***Grant applications are due December 2, 2022***

**MINI-GRANT PARTNERS**

The **Alameda County Conservation Partnership**, a collaboration between the Alameda County Resource Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in collaboration with **UC Cooperative Extension’s** Urban Ag & Food Systems Program announce the eighth round of our urban farm conservation mini-grant program, funded by the **Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District**, the **California Association of Resource Conservation Districts**, and the **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**.

**PURPOSE**

The urban farm conservation mini-grant program aims to enhance natural resources conservation and farm operational efficiencies on urban and urban-edge farms in Alameda County while improving yields and enhancing overall production. Mini-grants provide limited funding for farm or garden improvements that will enhance soil and water quality as well as habitat on-site, with benefits that positively impact the surrounding community and/or ecosystem. [Click here for more information about the program.](https://acrcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Conservation-Practices.pdf)

**WHAT TYPES OF CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES WILL BE FUNDED?**

Grants will cover the following types of activities:

* **Erosion control and runoff reduction measures-** e.g., bioswale, rain garden, or filter strips utilizing native, drought tolerant, or other appropriate plantings; straw wattles for storm drains; mulching; cover crops; rainwater collection systems[[1]](#footnote-1)
* **Water quality and efficiency improvements-** e.g., compost acquisition, compost systems, or compost covers; irrigation system improvements
* **Conservation and habitat plantings-** e.g., cover crops, hedgerows/pollinator plantings, bee and owl boxes, drought tolerant or native plantings
* **Informational/educational signage-** e.g., placards explaining the purpose of a rain garden or filter strip; a sign describing various run-off/erosion mitigation practices and how this supports water quality in an adjacent creek or channel

This list is a sample and applicants should feel free to propose additional conservation activities that will benefit water, soil, or habitat resources and support sustainable production. [For additional information on conservation practices click here.](http://www.acrcd.org/GrowingLocal/UrbanFarmsMiniGrantProgram/UrbanFarmConsPractice.aspx)

**FREE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Farms may also apply for free technical assistance independent of or in addition to application for conservation project funds. Technical assistance may be provided on topics such as irrigation installation and maintenance; fruit tree management; compost production and application; cover cropping; design, installation, and maintenance of native hedgerows; soil nutrient and urban soil quality management; integrated pest management; and more.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible applicants include urban farms, community and school gardens, and organizations with urban farming programs including faith-based and therapeutic organizations. The site where the project is to be implemented must be actively in food growing production. Priority will be given to urban farms managed by or serving marginalized populations, including unhoused, formerly incarcerated, low-income, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC), and schools with a high percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch.

We are able to offer funding to urban farms throughout Alameda County, however preference will be given to project sites located within [Alameda County Flood Control District Zones 2, 2A, 3A, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12 & 13,](http://acfloodcontrol.org/floodplain-management/neighborhood-zones) including Oakland, San Leandro, Castro Valley, San Lorenzo, Hayward, Fremont, and Newark. [For more detail on priority locations click here.](https://acfloodcontrol.org/get-involved/get-involved-neighborhood-zones/) Previous grant recipients may re-apply if the proposed project clearly enhances the prior project’s conservation benefits and/or addresses different conservation issues and/or is being proposed for a new site.

**MONITORING**

Applicants agree to evaluate initial and anticipated success of conservation activities or register for a Technical Service Provider to assess the site and manage evaluation, sharing the findings via a Final Report due June 2, 2023. Monitoring will vary based on initial site assessment and project type, but may include estimated gallons of water saved per month, gallons of run-off diverted from storm drains, pounds of fertilizer avoided through use of compost, success of native plantings, etc. Before/after photos will be required in the final report. Applicants will be asked to describe their monitoring plan in the application.

**GRANT SIZE**

Funding requests are not to exceed $2,500. The Conservation Partnership reserves the right to partially fund projects. A diverse workgroup will select projects to be funded. Funding will support 4-6 projects during the 2022/23 grant cycle.

75% of grant funds will be made available upon completion of the contract agreement and submittal of an invoice from the grantee. The remaining 25% will be disbursed upon adequate completion of the project and submission of the Final Report. Grantees who are unable to carry out their proposed projects or demonstrate significant progress towards completion by the end of the grant period may be required to return funds.

