

The background image shows a group of people working in a lush green field. In the foreground, there are large green plants. In the background, a person is using a long-handled tool, possibly a hoe, to work the soil. To the right, a large greenhouse with a white plastic covering is visible. The sky is bright and cloudy. The overall scene is one of active farming or community gardening.

GRANTS 101

FUNDING YOUR FARM AND FOOD PROJECTS

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Michael Fields Agriculture Institute

SO, YOU HAVE A GREAT PROJECT IDEA...

What should you consider before seeking funding?

- What problem, need, or opportunity are you addressing?
- Have others already addressed this problem or certain aspects of it?
- What's your *primary* strategy to address this problem?
- What's a realistic timeline to do this work?



SO, YOU HAVE A GREAT PROJECT IDEA...

What should you consider before seeking funding?

- Take stock: What resources do you *need* address this problem?

Which do you *already have*?

- People power – staff, partners, volunteers, community supporters
- Funding
- Materials/supplies/equipment
- Time
- Other??



AND YOU NEED MONEY TO DO IT...

What should you consider when looking at funding opportunities?

- Identify funding programs/opportunities whose purposes, values, and available resources seem most suitable to your purposes and values.
- Would your project advance a funder's stated mission and goals?
- Consider if multiple types of funding assistance are needed for your project, i.e. is the program's form of assistance appropriate to your needs?

The SARE Program

SARE's Mission is to advance – to the whole of American agriculture – innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.

Origin & Funding: SARE was created in the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (1990 Farm Bill, Title 16, Subtitle B). It is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The SARE program works primarily through competitive grant programs administered by four regions: North Central, Northeast, South, and West.

North Central Region-Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE)
NCR-SARE's **mission** is to strengthen communities, increase farmer/rancher economic viability, and improve the environment by supporting research and education.

The 12 states of North Central Region-SARE include: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

AND YOU NEED MONEY TO DO IT...

What should you consider when looking at funding?

- Are you an eligible entity? (For-profit vs. non-profit; individual vs. institution)
- What's a grant's average grant amount and total pool?
- Is funding available up-front or as reimbursement?
- What match amount is required, if any?



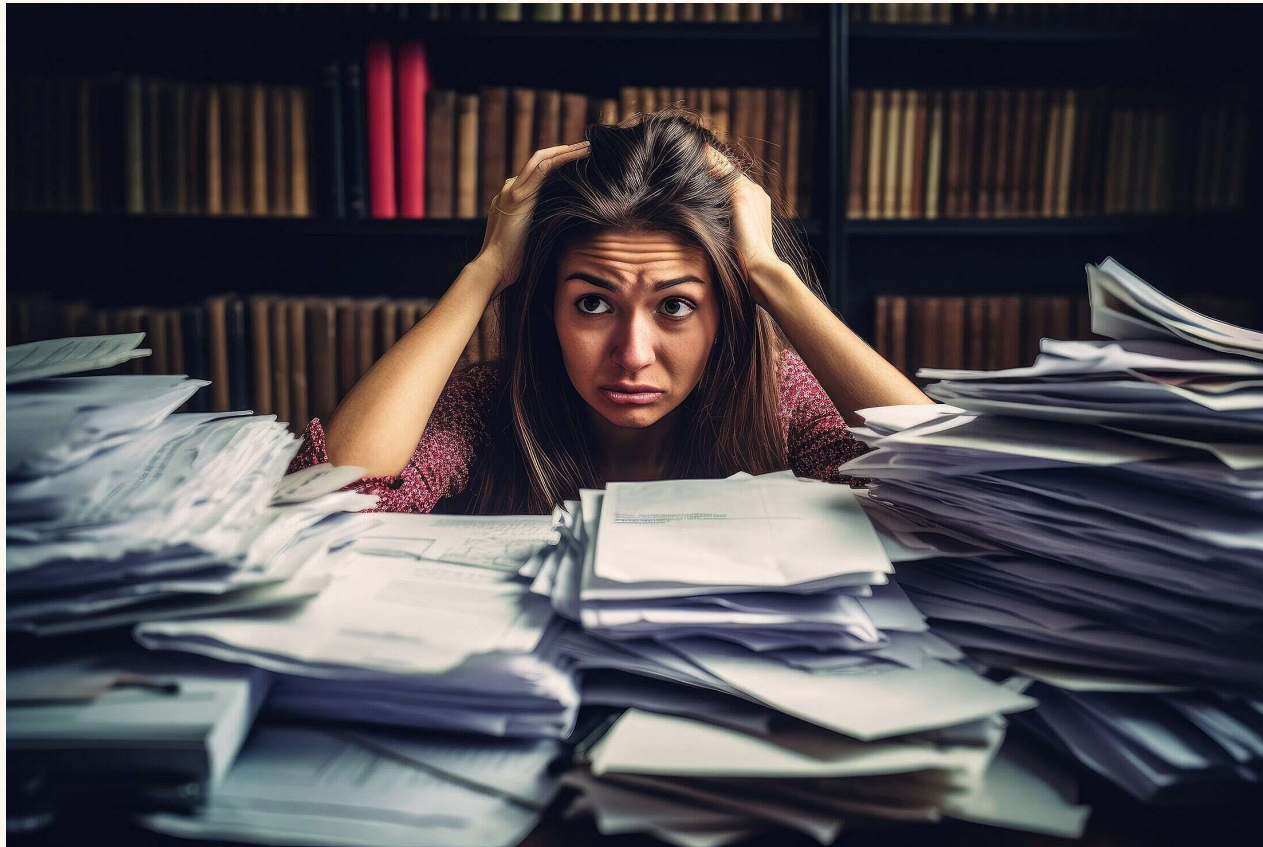
AND YOU NEED MONEY TO DO IT...

