

## **Almond Update: Grower Incentives to Advance Almond Orchard 2025 Goals**

By Brian German

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The most recent Training Tuesday from the Almond Board of California (ABC) highlights the grower incentives available to help advance the Almond Orchard 2025 goals. ABC brought together several federal, state, and regional agencies to discuss opportunities available to producers. Some of the incentive opportunities support the implementation of new irrigation techniques. Other incentives help to promote the adoption of practices to improve soil health and integrated pest management systems.

Geetika Joshi from the California Department of Food and Agriculture went over the components of the Healthy Soils Program (HSP). The HSP Incentives Program and the HSP Demonstration Projects both offer varying levels of support for producers. The HSP incentivizes conservation practices that improve soil health, sequester carbon, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Carlos Suarez and RaeAnn Dubay from the Natural Resources Conservation Service also provided information about the new pilot program being offered, the Conservation Incentive Contracts (CIC). The program provides support for a variety of different conservation practices that address drought. The deadline to apply for the CIC program is July 12.

Ryan Villane described the grower incentives that are offered through the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Villane discussed the Low-Dust Nut Harvester Replacement program, the Agricultural Tractor Replacement program, and the Alternatives to Agricultural Open Burning Program. Each of the programs is aimed at addressing air quality issues and provide growers with different levels of funding.

Kevin Greer with the Tehama Resource Conservation District spoke about the assistance they can provide through their Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL). The MIL can provide free irrigation assistance to growers in a multitude of ways. Greer explained that growers should check with their local Resource Conservation District about MIL availability. The MIL can provide a customized review of irrigation systems with an emphasis on distribution uniformity and application rates.