
Soil Health Financial Assistance Program

Fiscal Year 2024 Legislative Report

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Contents

Executive Summary1

Program Operations1

 Grant awards1

 Table 1: FY24 General Fund appropriation only SHFAP awards by county2

 Table 2: FY24 Grant awards for the SHFAP with General Fund appropriation3

 Table 3: FY24 Grant awards for the SHFAP with Clean Water Fund appropriation4

Executive Summary

Building soil health is key to facilitating resiliency across Minnesota’s working lands in the face of a changing climate and optimizing fertility to reduce nutrient loss. However, soil health practices typically require specialized, expensive equipment that many producers do not own. To meet this challenge, the Soil Health Financial Assistance Program (SHFAP) was established to provide grants to individual producers, groups of producers, and local government units to purchase soil health equipment. Initially established as a \$500,000 pilot appropriation in the 2022 legislative session, the SHFAP received additional funding in the 2023 legislative session. The additional funding includes a General Fund appropriation that allocates \$625,000 in Fiscal Year (FY)24 and \$625,000 in FY25, with \$639,000 in FY26 and each year thereafter. In addition to the General Fund appropriation, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture received a Clean Water Fund appropriation of \$1,750,000 in FY24 and FY25 for the SHFAP, bringing the total annual funds available for grants and administration of the SHFAP to \$2,375,000 in FY24 and FY25.

Program Operations

A request for proposals for the SHFAP was open from July 31 to September 15, 2023, and generated 284 applications for more than \$8.4 million in requested support from across Minnesota. Applications were competitively reviewed by an external review committee which scored and ranked applications based on their soil health benefit, financial need, potential for conservation practice co-benefits, and other factors. Grant award decisions were announced by December 30, 2023.

Grant awards

Using the General Fund appropriation, a total of 24 awards were made across 20 counties amounting to \$590,093.75. Of the \$625,000 available, up to 6.5% or \$40,625 can be reserved for program administration. Table 1 shows grant awards under the General Fund appropriation by county. The equipment purchased through these grant awards will be used to implement a wide range of soil health practices on a minimum of 57,756 acres annually.

Tables 2 and 3 show the individual awards made under the General Fund and Clean Water Fund appropriations, respectively. Combined, these two pools of funding allowed a total of \$2,312,352.51 in SHFAP grant awards in FY24 to 81 grant recipients. The equipment purchased with these grant awards will affect an estimated 153,032 acres annually.

Table 1: FY24 General Fund appropriation only SHFAP awards by county

County	Number of Awards	Total \$ Awarded per County
Aitkin	1	\$ 9,250.00
Chippewa	1	\$ 35,140.00
Clay	1	\$ 49,032.50
Clearwater	2	\$ 43,750.00
Freeborn	1	\$ 7,780.00
Grant	2	\$ 58,500.00
Martin	1	\$ 13,000.00
McLeod	1	\$ 30,000.00
Morrison	2	\$ 66,717.25
Murray	1	\$ 50,000.00
Olmsted	1	\$ 10,065.50
Rock	1	\$ 30,000.00
Scott	2	\$ 65,914.50
Stevens	1	\$ 30,000.00
Traverse	1	\$ 35,000.00
Wadena	1	\$ 8,750.00
Waseca	2	\$ 12,900.00
Wilkin	1	\$ 20,294.00
Yellow Medicine	1	\$ 14,000.00
SUBTOTALS	24	\$ 590,093.75

Table 2: FY24 Grant awards for the SHFAP with General Fund appropriation

County	Equipment	Grant Award	Estimated Acres Affected Annually
Aitkin	Seeding UAV	\$9,250.00	1,500
Chippewa	No-till drill	\$35,140.00	350
Clay	No-till drill	\$49,032.50	2,000
Clearwater	High-boy floater for seeding with drop tubes and GPS	\$23,750.00	3,000
Clearwater	Drone for cover crop seeding	\$20,000.00	2,100
Freeborn	Strip till unit	\$7,780.00	3,100
Grant	Strip till unit	\$50,000.00	850
Grant	Cover crop seeder	\$8,500.00	5,000
Martin	Sprayer for compost tea extract application	\$13,000.00	1,250
McLeod	Fertilizer/seed tender	\$30,000.00	3,500
Morrison	Dual wheel zone cleaners for strip till bar	\$16,717.25	3,250
Morrison	Vertical tillage tool (for cover crop seeding)	\$50,000.00	3,500
Murray	No-till planter and attachments	\$50,000.00	3,000
Olmsted	Air seeder	\$10,065.50	1,450
Rock	No-till drill	\$30,000.00	1,600
Scott	Clean sweep trash whippers and individual row flow sensing w/ VRT	\$23,414.50	800
Scott	No-till drill	\$42,500.00	2,000
Stevens	Inter-seeding planter	\$30,000.00	5,000
Traverse	Air seeder	\$35,000.00	778
Wadena	No-till drill & bale unroller	\$8,750.00	478
Waseca	Coulter conversion kit	\$4,900.00	4,000
Waseca	No-till drill	\$8,000.00	2,000
Wilkin	Attachments for liquid fertilizer application	\$20,294.00	4,250
Yellow Medicine	Nitrogen/seed applicator	\$14,000.00	3,000
	SUBTOTALS	\$590,093.75	57,756

