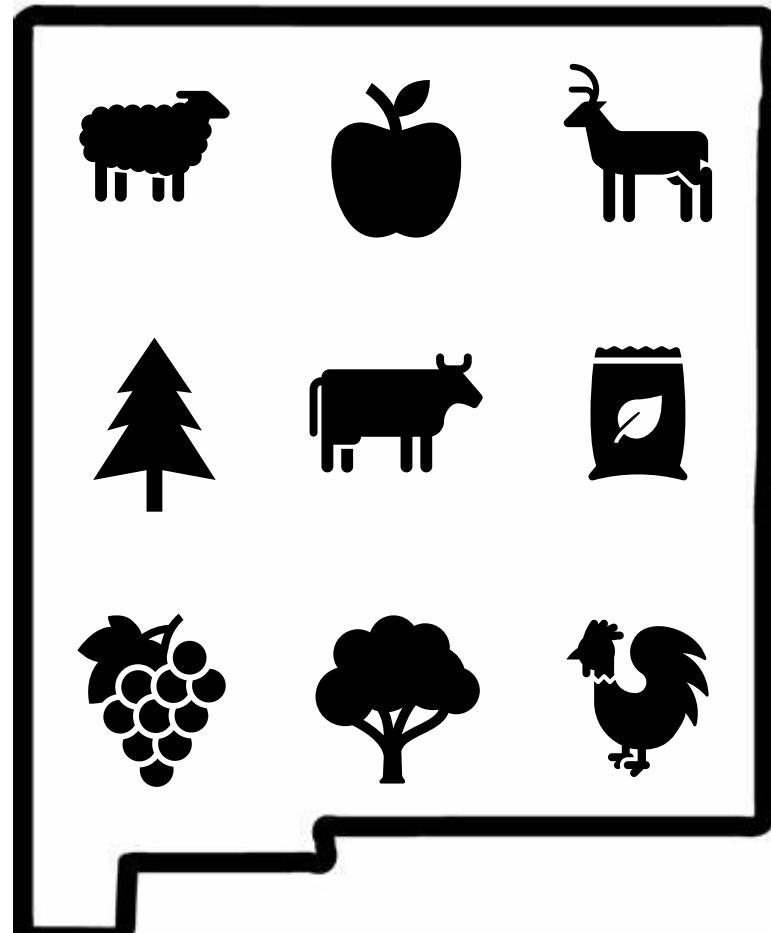
# WHEN Healthy Soil Program grants can happen

Projects can last **up to ~15 months**,  
starting mid-July 2026 and ending September 2027

July 15, 2026		August	September	October	November
December	January 2027	February	March	April	
May	June	July	August	September 30, 2027	



# WHERE Healthy Soil Program projects can happen



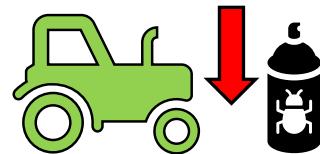
- Anywhere in New Mexico
- On any type of operation: cropland, rangeland, irrigated pasture, forest land, orchards, vineyards, gardens...
- Where there's an *existing relationship to the land*: your Eligible Entity owns/leases/manages the land, or your Eligible Entity simply is allowed to perform work on it
  - **Bottom line: Your Eligible Entity must have landowner permission** to implement a soil health project on land your Eligible Entity doesn't own
- On any amount of land: Projects can be measured in acres or square feet

NMDA's Healthy Soil Program grants fund on-the-ground projects involving 1+ of **the 5 soil health principles:**

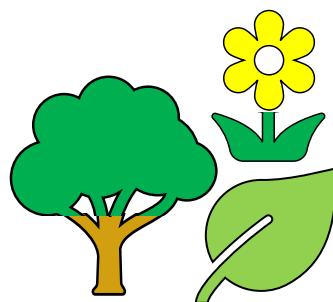
**1. Keep soil covered.**



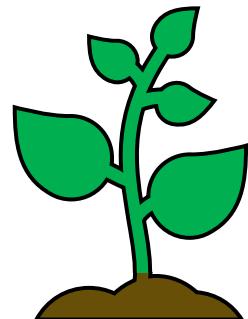
**2. Minimize disturbance on cropland and minimize external inputs.**



