



Grant and Financial Assistance Advising for Farmers and Agricultural Entrepreneurs in the Midwest

Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (MFAI) provides free financial assistance advising to agricultural producers and producer groups **within the 12-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.**

What is Grants Advising?

MFAI's Advisors can help you **apply to grant, loan, and cost-share programs of state or federal sources** that could help you **with specific projects to develop your agricultural, forestry or related business, or research a particular aspect of sustainable agriculture.** These can be programs of any federal or state agency, not just the USDA, as well as private sources. We assist individual producers, associations of farmers, and agricultural, fishery and forestry-related businesses to both search for and apply to programs for which they are eligible.

MFAI Grants Advisors help determine what funding opportunities would be appropriate to achieve specific farm goals. They will help **identify a funding program** that best fits your project and **outline a plan of work** to meet the application deadline and all application requirements. If your farm goals do not align with a grant program we may suggest other resources, such as federal, state or local loan programs, loan guarantees, or information resources.

While our services are open to all farmers, farmer groups and agricultural entrepreneurs in the Midwest, please note the following:

- Prospective applicants to North Central SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) grant programs for producers, agricultural and extension educators, and institutions are encouraged to seek our assistance.
- Midwestern farmers with limited resources, certain social disadvantages, or are military veterans, as well as organizations working with these farmer groups, are also encouraged to seek our assistance.
- Agricultural grant awards are, in general, not aimed at individuals looking to begin a farming career, and who lack experience, infrastructure and land. These individuals are better served by the loan-based financial assistance programs of the USDA Farm Services Agency (FSA) or other farm credit institutions.
- The MFAI website has a dedicated financial assistance page at: <https://www.michaelfields.org/grants-advising>. This is a good introduction to agricultural grants for those new to the topic.

Even for deadlines later in the year, it is best to start working *now* with our Advisors on a specific application. Get your plan of work organized early so that deadlines don't sneak up on you.

For more information, please contact MFAI Grants Advisor Martin Bailkey at grants@michaelfields.org.

Grants Advising is a project launched and supported by the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute since 2007. Originally funded by USDA's Rural Development Agency, and later by USDA's Risk Management Agency, it has long been funded by Farm Aid and the North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. Wisconsin Farmers Union is now a project partner, supporting our advising to Wisconsin farmers.