

Incentives and Support Programs to Promote Adoption of SPM in California – Working Document

Purpose

Successfully transitioning to sustainable pest management (SPM) can require time, economic investments, and complex technical knowledge. Various federal and state programs, nonprofit organizations, and other resources exist to help California growers, land managers, homeowners, and pest management practitioners make this transition.

This document provides a simple overview of existing resources, organized to help individuals identify those relevant to their needs. It covers direct financial incentives, grants that fund on-farm demonstrations and research, tax credits, loans, application assistance, technical training and educational resources, and more. Programs differ in eligibility, application requirements, funding methods, and availability. This document is intended to help you find up to date information about these opportunities and support the transition to SPM.

Disclaimer: Inclusion of a program or organization within this resource does not represent an endorsement by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). Users are encouraged to review all programs and consult with professionals before applying to or participating in any program.

This is a working document, last updated August 31, 2026. Please send recommendations for additional programs that promote SPM adoption to SPMAdvisory@cdpr.ca.gov.



Table of Contents

Direct-to-grower incentives programs	3
Federal programs	3
State programs	3
Nonprofit programs	4
Grant programs	5
Federal programs	5
State programs	6
Nonprofit programs	6
Loan access	6
Nonprofit programs	6
Tax credits	7
Federal programs	7
State programs	7
Land conservation and easement tools	7
State programs	7
Nonprofit programs	8
Urban pest management programs and opportunities	8
Local and regional programs	8
Nonprofit programs	9
Other resources	9
Webinars	9
Pest management technical assistance resources	10

Direct-to-grower incentives programs

Federal programs

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) [Environmental Quality Incentive Program \(EQIP\)](#)

- NRCS's flagship financial and technical assistance program for producers
- Reimbursement-based program; growers generally receive compensation when practices are completed and verified
- Program funds more than 200 practices including those related to IPM, soil health, irrigation, groundwater conservation, air quality, run-off, wildlife habitat, pollinator habitat, and more
- Eligible IPM activities include development of site-specific IPM plans (with land-grant university or other science-based standards), pest monitoring systems, risk assessments, habitat for beneficial insects, and environmental and pesticide resistance mitigations

USDA NRCS [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#)

- Annual payment program that rewards producers for maintaining and improving conservation practices – unlike EQIP, CSP recognizes existing practices and incentivizes further improvement
- Relevant enhancements include ecologically based pest management, cover crops, pollinator habitat, and reduced pesticide risk in surface and groundwater

USDA NRCS [Regenerative Pilot Program](#)

- New, outcomes-based program funded through EQIP and CSP
- Whole-farm holistic conservation planning, including pest management, is centerpiece of the program
- Bundled practices are integrated into a single application

State programs

CDFA [Healthy Soils Program \(HSP\)](#)

- Reimbursement-based program that supports implementation of practices that improve soil health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, many of which also support resilient agroecosystems and beneficial insects
- Eligible practices include cover crops, compost, hedgerow planting, mulching and reduced tillage

- Recently transitioned to a block grant model; CDFA awards intermediary organizations, who then solicit projects from individual producers

CDFA [Organic Transition Pilot Program](#)

- Supports farmers and ranchers preparing land for organic certification
- Structured as a block grant to eligible organizations, which then provide direct financial assistance and support to farmers and ranchers
- Provides technical assistance, application support, business planning, and language access services. Grower costs may be reimbursed or supported through advances depending on the awardee structure

CDFA [Pollinator Habitat Program](#)

- Provides financial assistance for development of pollinator habitat with floral resources and host plants
- Funds are available to eligible groups/organizations to collaborate with farmers/ranchers. Payments are reimbursed based upon successful completion (verification) of each project
- Hedgerow planting, cover crop, riparian herbaceous cover, conservation cover, critical area planting, tree/shrub establishment, and windbreak placement are all considered as acceptable practices

Nonprofit programs

Project Apis m. [Seeds for Bees](#)

- Provides free or low-cost cover crop seed mixtures to CA commercial orchard growers and commercial beekeepers
- Supports SPM through enhancing food resources and habitats for beneficial insects while also promoting healthy soils
- First year farmers/beekeepers can receive up to \$2,500 in seed mixes; applicants must plant at least six acres of cover crops in California

Zero Foodprint [Compost Connector](#)