What should you consider when looking for grants?


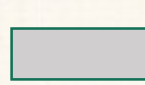
- When is the program's timeline, including **deadline, start date, and duration**?
- Is there a **pre-proposal** process and how does it stretch out the timeline?
- What are the **restrictions** for use of funding?



THOSE ARE A LOT OF QUESTIONS!



How do you figure out the answers and know for sure if a grant is a good fit?

- **Read the guidelines**, also called Request for Proposals (RFP), Request for Applications (RFA), Notification of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), **multiple times**. 
- Participate in program **webinars** for prospective applicants.
- Do a funding search and/or reach out for TA guidance on finding grants (like Michael Fields Grants Advising). 

NORTH CENTRAL SARE
Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

NCR-SARE Minnesota Office
University of Minnesota | 1390 Eckles Ave | Ste 120 | St Paul, MN 55108 | ph: 612-626-3113
www.sare.org | ncrsare@umn.edu

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant and Youth Educator Grant Office
Lincoln University | 900 Leslie Blvd, Rm 101 | Jefferson City, MO 65101 | ph: 573-681-5545

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grants
to experiment with or demonstrate Sustainable Agriculture Practices
2024 Call for Proposals

PURPOSE: Farmer Rancher Grants provide opportunities for farmers and ranchers to solve problems on the farm or ranch using innovative sustainable agriculture practices. Projects can focus on research or education and demonstration. Approximately \$720,000 is available for this program. Grant recipients have 23 months to complete their projects. There are two types of competitive grants:

1. Individual grants (\$15,000 maximum)
2. Team grants for two or more farmers or ranchers from separate and distinct operations who are working together (\$30,000 maximum).

TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL: go to <https://projects.sare.org/>. The online submission system opens in August 2023. **Proposals must be received online or in the NCR-SARE office by mail or e-mail by 4:00 p.m. Central Time on December 7, 2023.** Faxed proposals will NOT be reviewed. If you are unable to use the online system e-mail: ncrsare@umn.edu or mail proposals to:

NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant Program
120 Biosystems & Ag Eng Bldg, University of Minnesota
1390 Eckles Ave, St Paul MN 55108

This call for proposals is available on the North Central SARE web site at <https://northcentral.sare.org/>.
If you need a printed application, call 612-626-3113.

Checklist of Items Needed to Submit a 2024 Grant Proposal
☐ Proposal ☐ Budget ☐ Letter of support ☐ Confirmation of Commitment from Teams

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) - USDA Nondiscrimination Statement
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity



How do you figure out the answers and know for sure if a grant is a good fit?

- Find the list of past awarded grants/grantees.
- If allowed, contact funder staff.
- When appropriate, ask past grant recipients.

