

**California Department of Food and Agriculture**  
**Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP)**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

July 18, 2024

**General Questions**

1. Are operations that were awarded previous AMMP funding eligible to apply for subsequent rounds of AMMP funds?

Operations awarded previous AMMP funding are not eligible for subsequent additional AMMP funding, unless the new application represents a new site. Awards are limited to one per dairy or livestock operation site.

2. Can an operation that received an AMMP award and subsequently changed ownership apply for DDRDP or AMMP under the new owner?

If the awarded project was successfully implemented and completed on that operation, it would still count as the same site and would not be eligible to apply for a new AMMP project regardless of ownership. If an operation received an AMMP award in the past, but the project was not implemented (e.g., canceled or declined to proceed with award), the operation may be eligible to apply.

3. What is the definition of a dairy operation for purposes of AMMP?

For the purposes of this program, a dairy operation is defined as an entity that operates a dairy herd, which produces milk or cream commercially, and whose bulk milk or bulk cream is received or handled by any distributor, manufacturer, or any nonprofit cooperative association of dairy producers. A livestock operation is defined as an entity raising farm animals such as cattle, poultry, goats, sheep, swine, and horses. Eligible project sites must be located on a commercial California dairy or livestock operation.

4. Can a dairy operation submit more than one application?

Dairy or livestock operators may submit more than one application; however, each application must represent a unique project site.

5. Is the maximum grant award \$750,000 per dairy operation or per application?

The maximum grant award is \$750,000 per application. An applicant may submit multiple grant applications; however, each application must represent an individual project at a unique project site (i.e., dairy or livestock operation).

6. What is the maximum grant duration for any proposed project?

The maximum grant duration has been increased to 30 months. Projects can have a duration of less than 30 months, but the grant agreement term cannot exceed this

timeframe. Please refer to Funding and Duration section of Request for Grant Applications (RGA) document.

7. Can an organization apply on behalf of the dairy operation?

Yes, organizations may submit an application on behalf of the dairy or livestock operation. If awarded, the grant agreement will be between California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the dairy or livestock operation.

8. What types of organizations are eligible to submit an application on behalf of an agricultural operation?

There are no prohibitions against the types of organizations that may submit the proposal on behalf of the applicant organization. Keep in mind that only dairy or livestock operations are eligible to be the applicant organization. The dairy or livestock operation listed in the application is the entity to which CDFA will extend a Grant Agreement if the project is selected for an award.

9. When the dairy operation is leasing land, does the landowner need to apply on behalf of the agriculture operation?

No, the dairy operation can submit an application. It is the responsibility of the dairy operation to comply with the terms of their lease agreement. CDFA encourages all applicants to notify the landowner of the proposed project and secure their consent to implement the project. If awarded, CDFA will enter into a grant agreement with the dairy operation.

10. Where can applicants that were unable to attend the workshops or webinar find the materials from these presentations?

Materials from the CDFA-conducted AMMP workshops will be available on the AMMP website at [www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/ammp/](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/ammp/).

11. Is CDFA able to provide inexperienced applicants with technical assistance on how to prepare and submit an application?

To maintain the integrity of a competitive process, CDFA is required to provide the same level of assistance to all applicants. Unfortunately, it is not feasible for CDFA to provide one-on-one technical assistance to all prospective applicants or assist with the preparation of grant applications. However, all prospective applicants are encouraged to attend one of the CDFA-conducted workshops and webinars to learn more about applying to the Program. In addition, CDFA-funded technical assistance providers are available to provide free, one-on-one assistance (including on preparation and submission of an application, GHG emission reduction calculations, permitting information, project design, availability of a computer with internet access) to prospective applicants. A list of Technical Assistance Providers and UCCE Climate Smart Agriculture Community Education Specialists will be posted on the AMMP website.

