

# [***REQUESTS FAR OUTPACE FUNDING FOR NEW SOIL HEALTH GRANT***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BPX-NYG1-JCBF-S03G-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

The following information was released by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA):

Equipment will be used to implement ***soil health*** practices on over 140,000 acres annually

April 3, 2024

Demand is high for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) new ***Soil Health*** Financial Assistance Grant.

The MDA recently awarded 81 grants to individual producers, producer groups, and local governments to purchase or retrofit ***soil health*** equipment. The grants total over $2.35 million.

Interest far outpaced available funding. The MDA received 284 applications for $8.4 million in requests more than three times the money in this round of grants.

The grants will provide up to 50% cost-share for equipment and parts, up to a cap of $50,000.

"Given the amount of interest in this program, we see Minnesota farmers want to invest in healthy ***soils*** that provide important benefits to water quality and our other natural resources," said MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen. "Specialized equipment and machinery can be a financial barrier for most producers trying to implement ***soil health*** practices. Yet we can offset costs through the ***Soil Health*** Financial Assistance Grant, helping to expand the number of Minnesota farmers and acres engaged in ***soil health*** activities."

The equipment provided by these grants is estimated to be used on more than 141,000 acres annually across Minnesota (SEE MAP). The ***soil health*** practices on those acres include cover cropping, no-till planting, strip tillage, incorporation of perennials into cropping systems, low-disturbance nutrient application, and more. The most common types of equipment noted in the grant awards were no-till drills (21) and strip tillage equipment (12).

This is the first full round of the ***Soil Health*** Financial Assistance Grant. A pilot program in early 2023 awarded $475,000 to 16 individuals and organizations across 15 counties. The pilot program received more than 230 applications for more than $6.5 million over 13 times the available funding.

Applications for the next round of the ***Soil Health*** Financial Assistance Grant will open in August.

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