



# Fund Your Orchard Stewardship Activities with Blue Diamond's USDA Climate-Smart Grant (CSG)

In 2023, Blue Diamond was awarded a grant from the USDA for \$45 million over the course of 5 years to support growers implementing climate-smart farming activities. This voluntary program allows Blue Diamond member/growers or those who farm on a Blue Diamond orchard to be eligible to receive an incentive payment and no cost plants/seeds when implementing one or more of the following activities after program launch:

## ELIGIBLE PRACTICES

Cover Crops	Conservation Cover, "Bee Pasture"	Hedgerows	Whole Orchard Recycling (WOR)

**DELAYED LAUNCH**

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## MATERIAL COSTS

<b>No cost</b> , seeds provided by Project Apis m.	<b>No cost</b> , seeds provided by Project Apis m.	<b>No cost</b> , plugs provided by Pollinator Partnership	Consult local providers
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## IMPLEMENTATION INCENTIVE \*

<b>Up to \$35/acre *</b>	<b>Up to \$50/acre *</b>	<b>Up to \$8/linear foot *</b>	<b>Up to \$900/acre *</b>
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## IMPLEMENTATION INCENTIVE EXAMPLES

Cover crops planted on at least every other row of a 100-acre orchard: ≤ \$3,500	Conservation cover planted on 4% of 100 acres (primarily on idle or fallow land, in or next to orchards): ≤ \$200	Currently, Blue Diamond Growers is unable to launch Hedgerows and Whole Orchard Recycling due to ongoing challenges with the USDA. Until Blue Diamond receives more clarity on the requirements from USDA and potential implications for our growers that want to participate in Whole Orchard Recycling and Hedgerows, the launch will be delayed. Blue Diamond will continue to provide updates about the progress of launching these two practices.  Blue Diamond humbly requests your patience as we navigate the requirements of the USDA for Whole Orchard Recycling and Hedgerows.	
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**\*Implementation incentive is for eligible cost-share activities only and is provided as a reimbursement.** Eligible cost-share activities include land preparation, irrigation, management, and monitoring. For WOR, eligible activities only include chipping, spreading, incorporating activities. For cover crops, the incentive rate is reduced when planted on less than every other orchard row.

### What is required?

1. Participation in Blue Diamond's Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program (OSIP) [bluediamondgrowers.com/forms/](http://bluediamondgrowers.com/forms/)
2. Registration of your farm and orchards with the USDA Farm Service Agency [offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=ca&agency=fsa](http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=ca&agency=fsa)
3. A completed application, all requested materials, and approval from Blue Diamond (**note:** you will be notified when we receive your application and when review is complete)
4. Proof of implementation to show you have completed the activity
5. Adherence to all program requirements and rules (see link to guide on the right)

### Where do I learn more and how do I sign up?

- More information can be found on the Blue Diamond Growers webpage under *Grower Resources* > *USDA Climate-Smart Grant*, or [bluediamondgrowers.com/usda-climate-smart-grant](http://bluediamondgrowers.com/usda-climate-smart-grant)
- The application link is [bit.ly/bdg-csg-app](http://bit.ly/bdg-csg-app)
- Email [csg@bdgrowers.com](mailto:csg@bdgrowers.com) or contact your Regional Manager with additional questions. [bluediamondgrowers.com/meet-your-partners/](http://bluediamondgrowers.com/meet-your-partners/)

### Why does this matter and what's the goal?

Customers and consumers are increasingly demanding products grown with climate-, pollinator-, and water-friendly practices, and may be willing to pay more for them. To continue to drive additional value for our members, we are working to develop a market-based premium for products grown with climate-smart practices. This premium is aimed at funding the program beyond the life of this USDA grant, creating future cycles of profit for our members.

The BDG Climate-Smart Grant program is funded by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Program and supported by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.