12. Where can applicants find information regarding the AMMP Technical Assistance Workshops?

A list of all Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs) for a particular solicitation round is available at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/AMMP/>. TAPs can provide free-of-cost, one-on-one assistance to applicants. In addition, some TAPs may conduct virtual or in-person workshops in their areas. CDFA will update a list of workshops (if any) periodically. Applicants are strongly encouraged to check the AMMP webpage frequently for updated information. Applicants may also contact their local Climate Smart Agriculture Community Education Specialist at the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). A list of UCCE specialists is available at <http://ciwr.ucanr.edu/Programs/ClimateSmartAg/TechnicalAssistanceProviders/>.

13. Is use of the AMMP Project Planning Tool required for applicants?

No, use of the [AMMP Project Planning Tool](#) (a Program extension of RePlan) is not mandatory at this time. This tool is available to help potential applicants describe and visualize alternative manure management projects, and explore the estimated GHG benefits. It also produces a report with diagrams that can be used as part of application Attachment 1.1 (Site plan, project design documents, schematic diagrams, cluster maps, etc.), and a partially filled Benefits Calculator Tool that can be completed and used for application Attachment 5 (Benefits Calculator Tool).

14. Can AMMP funds be used at sites with proposed or existing anaerobic digesters funded by CDFA?

AMMP grant funds cannot be used for operations that have already installed an anaerobic digester system funded by CDFA's Dairy Digester Research and Development Program (DDRDP), or operations that previously received AMMP funding. Operations with existing non-DDRDP funded digesters can apply for AMMP funding to reduce methane emissions from manure not being treated in the digester system.

15. Do all required permits need to be completed prior to applying for an AMMP grant?

No, but CDFA expects a project to have all necessary permits in place within 18 months of grant agreement execution. However, applicants who have obtained or are in the process of obtaining permits related to their project will contribute to greater project readiness and may be more competitive during review.

16. Will Air Districts and/or the Regional Water Boards expedite the permitting process for these projects?

CDFA is unable to provide commitment for permitting processes implemented by the Air Districts or Regional Water Boards. Applicants should direct questions regarding permitting processes to their respective Air District or Regional Water Board. For a list of permitting agencies relevant to a location (city or county), visit [CalGold](#), a useful

online resource provided by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development.

17. Can a dairy or livestock operator start a project prior to start date mentioned in the RGA?

A dairy or livestock operator may begin work to demonstrate greater project readiness, but if awarded, any costs incurred outside the grant agreement term and dates described in the Funding and Duration section of the AMMP RGA will not be reimbursed by CDFA and would not qualify as matching funds.

18. If a prior AMMP recipient has additional facilities they are considering for AMMP projects, do the facilities need to have a separate Tax ID and/or Social Security Number or can they be the same?

Operations awarded previous AMMP funding are not eligible for subsequent additional AMMP funding, unless a new application represents a new site. Awards are limited to one per dairy or livestock operation site, not by Tax ID or SSN.

19. Can a contractor be changed after the grant is awarded?

Yes. An applicant can choose to go with a different contractor from what was originally proposed in the application as long as the total overall cost of the project does not exceed the grant funds requested. The applicant will be required to notify the Program prior to the proposed change, and provide documentation such as new quotes/estimates, as needed.

20. Do awarded projects need be operational beyond the five-year term? If a dairy or livestock operation goes out of business after the project is implemented, does CDFA have recourse over the funds dispersed?

CDFA expects that awarded projects will be operational for at least five years, and in most cases, projects will be operational for much longer. If a dairy or livestock operation goes out of business, CDFA does not have recourse against the dairy or livestock operation once the funds have been expended.

21. When are grant recipients required to submit the annual five-year post-project report to CDFA?

At the end of the project term and/or when the alternative manure management practice becomes operational, recipients will be required to participate in post-project completion reporting annually. The program will provide guidance on post-project completion reporting at time of project verification and close out.

22. Can I apply to both DDRDP and AMMP at the same time?

The intent of the programs is to ensure a wide distribution of funds across individual operations. While an applicant may submit an application to both DDRDP and

AMMP, the choice to apply to both programs should be considered carefully. AMMP and DDRDP projects differ greatly in their scope as well as permitting requirements. Inadequate preparation of applications may impact the quality and competitiveness of applications. If after review, the project submitted to both programs receives a competitive score for award, only one of the AMMP or DDRDP award would be made, consistent with the Program Requirements and Eligibility and Exclusions in the RGA.