2023 NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant Projects Recommended for Funding										
Project #	Title	PI First Name	PI Last Name	Primary Grantee	Project State	\$\$ Amt	Cumulative	Practices	Commodities	Brief Description
FNC23-1359	Breeding a Cold-hardy, Non-astringent Hybrid Persimmon Cultivar	Weston	Adams	Weston Adams	MO	\$ 14,989	\$ 14,989	Crop Production	Fruits	Persimmons are rising in popularity as a naturally disease-resistant fruit for the NC-SARE region, but growers currently have access to very few non-astringent cultivars with sufficient cold hardiness. Using hybrid genetics, I wish to launch a private breeding project to address this problem.
FNC23-1361	Developing a Regional Spring Flowering Seed Mix to Support North Central Mason Bees	Justina	Block	Osmia Bee Company	OH	\$ 28,954	\$ 43,943	Crop Production	Animals	Develop and distribute a regional herbaceous seed mix for mason bees, and generate a public list of the floral resources that support mason bees so that North Central farmers, land managers, and home owners can make informed decisions on how to provide resources for springtime mason bees.
FNC23-1362	Pull-Type Hazelnut Combine Development	David	Bohnhoff	Happy Roots Farm	WI	\$ 30,000	\$ 73,943	Production Systems	Nuts	Development of a machine incorporating (1) a shaker for removing hazelnut clusters off plants, (2) a unique cluster collection platform and transport system, (3) a threshing unit for freeing nuts from their husks, and (4) rotary sieves and a winnowing system for separating nuts from other debris.
FNC23-1363	Hybrid Electric Tractor Energy - Saving Configuration Conversion	Robert	Braun	Pigeon River Farm	WI	\$ 14,957	\$ 88,900	Energy	Not commodity specific or doesn't apply	Converting farm utility tractor used for many tasks in the farm's daily operation to a hybrid configuration. The tractor will be modified with a modern high-powered electric motor and powered with onboard batteries. This configuration will mimic the example plug-in Toyota Prius strategy.
FNC23-1364	Creating a Sustainable Honey Bee Depository from Urban to Rural Settings	Robert	Brooks	META	KS	\$ 12,860	\$ 101,760	Crop Production	Animals	It has been shown in the US and Europe that there are more honey bees and pollination (seed setting) in cities than rural areas. When bees swarm in the city they usually enter a house and are exterminated by the home owner. I propose to trap these bees relocating them to rural areas as pollinators.
FNC23-1365	How can Midwestern growers make the most of winter high tunnel real estate for winter salad mixes?	Michelle	Nowak	Franklinton Farms	OH	\$ 8,781	\$ 110,541	Crop Production	Vegetables	Unheated high tunnels make it possible to grow year-round in the Midwest, but careful crop selection is crucial for optimizing winter yields and profits. In our winter high tunnels, we will compare yields of 14 varieties of direct-seeded varieties of leafy greens and lettuce.

How do you figure out the answers and know for sure if a grant is a good fit?

What should you consider before starting the application?

- Take stock: What resources do you need to **apply** for a grant, **conduct** the project, and **administer** the project? Which do you already have? What can be applied to **match**, if required?

- People power – staff, partners, volunteers, community supporters
- Funding
- Materials/supplies/equipment
- Time
- Other??



GRANT MANAGEMENT 101 – GET ORGANIZED

- **START EARLY!** Make a “crop plan” for your grant writing and management processes. Create an internal application completion timeline backwards from the grant deadline.
- Plan to **submit at least a few days early**.
- Use a **checklist** and an **outline** to keep your narrative logical and to share with other coordinators and reviewers.
- Determine **who you need** on your (small) grant team and reach out ASAP to get them on board and create your game plan.
- Get needed matching funds, named partners, equipment/supply quotes, and signatures lined up (**ASAP**).



GRANT MANAGEMENT 101 – GET ORGANIZED

BFRDP FY2024 Sample Checklist for Standard Team Grant Applications

- ☐ SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet
- ☐ SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)
- ☐ R&R Other Project Information Form
 - ☐ Project Summary (PDF) (see form in forms folder)
 - ☐ Table of contents (1 pg., does not count towards 20 pg. limit of narrative but should be attached on top of the narrative)
 - ☐ Project Narrative (PDF) (max. 20 pgs.)
 - ☐ Logic Model ([see logic model template](#))
 - ☐ Bibliography & Cited References (PDF)
 - ☐ Facilities and Other Resources (PDF)
 - ☐ Equipment Documentation (PDF)
 - ☐ Other Attachments
 - ☐ Data Management Plan ([PDF](#))
 - ☐ Commitment Letters (PDF) (see template in forms folder) (must also have one from applying from each Key Personnel)
- ☐ Supplemental Information Form
 - ☐ Conflict of Interest List (PDF) (see form in forms folder)
- ☐ R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)
 - ☐ Biographical Sketch(es) (PDF)
 - ☐ Current & Pending Support (PDF) (see form in forms folder)
- ☐ R&R Personal Data (voluntary/optional)
- ☐ R&R Budget
 - ☐ Match
 - ☐ Indirect Costs
 - ☐ Budget Justification (PDF)
 - ☐ R&R Sub-Award Budget(s)

Other resources:

[RFA](#)

Additional resources/information/NIFA Guide:

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/PKG00284447-instructions.pdf>

Application support templates (all relevant docs. on this site already uploaded to “forms” folder)

