

Restore with ZFPA Grant Program



Administered by
Zero Foodprint Asia, a Hong Kong limited, non-profit organization

Application Period June 28th – July 20th, 2024

Restore Grant Application Overview:

Funding:

1. The annual maximum grant is HKD150,000.
2. The minimum grant request is HKD20,000.
3. The Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) budget is in addition to the grant amount, and is capped at 20% of the grant amount. (For example, a HKD\$100,000 grant may receive up to an additional HKD\$20,000 for Technical Assistance).

Applicants who have received HKD\$150,000 within a grant season will have to wait until the following grant season to be eligible.

Eligibility:

1. All managers and owners of agricultural operations in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area are eligible to apply.
2. Applications must include at least 1 approved management practice (see: Appendix B).
3. Applicants must commit to operate on the approved farm site pesticide-free.
4. The applicant farm or ranch grows products for human consumption as food or beverage.
5. Property owner approval or proof of right to manage the land is required.

Selection Process:

The Restore with ZFPA Fund supports a wide range of projects that contributes to building up healthy soil, more nutrient-rich food for humans and increasing knowledge about regenerative farming methods in Asia. We assess the project scope holistically and grants will be awarded primarily on the basis of:

- i) the degree of soil improvement
- ii) the opportunity for enhancing both below ground and above ground microbiology and biodiversity
- iii) the readiness for implementation
- iv) the possibility for increasing soil carbon sequestration potentials

Timeline:

1. The application period is June 28th, 2024 until July 20th, 2024.
2. All applicants will receive a notice of award status by August 13th, 2024.
3. All Restore grants are for single year practice implementation, including practices that have a multi-year lifespan.

4. Implementation and use of funds must be completed within twelve (12) months of signing the contract.
5. Soil monitoring to take place over a three (3) year period from project start date.

Verification:

1. Restore is focused on verification of practices/land management. TAPs are required to document and confirm practices are completed in accordance with Conservation Practice Standards.
2. Soil testing will be required at different stages of implementation and will last up to three (3) years, for data collection and modeling purposes.

The purpose of collecting data for Asian regions helps shed light on the impact regenerative farming and production methods have on the soil health, biodiversity and the change in soil carbon content.

Restore Grant Application Guidelines

Purpose and Funding

Restore with ZFPA is a program of Zero Foodprint Asia, supported by [Zero Foodprint](#) headquarters, the [Soil Science Society of China](#) and [Homeland Green Hong Kong](#). The Restore program serves as a catalyst for city, national, and regional efforts to increase the beneficial ecosystem services provided by agriculture and specifically to advance climate change goals by improving soil health and sequestering atmospheric carbon. In doing so, the program also aims to engage the public in supporting the resilience and carbon benefit potential of the agricultural economy and land holdings.

The **primary goals** of the program are to distribute funds in a manner that reflects the following values:

- i) spurring broader adoption of regenerative agricultural practices;
- ii) increasing awareness of and demand for ingredients produced through regenerative agriculture; and,
- iii) distributing Restore with ZFPA funds equitably.

The **secondary goal** of the program is to sequester atmospheric carbon in the form of soil organic carbon, resulting in myriad co-benefits for the public ranging from climate resilience to improved nutrient density.

The financial incentives made available through the Restore program enable farmers and ranchers to adopt conservation practices and, in exchange, businesses and consumers gain the opportunity to directly improve regional food systems and take regionalized climate action. The soil health practices funded through Restore with ZFPA will accrue value to the agricultural operation as well, improving water and nutrient management, among other benefits.

Property Owner Approval

A proof of right to manage the land is required if grant funds are awarded in one of two ways:

1. The property owner will be required to sign the “Grant Owner Consent” form at the end of Appendix A
2. A lease agreement with a term of no less than 36 months beginning from the anticipated project start date

Technical Assistance

A Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) is an agricultural consultant with experience in regenerative practices that promotes soil health. Coordination with a TAP will be required for grant selection. The TAP provides technical assistance to the farmer/rancher and monitors the improvements on the ground to ensure a successful 12 month transition. The cost for TAP will be capped at 20% in addition to the funds for the practice(s).

At the existing scale, ZFPA will designate a TAP to you unless pre-suggested otherwise. This is currently executed via regional regenerative farming researchers via [Homeland Green Hong Kong](#), [Mushroom Initiative](#) and [Soil Science Society of China](#).

Application Steps

Step 1

Complete Project Application Form (Appendix A)

Step 2

Record a 3-5 minute video outlining (The video should not be longer than 5 min and should only include the highlights of the following items):

- Show & Tell: What is a typical day like for you on your farm?
- What is your farming philosophy? Please describe your current practices.
- What kind of challenges do you face?
- What kind of improvements would you like to see?
- What inspired you to learn more about regenerative farming?