23. How do the composting requirements for AMMP differ from CDFA's Healthy Soils Program (HSP) and is there overlap?

The AMMP provides funding support for producing compost from dairy and livestock manure. The HSP provides funding to farmers to apply compost to farmland and rangelands for improvements to soil health. The mechanism of greenhouse gas reduction achieved from either program is different and the scope of funded activities does not overlap: while AMMP can reduce methane emissions from dairy and livestock manure by replacing wet manure management systems (e.g., anaerobic lagoon) with a dry system (i.e., composting), HSP reduces greenhouse gas emissions through sequestration of soil carbon through application of compost to cropland and rangeland.

24. Can a composting facility that will be composting material from several dairy or livestock farms apply for an AMMP grant?

No. Eligible applicants are dairy or livestock operators only. Individual dairy and livestock operators can however submit separate applications to develop centralized projects (for example, a centralized composting facility).

### **Technical Questions**

25. Can solid separation and conversion from flush to scrape be selected as stand-alone practices?

No. Methane Conversion Factors (MCF's) are only available for practices which describe how the manure is handled after separation or collection, rather than just the technologies of solid separation or scraping. Solid separation or conversion from flush to scrape must be proposed in conjunction with one of the manure treatment and/or storage practices listed in the Request for Grant Applications.

26. Are there other eligible practices available for AMMP funding?

The only practices eligible for funding currently are those for which a quantification methodology is available. Refer to the Eligibility and Exclusions section of the RGA, or <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/AMMP/docs/ListofAMMPPractices.pdf> for a list of eligible practices.

27. Does this program apply to existing dry-manure management practices (for example, an operation that wants to switch from windrow composting to better

composting technologies)? Would a project that solely proposed implementation of open solar drying (for instance, they already have a solid separator) be eligible to apply for an AMMP grant?

To be eligible under the AMMP, the applicant operation's current baseline manure management practices must include the anaerobic decomposition of volatile solids stored in a lagoon or other predominantly liquid anaerobic environment, and the proposed manure management project must include at least one of the eligible practices that reduce baseline methane emissions as described in the AMMP RGA, pages 6-8. If a dairy or livestock operation is only proposing to implement or improve a manure treatment, storage or drying process such as open solar drying or composting, it would not be eligible.

28. Are dairies that already employ scrape collection systems eligible to apply (for example, a dairy with a scrape system that would like to put in a compost bedded pack barn, or a screw press separator)?

Yes, as long as the scrape system was not implemented using AMMP funds in the past, operations that already utilize scrape for some, or all, of their manure management may be eligible to apply. The proposed project would still be subject to other program requirements, including that to be eligible, current baseline manure management practices must include the anaerobic decomposition of volatile solids stored in a lagoon or other predominantly liquid anaerobic environment, and that the AMMP Benefits Calculator Tool can quantify the new practice(s) to be implemented as resulting in reduced GHG emissions.

29. Can a weeping wall be the primary separator required for vermifiltration, or does it require an additional mechanical separator?

As currently written in the RGA under eligible practices, and the way the AMMP Benefits Calculator is set up, a primary mechanical separator is required to be implemented in front of a vermifiltration system. A weeping wall is considered a non-mechanical separator. If a weeping wall is a feasible method of primary separation to remove coarse fibers before the effluent is applied to a vermifilter and there are examples or data to support it, it could be submitted through a New Practices Request for Proposals and may be considered for future updates.

30. Would expansion of current weeping walls (for example, adding cells) be eligible?

No, expansion of a current weeping wall system would not be eligible. Proposals would need to be for a new manure management practice. The Benefits Calculator Tool is also not able to quantify weeping wall separation based on the number of cells in the system (or a change to that system).

31. Should an applicant use industry standard defaults or operation-specific values for the percent of milk fat and protein when calculating energy-corrected milk?

Applicants are encouraged to use dairy-specific data for the percent of milk fat and protein to eliminate feed-efficiency differences between different cow breeds.