Table 3: FY24 Grant awards for the SHFAP with Clean Water Fund appropriation

County	Equipment	Grant Award	Estimated Acres Affected Annually
Big Stone	No-till drill	\$35,000.00	1,100
Cass	Drone for cover crop seeding	\$17,710.00	3,500
Clay	No-till drill	\$9,250.00	12
Cottonwood	Cover crop spreader	\$36,500.00	2,600
Cottonwood	Row units for crimper	\$12,050.00	400
Dakota	Air seeder	\$50,000.00	2,710
Douglas	No-till drill	\$5,300.00	120
Faribault	Strip till unit	\$20,000.00	2,500
Freeborn	No-till drill	\$15,000.00	1,200
Goodhue	No-till drill	\$26,392.00	600
Hennepin	Strip till unit	\$23,296.00	605
Houston	No-till drill	\$12,500.00	200
Isanti	No-till drill	\$21,250.00	500
Jackson	Strip till unit	\$7,500.00	152
Kanabec	Roller crimper retrofit	\$3,928.00	80
Kandiyohi	Air seeder	\$12,800.00	591
Lac qui Parle	Air seeder	\$50,000.00	2,000
Lac qui Parle	Seed cleaner and conveyor	\$19,000.00	2,000
Lac qui Parle	No-till planter	\$50,000.00	800
Lac qui Parle	Mower/conditioner/swather/windrower	\$40,000.00	2,200
Lac qui Parle	No-till drill	\$45,000.00	12,000
Le Sueur	Drone for cover crop seeding	\$33,000.00	2,600
Lincoln	Cone-bottom tanks, transfer pump, and no-till planter for compost extract application	\$50,000.00	2,700
Lincoln	Portable corral system for livestock grazing	\$14,250.00	600
Lyon	Vertical tillage tool (for cover crop seeding)	\$50,000.00	2,500
Marshall	No-till drill	\$50,000.00	3,800
Martin	Air seeder	\$50,000.00	2,582
Meeker	Vertical tillage tool (for cover crop seeding)	\$40,000.00	1,600
Mille Lacs	Cover crop seeder	\$25,000.00	1,200
Morrison	Vertical tillage tool (for cover crop seeding)	\$8,186.06	400
Morrison	No-till planter	\$11,750.00	400
Mower	No-till drill & parts	\$20,000.00	560
Mower	Montag Mount for Vertical tillage tool (for cover crop seeding)	\$19,500.00	1,500
Murray	Strip till unit	\$50,000.00	3,500
Murray	No-till planter	\$50,000.00	3,750
Murray	Materials to update strip till bar	\$50,000.00	1,285
Murray	Calmer stalk rolls	\$12,028.00	350
Olmsted	No-till drill and drone for cover crop seeding	\$27,500.00	545
Olmsted	No-till drill	\$50,000.00	2,200
Otter Tail	Hydraulic down force system for planter	\$17,237.00	1,500
Pipestone	Strip/no-till planter and attachments	\$50,000.00	2,500
Pipestone	Drone for cover crop seeding	\$19,345.00	750
Pope	Pneumatic row cleaners	\$11,000.00	800
Pope	No-till drill	\$16,000.00	693
Redwood	Air seeder	\$50,000.00	10,000
Renville	Seed units for cover crops	\$15,294.50	500

County	Equipment	Grant Award	Estimated Acres Affected Annually
Renville	No-till drill	\$50,000.00	480
Rice	Inter-seeder	\$40,710.00	500
Rock	Strip till unit	\$50,000.00	2,000
Rock	No-till drill	\$24,000.00	2,500
Stearns	No-till drill	\$50,000.00	650
Stearns	Strip till unit	\$22,000.00	900
Winona	Vertical tillage tool (for cover crop seeding)	\$49,500.00	800
Winona	Row cleaners and seed openers	\$4,982.20	300
Wright	Manure spreader (vertical beater)	\$28,500.00	522
Yellow Medicine	Strip till unit	\$50,000.00	730
Yellow Medicine	Low-disturbance manure spreader	\$50,000.00	1,200
	SUBTOTALS	\$1,722,258.76	95,267