**WHAT COSTS WILL THE GRANT COVER?**

Covered

* Materials and supplies for the project
* Equipment rental
* Signage
* Wages or salaries for labor (no more than 25% of total grant funds may be spent on labor)

Not Covered

* Food/Drinks
* Farm equipment or other big-ticket items not directly related to the project (e.g., rototiller, tractor implement, computer etc.)

**IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

* Proposals due: **December 2, 2022 – 5pm**
* Applicants notified, contracts and invoice templates sent out: **December 23, 2022**
	+ Grant funds will be disbursed within 30 days of receipt of a signed contract & invoice
* Final report, including photos, due: **June 2, 2023** *– form will be provided*
	+ Final grant payment will be disbursed within 30 days of receipt of a final invoice

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

* 2022/23 Priorities:
	+ Farm sites near, adjacent to, or containing a storm drain, creek, channel, or body of water to which farm run-off is likely to flow during a significant storm event
	+ Farm sites located in, producing food for, or providing educational opportunities for underserved communities[[2]](#footnote-2)
	+ Farms operated by Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, as defined by the 2017 Farmer Equity Act[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Efforts by the implementing organization/entity to outreach to the public and educate their neighbors about the benefits of the newly implemented conservation activities are encouraged
* Re-submission of prior unsuccessful applications will be given extra consideration provided reviewer feedback is reflected in the revised application
* Project sites located within [Alameda County Flood Control District Zones 2, 2A, 3A, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12 & 13,](http://acfloodcontrol.org/floodplain-management/neighborhood-zones) including Oakland, San Leandro, Castro Valley, San Lorenzo, Hayward, Fremont, and Newark. [For more detail on priority locations click here.](https://acfloodcontrol.org/get-involved/get-involved-neighborhood-zones/)

**Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant Application**

***Due December 2, 2022 – 5pm***

Please complete the following application either via our [google form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc2j26Dk_0wnce9cGfFrsgBnS43UkfRTTHGYofIOnQhwAY2Vg/viewform?usp=sf_link) or below. Be brief but provide enough information about your project so we have a clear picture of what you plan to accomplish and how you plan to do so. Incomplete applications will not be considered; detailed, concrete responses will give your project best chance of being awarded.

**Project Title:**

**Organization/Farm Name**: **Website**:

**Property Owner: Fiscal sponsor (if applicable)**:

**Project Director**: **Email**:

**Address**:

**Phone**: **Best way to reach you: Phone 🞎 Email 🞎**

1. In a few sentences, describe the mission of the applicant urban farm or organization. How is produce from the farm or garden used?
2. Describe the location where conservation activity will take place including address if different than above. Please include a map of the location (snapshot from google maps with the site highlighted is fine) and a photo of the site. You may attach at the end of the application.
3. Please describe the nature of your access to the farm/garden site on which the project will occur including the term of permitted use (i.e., 1-yr lease, 5-year lease, permanent access, etc.).
4. Please describe the specific conservation activities that you plan to implement with support from this grant.
5. Do you have permission to carry out the conservation activities described above? Yes 🞎 No 🞎
6. How will these practices be implemented? Please describe the staff/volunteers/consultants necessary to successfully plan and carry out the work and provide a timeline for completion. You may request free technical assistance below. *Note:* *Projects that do not demonstrate significant progress towards completion by the end of the grant cycle may be required to return funds.*
7. Do these activities stand to improve water quality or minimize run-off into storm drains or nearby drainages? Yes 🞎 No 🞎 If so, please describe.
8. Do these activities stand to improve soil quality or create beneficial habitat? Yes 🞎 No 🞎 If so, please describe.
9. Describe how you will monitor and evaluate the success of your conservation activities. You may request free technical assistance to manage this for you (see information above).
10. Do you have plan to host events, trainings, volunteer workdays etc. to educate the community about your conservation activities? Yes 🞎 No 🞎 If yes, please explain.
11. Is your farm/garden within 50’ of a storm drain? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

Is your farm/garden within 250’ of a creek, channel or other waterbody? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

Is there potential for run-off from your farm/garden into a storm drain or waterway during a large storm? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

1. Is your farm located within an underserved community[[4]](#footnote-4)? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