32. The CARB Benefits Calculator Tool considers the number of cows based on averages from the prior 12 months. Since a dairy may expand its herd, can an applicant provide maximum permitted herd size level instead?

Herd size calculated as an average from the prior 12 months is consistent with the CARB Compliance Offset Protocol - Livestock Projects. Project baseline GHG emissions and estimated GHG reductions are determined based on current herd size at time of application. Once a project is awarded and during the project term, the project may not change or alter the proposed manure management practice to be implemented or change herd size beyond the dairy's existing permits at time of application.

33. How should the AMMP Benefits Calculator Tool be uploaded if the facility has two project populations that will be treated differently (but different than the baseline)?

The AMMP Benefits Calculator Tool would need to be run twice to most accurately address implementing different manure management practices for two livestock populations in the project boundary. However, as the AMMP application only accepts one copy of the AMMP Benefits Calculator Tool, it is recommended to complete and upload the AMMP Benefits Calculator Tool for the primary population being impacted. Additional or secondary components of the project can be described in the Project Narrative and other locations in the application as appropriate.

34. How does CDFA determine that a proposed technology is well-suited to a project?

CDFA relies on the expertise of the technical reviewers and the AMMP Technical Advisory Committee to evaluate effectiveness of proposed technology employed to reduce GHG emissions at a dairy or livestock operation while accounting for current manure management practices employed at the dairy.

35. When completing the Benefits Calculator Tool, are applicants required to submit records of their electricity and diesel consumption?

No, applicants are not required to submit records of their electricity and diesel consumption associated with manure management, but are encouraged to provide them if available to support the values used in the calculator tool.

36. If an applicant has a heifer facility, how do they complete the section of the Benefits Calculator Tool that asks to provide % milk fat, % milk true protein, and lbs/cow/day milk produced?

Applicants that have non-milking dairy or other livestock facilities should leave this section about milk production characteristics blank when completing the Benefits Calculator Tool. Non-dairy or other livestock facilities will be scored using Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction per animal instead of GHG reduction per unit Energy Corrected Milk (ECM).

37. Is there a minimum threshold for greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions?

There is no minimum threshold for GHG emissions reductions as long as GHG reductions can be quantified using the California Air Resource Board (CARB) quantification methodology. Refer to the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Calculations section of RGA for detailed information regarding the CARB quantification methodology.

### **Budget and Allowable Cost Questions**

38. Under the unallowable cost section, what does CDFA mean by “cost covered by another State or Federal grant program”?

CDFA cannot fund project costs or tasks already funded or that will be funded by another Federal or State program. In other words, applicants cannot “double dip” by requesting CDFA to cover project expenses or tasks already funded by another Federal or State program. However, project expenses or tasks not covered by AMMP can be covered as matching funds from other State or Federal grants.

39. Is construction of a roof to cover compost piles so they are prevented from re-wetting in rain an allowable cost?

The cost of constructing cover specifically related to the successful implementation of composting practices may be an allowable cost.

40. What is the difference between funds requested, matching funds provided, and total budget?

Funds requested is the amount of AMMP funding requested from CDFA and must not exceed \$750,000 per project. Matching funds provided refers to the amount of Cost Share being contributed to implement the project (matching funds and in-kind contributions committed to the project). Total budget represents the whole project, and is the sum of funds requested and any matching funds provided.

41. Can dairy operations request funds for the cost of the project design?

Pre-development costs, including project designs, incurred outside of the grant agreement term will not be reimbursed by CDFA. Design and engineering costs specifically related to the implementation of the proposed manure management practice incurred within the grant agreement term may be allowable, but must not exceed 5% of the total grant amount requested.



42. Can bids from companies be attached in lieu of the budget worksheet to support project cost?

No, the Budget Worksheet is a required attachment (Attachment 3). Applicants must download, complete and attach the Budget Worksheet with the application. The budget worksheet can be downloaded from the Request for Grant Applications. Bids and quotes from companies are encouraged to be included as part of Attachment 3.1.