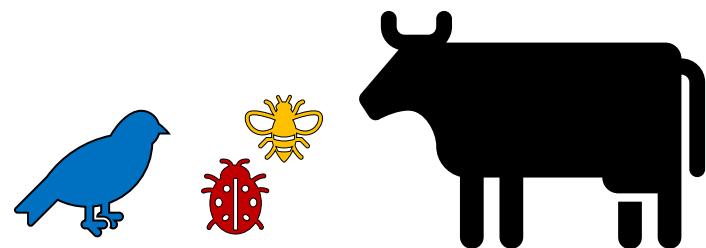
**3. Maximize biodiversity.**



**4. Maintain a living root.**



**5. Integrate animals into land management**, including grazing animals, birds, beneficial insects or keystone species, such as earthworms.



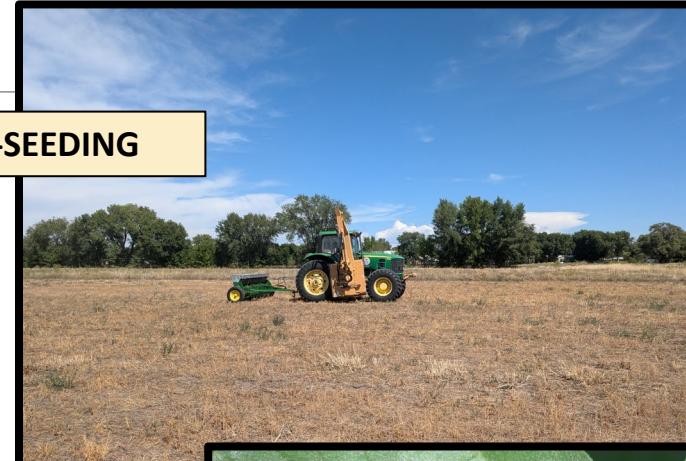
**Q: How does an ELIGIBLE ENTITY decide *which* soil health principle(s) should be at the heart of their on-the-ground project?**

**A:** Using local knowledge and consulting your local office of USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and/or NMSU—Cooperative Extension Service can help your Eligible Entity **identify soil health-related resource concerns** (erosion, compaction, etc.). Then the Eligible Entity can determine which soil health principle(s) is/are best for the land.

