

County of Santa Clara

Department of Planning and Development

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 25, 2020

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM:  Jacqueline R. Onciano, Director, Dept. of Planning and Development

SUBJECT: Update on Agricultural Resilience Incentive (ARI) grant program

This memo is intended to provide an update to the Board of Supervisors on the Agricultural Resilience Incentive (ARI) grant program.

The ARI grant program Policies and Procedures Guide (Guide) was approved by the Board on May 12, 2020. The ARI Guide was developed by the Department of Planning and Development (Department) to establish rules for administering the ARI grant program, which was first approved by the Board on January 15, 2019, as part of the implementation plan for the Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan. The ARI grant program was created and funded by the Board as a one-time pilot program.

Current Status of the ARI Grant Program

The next step in implementation of the ARI grant program is the solicitation of applications from farmers and ranchers within the County. This will involve working closely with technical experts at the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Santa Clara County office and County Agricultural Commissioner staff, to conduct public outreach and education with farmers and ranchers about the ARI grant program and the application process. UCCE will support farmers and ranchers in developing their project proposals and application materials.

Due to the busy spring and summer planting season and the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department did not conduct outreach in May and June 2020, and instead will conduct outreach with a target audience of agricultural producers during the winter months of 2020-21, accepting applications through spring 2021.

Once submitted, the Department and UCCE will review and rank the applications. The highest ranked applications, according to the criteria outlined in the Guide, will be recommended for approval by the Board. The Department anticipates this to occur in May or June 2021. Board-approved project proposals will then execute Grant Funding Agreements, and technical assistance providers will be available to support project implementation. Technical assistance providers will ensure that the practices are implemented according to the project's approved scope.

Once under implementation and after a sufficient data collection period, an analysis of the grant-funded projects will be prepared by technical experts and the Department will return to the Board to share an evaluation of this one-time pilot and outline prospects for continuing the ARI grant program.¹

cc: Megan Doyle, bosagenda@cob.sccgov.org

¹ In accordance with a President Chavez Board Referral to “report to the Board of Supervisors on date uncertain results of the pilot program of the Agricultural Resilience Incentive grant program, including the amount of carbon sequestration achieved, an analysis of the program's effectiveness, and staff recommendations.”