Step 3: If approved - Execution of Grant Agreement

After award of the grant and prior to disbursement of funds, the grantee will execute Zero Foodprint Asia's grant funding agreement, which includes:

- Property owner approval letter or proof of right to manage the land
- Designating a test plot area no smaller than 25% of total land mass for full implementation of regenerative agriculture practices
- Final Project Scope & Implementation Timeline, *Project Start Date* to be determined
- Technical assistance provider approval of project scope and intent to verify
- Refer to Timeline for Funding & Project Completion below

If the agreement has not been executed within 30 days of the agreed on *Project Start Date* decided during Step 3, Zero Foodprint Asia reserves the right to transfer the grant to the next eligible project.

Final Project Scope & Implementation Timeline

The applicant will work with the assigned TAP to produce a detailed Project Scope to include the farm layout, and the design and implementation of the different practices listed in the application: Appendix A.

Timeline for Funding and Project Completion

Projects that consist of annual practices must be completed within twelve (12) months beginning from the agreed on *Project Start Date*.

Grants awarded for recurring annual practices will cover the first year implementation only. Subsequent year practices will require a new application and are encouraged, given the improved cost effectiveness of recurring annual practices.

Funding for practices will be provided following execution of the grant agreement in installments:

- ZFPA will release up to 50% of the grant amount on/before the *Project Start Date* for the implementations described in the application.
- Upon demonstration that the project is underway, ZFPA will release the second grant payment of not less than 25% within 90 days.
- The third and final payment, not to exceed 25%, will be made upon verification from the TAP. This payment will be made upon the final soil sample collection in the first year.

- Compost: In the event that the project involves the purchase of compost from a compost producer (not on farm produced), Zero Foodprint Asia reserves the right to appoint a specific high-quality compost source.
- Materials/resources for transition: A list of acceptable materials and resources suited for RF transition in Hong Kong are available in appendix C. TAPs and consultants shall verify that purchases are adhered to accordingly.

If the project cannot be completed within the required timeframe in the agreement, or should use of funds become ill-used, the grantee may be required to reimburse misused funds, return any unexpended funds to Zero Foodprint Asia and may become ineligible for future applications. Unforeseen/unpreventable circumstances, such as wildfire, flooding or drought, may permit additional flexibility in project implementation.

Outcome Evaluation and Storytelling

At no additional cost to the grantee, TAPs may conduct check-ins to help Zero Foodprint Asia better understand and quantify the positive impact of the project. Grantee agrees to a good faith effort to cooperate with efforts to provide pictures and brief descriptions of the farm and/or project for the purposes of restaurant marketing and fundraising. The grantee may be asked to disclose information related to the actual cost of practice implementation.

Application Reservations

Zero Foodprint Asia reserves the right to make changes to this application process without liability, obligation or requirement to pay any costs incurred by any applicant in applying for grant funding, including but not limited to:

1. Reject all applications without any reason for the rejection.
2. Ask The applicant to revise or modify their application.
3. Modify, in the final grant funding agreement, any terms and/conditions described in this guide.
4. Terminate this process at any time.
5. Change any of the procedures or processes described in this guide.

Attachments:

Appendix A — Project Application Form

Appendix B — Approved Management Practices

Appendix C — Reference List of Materials Approved for RF Transition (HK)

APPENDIX A: Project Application Form

Please submit all application materials to: hello@zerofoodprintasia.org with the subject line "Restore with ZFPA Application".

Farmer/Rancher Applicant

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different from above): _____

About Your Farm

Name of Farm/Ranch: _____

Address: _____

Property Owner Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Total Farmable Land Size Size: _____ square footage | m²

Years in Operation: _____

Certificate/Farm Business Registration Number: _____

Social Media (if available):

Webpage: _____ Facebook: _____

Instagram: _____ Weisin: _____

Number of Employees: _____

Annual Production: _____

Primary Crops on Site(s):

Where do you sell your produce? Write names of the restaurants, cafes, wholesaler you sell to.

Do you raise animals for human consumption purposes on your farm? (Yes) (No)

If yes, how many production animals do you have on your farm?

and what is the amount of animal products produced per year? _____

Prior Conservation Practices Implemented (if any):

Project Scope

To better understand the types of regenerative practices you would like to incorporate on your farm, please fill out the below table as best as you can.

*Refer to Appendix B for a list of the different types of practices.

Management Practice	Square Footage & Equivalent [Mű]	Total Practice Cost Estimate
TOTAL		\$

Total Cost Estimate \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Anticipated Project Start Date: _____
dd/mm/yyyy

To ensure proper transition and the success of the project, please indicate and designate an area you wish to transition to with the practices aforementioned. The area(s) can be amended prior to the official launch of the project once approved and should be at least 25% of the farm's total arable land.

[image]

Designated area(s) size: _____ square footage | m² | DC

Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) if available: Yes No

If yes, please provide TAP Point of Contact:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

By checking this box, I represent and warrant that this Application accurately describes the intended use of the requested grant to complete the management practices listed above and if such grant is awarded I shall comply with all terms and conditions guided by Homeland Green Hong Kong, Mushroom Initiative and the Soil Science Society of China.

I understand that this application may be shared with Zero Foodprint staff, representatives, and partners for review and scoring. I certify that I am the authorized representative of the farm/ranch to submit this Application and that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a false statement may disqualify me from the grant program.