Does your farm supply produce or other goods to underserved communities? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

Does your farm provide educational opportunities to underserved communities? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

1. Is your farm operated by a Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher? Yes 🞎 No 🞎

(a member of one or more of the following groups: African Americans, Native Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders)

Technical Assistance Request

Technical assistance is the sharing of information and skills by local experts in issues related to farming or farmlands management in an urban environment. Our urban ag Technical Service Providers have experience working with urban farms and gardens in Alameda County. They can help you with:

* Irrigation management
* Rainwater catchment
* Composting
* Cover crop selection
* Weed management
* Site assessment, monitoring, and evaluation for this project
* Habitat development and more!

The Alameda County Conservation Partnership and UCCE has funding to support your farm with technical assistance for this project as well as any other production or conservation-related concerns you may have.

Additionally, the [UCCE Urban Agriculture website](https://ucanr.edu/sites/UrbanAg/) lists current no-cost, low-cost or at-cost informative urban ag resources for urban farmers on a wide range of topics. You can also schedule a meeting with the UCCE Urban Ag & Food Systems Advisor at times and in languages that are convenient for you.

Are you interested in additional assistance? Yes 🞎 No 🞎 If so, please list the nature of the assistance.

**Project Budget**:

In the worksheet on the next page, show the breakdown of estimated project costs for:

* Labor (not more than 25% of project budget), materials, supplies, services, rental costs to be paid for with grant funds.
* Match can include volunteer (unpaid) labor, donated materials, supplies, services, rental costs, or refreshments (provided during implementation events). Match is not required, however, if it demonstrates collaboration with other organizations you may want to list it,
* Grant monies cannot be used to purchase food, ongoing crop production materials, or farm equipment not directly related to the grant-funded project. EXAMPLE BUDGET –

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***EXAMPLE*** | ***Grant Funds*** | ***Grant Funds*** | ***Optional Match*** |
| Description | Materials, services, etc. purchased with grant funds  | Paid labor and staff time (estimated hrs and total cost) | Donated materials, services, or labor  |
| *Native plants and seeds* | *$500.00* |  |  |
| *Volunteers at planting event* |  |  | *4 hours x 6 volunteers at $15/hr ($360)* |
| *Project managers time to oversee implementation* |  | *12 hrs at $35/hr ($420)* | *8 hrs ($240)* |
| Subtotals  | $500 | $420 | $360 |
| **TOTAL REQUESTED GRANT FUNDS** | **$920** |  |  |

**BUDGET WORKSHEET:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Grant Funds** | **Grant Funds** | **Optional Match** |
| Description | Materials, services, etc. purchased with grant funds  | Paid labor and staff time (estimated hrs and total cost) | Donated materials, services, or labor  |
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| Subtotals  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL REQUESTED GRANT FUNDS** |  |  |  |

**Applicant Signature** – Please print and sign or sign electronically. Email finished applications to Owen Sowerwine urbanagminigrant@gmail.com or [submit via google form here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc2j26Dk_0wnce9cGfFrsgBnS43UkfRTTHGYofIOnQhwAY2Vg/viewform?usp=sf_link) by **5pm, December 2, 2022.**

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Signature of Applicant Date

Applicants will be notified of award status by December 23, 2022. Applicants selected for funding will be required to sign an agreement with the Conservation Partnership including a Liability Release Waiver form.

**Program Contact:**

If you have any questions regarding the mini-grant program, please contactOwen Sowerwine:

owen.sowerwine@acrcd.org

925-453-3859

Alameda County Resource Conservation District

3585 Greenville Rd. Suite 2

Livermore, CA 94550

1. Rainwater collection systems are recommended only if sufficient roof surface area is available and cisterns can be safely and effectively located. [To learn more about design considerations click here.](http://www.acrcd.org/Portals/0/BASMAA_Rain_Barrel_Fact_Sheet_082312_APPROVED_fold_and_print.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As defined by [CalEnviroScreen](https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/scoring-model) and the [USDA Food Access Research Atlas](https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Defined in the [2017 Farmer Equity Act](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB1348) as a farmer who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, including: African Americans, Native Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. As defined by [CalEnviroScreen](https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/scoring-model) and the [USDA Food Access Research Atlas](https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)