43. If a contractor provides an estimate with costs for Supplies and Equipment within Labor, do those costs need to be broken down per item and listed within the appropriate budget categories?

Yes, only costs for labor should be included within the contractor category of the Budget Worksheet. Cost for items less than \$5,000 per unit should be included under Supplies. Costs for items greater than \$5,000 per unit should be included under Equipment. Costs for taxes on any Supplies or Equipment should stay with the item in that category.

44. Are fees for permits an allowable cost?

Permit fees are allowable only if they are incurred during the project term described in the Funding and Duration section of the AMMP RGA.

45. Are engineering drawings required as part of the application and are these costs allowable?

Engineering drawings are not required but are encouraged and may result in a more competitive project during technical review; these can be included as part of Attachment 1.1 (site plan, project design documents, cluster maps and schematic diagrams). Costs incurred outside of the grant term will not be reimbursed by CDFA.

46. Can an applicant be reimbursed for use of personal time if they are doing any labor work on the project?

Applicants cannot be reimbursed for their own labor on work related to the preparation of their proposal or to implement the project. However, time spent or labor done by the applicant to implement the project may be documented as cost share (in-kind contribution).

47. Can the AMMP grant be used to fund a manure hauling truck/trailer which will be used for spreading the manure on pasture or cropland?

The cost of general use equipment, such as a truck or trailer, is only allowable if it will be used specifically and predominantly for AMMP project activities. A truck or trailer specifically being used for implementation of AMMP project activities, such as manure spreading in a project that will include the option of daily spread (in

combination with solid separation of flush-to scrape conversion), may be eligible as part of the overall project.

48. If a tractor exceeds the maximum grant amount of \$750,000, can the remainder of the cost be provided through cost-share? How can one indicate this on the Budget Worksheet?

The cost of general use equipment, such as a tractor, is only allowable if it will be used specifically for the AMMP project activities. Part of the equipment may be covered by cost-share. In the Budget Worksheet, the equipment and cost requested through the AMMP grant should be listed in the blue column for "Equipment", and corresponding matching funds should be entered in the orange "Cost Share" column. The description of the item should be the same under both columns to allow reviewers to identify the cost share split correctly.

## **Application Procedures**

49. What attachments are required to be submitted with the application?

Please refer to Grant Application: Questions and Attachments section of the RGA. A list of application attachments, including indication of which are required, can also be found in Appendix A: Attachments in the RGA.

50. In the Project Narrative Microsoft Word template, should we delete or leave the prompt questions?

The Project Narrative template contains a section of instructions and prompts (rather than embedded in the blank template sections) following a section break at the end of the document. Instructions are also available separately, linked on the AMMP webpage. Applicants can choose to delete the instructions before attaching their Project Narrative in the online application, or can leave it in. The instruction pages, if left in, will not count towards the overall Project Narrative page limit.

51. Would an applicant attach the printed results from the Benefits Calculator Tool or should the Excel workbook be attached?

The entire filled in Excel workbook should be attached as a locked XLS or XLSX file, which will include the Benefits Calculator Tool results.

52. How do you attach project designs to the application?

All documents associated with the application should be uploaded to the appropriate section of the online application. For more information on the sections, required and optional attachments and their file types, please refer to the RGA, Grant Application: Questions and Attachments or Appendix A: Attachments.

53. Can a prior AMMP applicant use information from their Wizehive account when applying for this round?

CDFA has transitioned from Wizehive to a new online application submission platform, Amplifund. Although applicants may have the ability to enter their past Wizehive account to reference responses and materials submitted in previous rounds, access is not guaranteed.

54. Can I use the Wizehive account created in the previous round to submit a 2023 application?

No, CDFA has transitioned from Wizehive to a new online application submission platform, Amplifund. All applicants will need to create a new account to apply.

55. Is there a standardized naming convention for AMMP attachments?

CDFA suggests applicants use the following format: "Attachment Number\_Attachment Name\_Name of Project Operation". For example: "Att3\_BudgetWorksheet\_XYZ Dairy" or "Attachment 1\_Project Narrative\_XYZ Dairy"