

Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26)
NMDA's Healthy Soil Program
Conservation Planning Template required for Individual Applicants with cropland
USDA-NRCS in-field assessment and recommendations

NOTE: Conservation planning with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a **pre-application requirement** for Individual Applicants seeking Healthy Soil Program grants. If you are applying for a grant with a project that will occur on cropland, you must submit this template (or an existing conservation plan from NRCS) as part of your application. **This template was not designed for the Individual Applicant to complete themselves. This template must be completed in cooperation with USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)* on or before February 21, 2025.** Failure to submit an NRCS conservation plan or this template (completed in cooperation with NRCS, including the planner's signature) as part of your Healthy Soil Program application will render your application incomplete and thus ineligible.

NOTE: NMDA's Healthy Soil Program requires grant applicants to upload a soils map ([using https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/](https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/)) as part of their online application. Because such a map indicates different soil types within the project site and is essential to the conservation planning process, NMDA recommends that all applicants create and study this map *prior to* their conservation-planning appointment with NRCS.

Farmer/Land Manager: _____

Farm Location: (Physical Address, Section/Range/Township, Latitude/Longitude) _____

County: _____

Field names with associated acres / square footage:

Field name/number									
Acres / sq. ft.									

FOR THE INDIVIDUAL APPLICANT: Using only the space below, describe your soil health-related goals.

FOR THE CONSERVATION PLANNER: Using only the space below, describe your observations regarding the Individual Applicant’s current cropping system and management activities such as crop rotation, tillage operations, and weed/pest management. If irrigation water is applied, describe the type of irrigation system used.

FOR THE CONSERVATION PLANNER: Using only the space below, describe your observations regarding the Individual Applicant’s existing resource concerns related to soil health. Examples: decreased water infiltration, compaction, organic matter depletion, etc.

FOR THE CONSERVATION PLANNER: Complete the table below by listing the resource concerns you observe related to soil health, the agricultural/conservation practices you recommend to address each resource concern, and the soil health principle(s) that corresponds with that agricultural/conservation practice.

Reference these **soil health principles** (as defined in the Healthy Soil Act) when completing the table below.

- 1) Keeping soil covered
- 2) Minimizing soil disturbance on cropland and minimizing external inputs
- 3) Maximizing biodiversity
- 4) Maintaining a living root
- 5) Integrating animals into land management, including grazing animals, birds, beneficial insects or keystone species, such as earthworms

Agricultural/conservation practices must be planned in accordance with NRCS-NM Standards and Specifications. Please note if the practices will be completed in phases (Year 1, Year 2, etc.) as part of a soil health management system.

Planning criteria must include at a minimum:

- Planned implementation date
- Planned amount (acres/sq. ft., lbs. applied, etc.)
- Planned species and seeding rates (cover crop, pollinator habitat, native grasses, field borders, etc.)

Soil Health-Related Resource Concern	Agricultural Practice Please list all practices required for project implementation	Planning Criteria Field name/number, planned date, amount implemented, species, etc.	Soil Health Principle Use numbers 1-5 from the list above

FOR THE CONSERVATION PLANNER: Additional notes related to soil health such as but not limited to:

- In-field assessment results
- Expected outcomes

Farmer/Land Manager signature

Date

NRCS Conservation Planner signature

Name

Title

Local USDA Service Center

Date

* This template was created in cooperation with USDA NRCS-NM. NRCS-NM provides financial support to NMDA's Healthy Soil Program through a contribution agreement.