Signature of Farmer/Rancher Applicant

Date

Printed Name of Farmer/Rancher Applicant

PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT

I hereby certify that I am the property owner referenced in the Application. I acknowledge that the Farmer/Ranch Applicant has the legal right to occupy the property. I consent to the filing of the Applicant and the Management Practices proposed for the property in this Application.

Signature of Property Owner

Date

Printed Name of Property Owner

APPENDIX B: Approved Management Practices

The US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) [COMET-Planner](#) online tool is used for the purpose of estimating soil carbon sequestration potentials in relation to the different types of management practices. It's a tool that is currently designed for the California state only. As such, it will be used as a guide for our internal assessment only as the models used to evaluate potential carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reductions will require additional data and research in Asia.

There are currently 28 different eligible practices and many can be implemented concurrently. Some are annual practices, like compost application or cover-cropping, and some are perennial improvements, like planting woody plants as a hedgerow. The practices are categorized by type of agricultural land (cropland, orchard/vineyard and grazing land) and not all practices will be suitable for all types of farmland.

Additional information on these practices can be found in the [NRCS National Handbook of Conservation Practices](#), on the [NRCS website listing Conservation Practices](#), using the online [COMET-Planner](https://comet-planner-global.com/home) (<https://comet-planner-global.com/home>) tool, and the [Healthy Soils Program Implementation Guidelines](#).

For global research, please refer to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' six part manual: [Recarbonizing Global Soils: A technical manual of recommended management practices](#) published in 2021.

	<u>Practice Name</u>		<u>Practice Name</u>
1	Alley Cropping	15	Hedgerow Planting
2	Conservation Cover	16	Mulching
3	Conservation Crop Rotation	17	Forage & Biomass Planting
4	No-Till	18	Prescribed Grazing
5	Contour Buffer Strips	19	Range Planting
6	Cover Crop	20	Strip-Cropping
7	Reduced-Till	21	Nutrient Management
8	Multi-story Cropping	22	Vegetative Barrier Establishment
9	Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment	23	Herbaceous Wind Barrier
10	Silvopasture	24	Tree/Shrub Establishment
11	Field Border	*25	Compost Application on Grazelands (COMET)
12	Riparian Forest Buffer	*26	Compost Application on Annual Cropland
13	Filter Strip	*27	Compost Application on Perennial Cropland (Orchards & Vineyards)
14	Grassed Waterway	*28	Compost Application on Grazelands (Ryals)

Based on the NRCS National Handbook of Conservation Practices, unless marked with an asterisk. Those practices marked with an asterisk do not currently have a published NRCS Practice Lifespan and scientific consensus regarding the lifespan of the practice may not be available; for the purposes of the Restore Program, Practice Lifespan was determined using various sources including [A Lifecycle Model to Evaluate Carbon Sequestration Potential and Greenhouse Gas Dynamics of Managed Grasslands](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10021-013-9660-5) [https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10021-013-9660-5](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26263673/) and <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26263673/>

Other recommended science-based RF practices developed locally through past Restore Projects:

29	Application of compost tea or compost extract	32	Application of beneficial microbes like Trichoderma and mycorrhizal
30	Bioactive foliar spray as a source of plant micro- and trace-mineral intake	33	Bio-inoculants and mineral amendment at seed germination
31	Bioactive fish hydrolysate and other bacterial serums as plant nutrient		

The lists above serve as a reference list of approved management practices. Once the project starts, grantee farms are allowed to implement other localized practices recommended by our soil expert consultants.

APPENDIX C: Reference List of Materials Approved for RF Transition (HK)

Reference list of items and resources approved for purchasing via the grant (the list is subjected to change and based on the needs of the farm's applicable practices. More comprehensive recommendations and information will be given once the program starts and across the program period):

- Compost
 - Jiangxi Compost
 - Or other allowed compost
- Mulch
 - Mushroom substrates
 - Wood chips
 - Bamboo chips
 - "Cardboard" seeds for live mulching (Seed Paper & Biodegradable Confetti)
 - Or other allowed mulch materials
- SOBE biological fertilizer granular
- SOBE EM microbial (composting powder)
- Trichoderma and mycorrhizal
- Mineral and biological inoculant approved soil amendments, including rock dusts, basalt
- Nutrient amendments and compost tea
 - Fish
 - Bioactive kelp/seaweed
 - Liquid emulsion
 - Molasses
 - Bran
 - Amino acid
 - Whey protein
 - Nut pulps
 - Magnesium sulfate
 - Horn meal
 - Calcium & Magnesium
- Cover crop seeds
- Tree shrub, hedgerow, herbaceous cover or vegetative barriers
 - Shelterbelts, hedgerows or other windbreak establishment
 - Cropland to Herbaceous Cover conservation practices such as conservation cover, contour buffer strips, field border, filter strips, forage and biomass planting, grassed

- waterway, herbaceous wind barriers, riparian herbaceous cover, or vegetative barriers.
- Or any other items and materials relevant and useful for transitioning to regenerative agriculture, subjected to approval by our consultants