- Rebate program for California growers who purchase compost from pre-approved composting facilities
- Promotes soil health and carbon sequestration through the distribution of compost to farms/ranches

Xerces Society [Pollinator Habitat Kits](#)

- Proposals can be submitted for free plant kits which include a varying number of native plants as well as growing instructions. Kits can be used to create or enhance monarch and pollinator habitat on working lands, public lands, tribal lands, and private/non-working lands recovering from wildfires, with landowner or land manager collaboration. This includes farms, ranches, tribal land, post-wildfire recovery areas, urban farms or gardens, city parks, school gardens, or other public areas, but it does not cover home gardens.
- Kits provide up to 600 plants and are tailored to the goals of the project, which may encompass providing pollinator habitat, hedgerow and riparian hedgerow habitat, or pollinator overwintering sites.

Grant programs

Note: Growers may not be eligible to directly apply for all grant programs, but they may benefit by partnering with universities, local cooperative extension agents, nonprofits, or other eligible entities.

Federal programs

USDA NRCS [Conservation Innovation Grants](#) (CIG)

- Competitive grants within EQIP program that fund development and testing of innovative conservation approaches, typically through university, nonprofit, and grower partnerships
- Supports on-farm trials and pilot studies to implement and evaluate conservation practices
- Previous grants have funded biocontrol, landscape-level pest monitoring, and decision-support tools
- Growers do not play a role in the application process but are brought in later to host field trials

USDA [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education \(SARE\) Grants](#), Western Region

- Competitive grants supporting sustainable agriculture projects that incorporate both research and outreach
- Farmer/Rancher grants allow growers and technical advisors to apply directly to fund on-farm trials
- Past projects have evaluated a wide range of non-chemical or lower-risk pest and weed management practices and tools, including natural enemy release, organic pesticides, and cultural practices

State programs

CDFA [Biologically Integrated Farming Systems \(BIFS\) Grant Program](#)

- Funds on-farm demonstration projects of innovative, biologically integrated pest management programs that reduce chemical pesticide inputs
- Growers cannot apply directly but can partner with cooperative extension agents, nonprofits, or other eligible entities to develop a project
- Previous projects have provided financial and technical assistance to growers willing to implement BIFS practices and host a demonstration site

Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) [Sustainable Pest Management Grants](#)

- Competitive grant program supporting projects that advance SPM through IPM research, knowledge, outreach, tools, and implementation in agricultural, urban, and/or wildland settings
- Can fund projects that reduce impacts to public health or the environment from pesticide applications.
- Growers may apply as long as eligibility requirements are met; partnering with universities, nonprofits, or other relevant organizations is recommended

Nonprofit programs

Veteran farmer programs

- The [Farmer Veteran Coalition](#) offers \$1,000 to \$5,000 grants to assist veterans with purchasing equipment, scholarships, or breeding livestock. Applicants are evaluated on several criteria, including experience, goals, and community involvement. Grants are provided once per year, and payments are made directly to vendors on the farmer's behalf. Member discounts and official labels are also available.
- The [Farmer Veteran Coalition of California](#) offers the Bear Flag Vanguard Fund, a grant up to \$2,500 that can be used to purchase equipment, infrastructure, or other materials. Funds are disbursed directly to the vendor.

Loan access

Nonprofit programs

[California FarmLink](#)

- Provides loans to small and mid-scale farmers with limited access to conventional financing

- Conservation bridge loan can be paired with reimbursement programs like EQIP and HSP
- Offers bilingual business education and technical assistance, helping growers navigate incentives program

Tax credits

Federal programs

Federal Research Credit

- Tax credit that may apply when growers, companies, or partner organizations conduct qualified research and development – not routine adoption of standard practices
- Could potentially support coordinated field trials, led by UC Cooperative Extension or other organizations, to systematically evaluate SPM programs or technologies. Relevant SPM examples include testing pest monitoring systems, biopesticides, application technologies, or other methods that involve technical uncertainty and systematic evaluation
- Consult with tax professionals about applicability

State programs

California Research Tax Credit

- California credit generally follows the federal research credit model, with California-specific rules and qualified in-state research requirements
- May apply to SPM-related research, tool development, or on-farm experimentation conducted in California
- Consult with tax professionals about applicability

Land conservation and easement tools

State programs

[California Department of Conservation, Williamson Act Program](#)