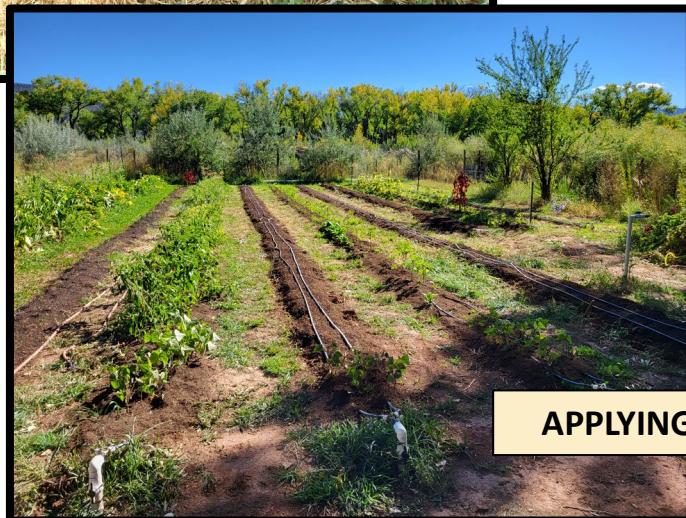
# Sample project activities on cropland



PLANTING A DIVERSE COVER CROP MIX



DRILL-SEEDING



APPLYING MANURE/COMPOST



ESTABLISHING POLLINATOR HABITAT

# Sample activities on rangeland

## BALE GRAZING

to restore cover on bare ground



## VIRTUAL FENCING

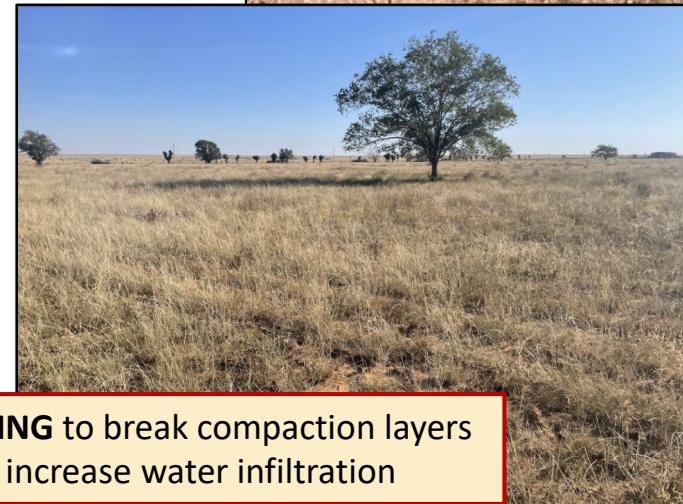
to improve grazing distribution



**INTENSIVE ROTATIONAL GRAZING**  
to lengthen rest/recovery periods



**SUBSOILING** to break compaction layers  
and increase water infiltration



**Everything you need to apply as a “local governmental entity with proven land management capacity to support healthy soil” is on the ELIGIBLE ENTITY webpage – just follow Steps 1-4.**

## FY27 Requirements and Outreach Opportunities for Eligible Entities

Eligible Entities include New Mexico's pueblos, tribes, and nations; acequias; land grants; soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs); NMSU—Cooperative Extension Service; and other “local governmental [entities] with proven land management capacity to support healthy soil”, as Eligible Entities are defined in the Healthy Soil Act.

The step-by-step application process outlined below pertains to the next (Fiscal Year 2027, or FY27) Healthy Soil Program grant application cycle. The deadline to apply is 12 p.m. (noon) Mountain Time on Friday, March 20, 2026. **Late, incomplete, and paper applications will not be accepted or reviewed.**

Learn more about the FY27 program by reading the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) and by attending the following outreach opportunities:

- **September 30, 2025, webinar:** How eligible governmental entities can apply for NMDA's Healthy Soil Program grants. [Review the slides](#) or [watch the recording](#) (captions coming soon).
- **January 27, 2026, webinar from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. :** How Eligible Entities complete the online grant application. [Registration is required.](#)

For Healthy Soil Program updates – future funding opportunities, as well as soil health events and news – subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter using the form at the bottom of the [Healthy Soil Program](#) home page.

Step 1. Select the project site(s) and identify the top soil health-related resource concern(s).

Step 2. Develop the project idea.

Step 3. Work on the online application.

Step 4. Finalize and submit the online application.

Questions? Email NMDA's Healthy Soil Program team at [hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu).

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Follow us to the Healthy Soil Program webpage  
for **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES**

If you have a smartphone handy, **scan this QR code**



# Tips to help your Eligible Entity apply for a Healthy Soil Program grant...

- ✓ Follow application **steps 1-4 in order**.
- ✓ **Stay in the driver's seat of your Eligible Entity's application**, even as you seek input from others (NRCS, your Project Sponsor, NMDA, trusted nonprofits, etc.)
- ✓ Review your Eligible Entity's timeline/budget to **ensure that all requested goods and services are essential to the project** – and eligible for grant funding.
- ✓ Doublecheck – even **triple-check** – **your Eligible Entity's application** before pressing submit.
- ✓ Aim to **submit your Eligible Entity's online application (including all documents) early** to avoid the possibility of technical issues on your end.

# Questions?



**Visit our website to learn more  
and to subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter**  
featuring application tips and deadline reminders,  
as well as soil health events, news, etc.

[https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/  
healthy-soil-program.html](https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/healthy-soil-program.html)



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