- Voluntary program administered by local governments designed to help farmers lower operating costs and preserve agricultural land
- Contract agreements restrict land use to agricultural production while providing landowners with reduced property tax assessments
- Contracts generally last 10 years, and heavy fees are assessed for early exit

- Indirectly supports SPM by preserving working lands and providing cost savings that can be used to invest in sustainability practices

Nonprofit programs

The Nature Conservancy Private Lands Conservation

- Conserves ecologically important working lands while supporting sustainable agriculture, biodiversity, climate resilience, and water resources
- Partners with landowners, communities, cooperatives, and businesses to form local conservation groups; uses land trusts, conservation easements, private reserves, and incentives
- Conservation easements are voluntary agreements to limit or prohibit certain uses or development in perpetuity
- SPM relevance through habitat protection, wildlife corridors, water quality protection, and approaches that support ecological pest management

Urban and vector control programs and services

Local and regional programs

Turf replacement programs

- Many California cities and water districts offer rebates for replacing water-intensive turf grass with drought tolerant native landscaping. This is relevant to SPM because turf is a significant driver of pesticide use and runoff in urban areas. Replacing turf with diverse native plantings can reduce reliance on herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides while supporting beneficial insects
- Rebate amounts and eligibility vary by region. Contact your local water agency or visit their website to find programs in your area

Mosquito and vector control programs

- The [Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California](#) encompasses many California city and county mosquito control organizations. Many organizations provide free-of-cost, direct services to homeowners or property managers, consultations to identify problem areas, and pesticide-free management options (i.e., providing mosquitofish or eliminating standing water)
- Certain mosquito and vector control agencies provide rebate programs for larger, more expensive projects to prevent mosquito populations from forming. Rebate programs, such as the one provided by the [Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector](#)

[Control District](#), vary by region. Contact your local mosquito and vector control agency for availability

- Commercial rebates are additionally available for PCAs and private pest control companies to encourage mosquito-specific control alternatives. Total rebate amounts vary by organization
- [Local water boards](#) offer rebate programs to reduce water waste and limit mosquito breeding opportunities using pool covers. Rebate amounts and eligibility vary by region. Contact your local water agency or visit their website to find programs in your area

Nonprofit programs

Residential native plant programs

- The [Xerces Society](#) provides native plants, planting guides and resources, and reporting tools directly to residential properties to increase the prevalence of native plants and reduce the need for urban pesticide use
- Residential property owners are required to apply and periodically report on the success of the program, but the plants and guides are provided free of cost

Other resources

Webinars

USDA NRCS 595 – Pest Management Conservation Systems practice standards

- [Land Grant and Extension: Facilitating use of NRCS Conservation Programs to increase adoption of IPM](#)
- [How crop consultants can facilitate use of NRCS Conservation Programs to support grower use of IPM practices](#)
- [Increasing resource conservation through adoption of Integrated Pest Management 595 conservation practice systems](#)

Foundation for Food and Agriculture (FFAR)

- New Perspectives on Integrated Pest Management - <https://foundationfar.org/events/new-perspectives-on-integrated-pest-management/>
- Latest Advances & Challenges in Developing & Implementing IPM - <https://foundationfar.org/events/latest-advances-challenges-in-developing-implementing-ipm/>

- Can Ecosystem Service Benefits Be Assessed and Valued for IPM Practices? - <https://foundationfar.org/events/can-ecosystem-service-benefits-be-assessed-valuated-for-ipm-practices/>

Pest management technical assistance resources

- [Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association \(ALBA\)](#)
- [California Certified Organic Farmers](#)
- [Center for Land-Based Learning](#)
- [Community Alliance with Family Farmers \(CAFF\)](#)
- [DPR Approved Continuing Education](#)
- [Healthy Schools Act](#)
- [IPM Institute of North America](#)
- [National Center for Appropriate Technology, Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas \(NCAT/ATTRA\)](#)
- [NRCS certified technical service providers](#)
- [Pollinator Partnership](#)
- [Organic Farming Research Foundation](#)
- [Resource Conservation Districts \(RCDs\)](#)
- [UC Cooperative Extension](#)
- [UC IPM](#)
- [UC Master Gardeners](#)
- [UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program \(SAREP\)](#)
- [Wild Farm Alliance](#)