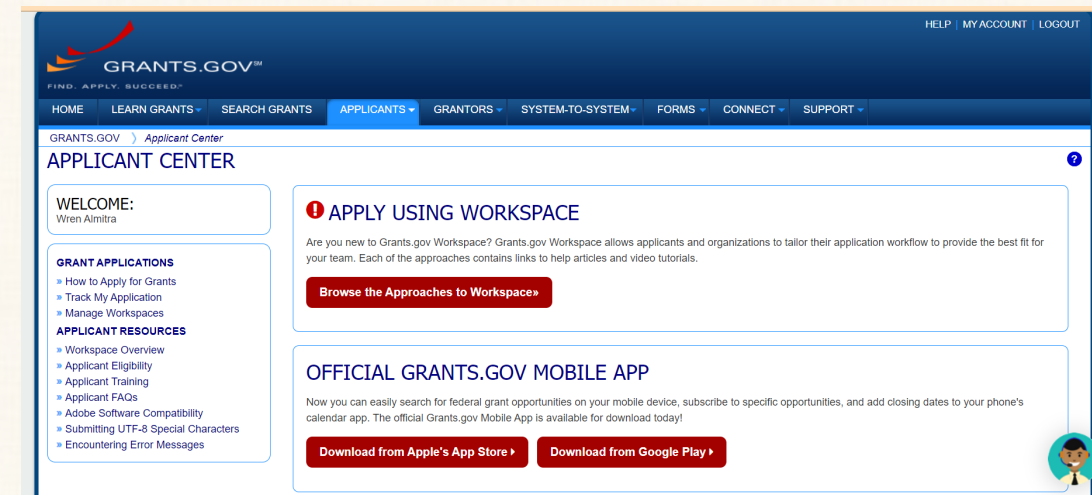
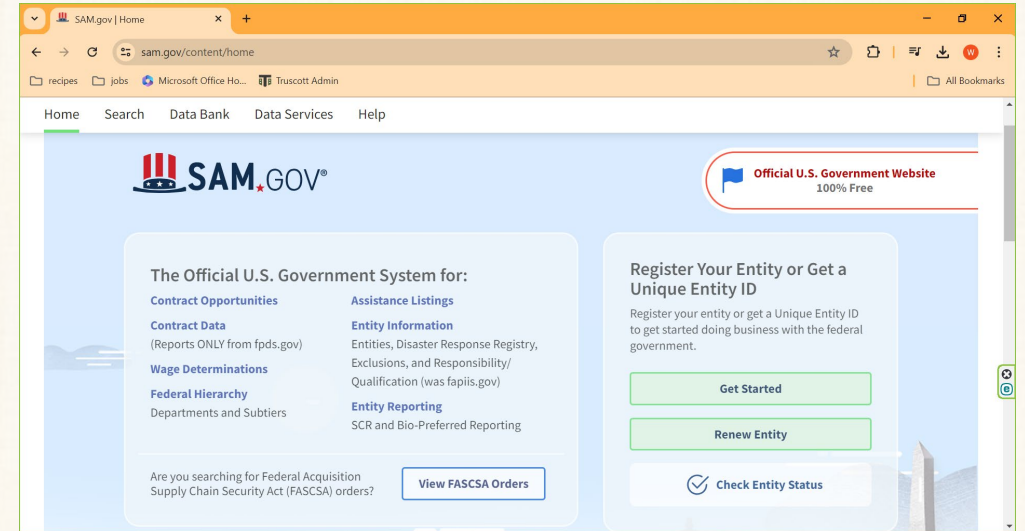
<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/application-support-templates>

Outcomes based reporting guide (for evaluation and developing outcomes)

https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2023-11/BFRDP%20Outcomes%20Based%20Reporting%20Guide_remediated.pdf

GRANT MANAGEMENT 101 – GET REGISTERED

- Register right away for any accounts needed and start the application process in the portal first thing.
- For Federal funding, a SAMs registration will be required and a Grants.gov account.
- **Special note: if seeking loans or cost share assistance through FSA or NRCS, you will need a farm number.*



GRANT WRITING 101 – BE DETAILED, CLEAR AND ACCURATE

- Use clear, simple language, readable to all (or most) audiences. Assume reviewers don't know you, your work or acronyms.
- Follow the guidelines, grant narrative and budget formats exactly.
- Get fresh eyes on your draft for review.
- Be willing to readjust your proposal for each funding program to which you submit to, paying attention to new details of new applications.



GRANT WRITING 101 – BE STRATEGIC

- For letters of support, offer talking points or a template for their authors (but don't make them all identical).
- Make sure you understand the grant review process; know the point values of each section.
- Identify the weakest aspects of your proposal and give yourself time to fix them.
- **Know the grant deadline, including the time of day it's due, and submit well in advance (at least two days).**



QUESTIONS?



THE APPLICATION – Narrative

- **Project Summary:** What are you going to do and why? (Typically will write once the rest of the narrative is written)
- **Farm/Org. Mission:** Tell your story. Why are you a great candidate to fund?
- **Goals/Need:** What are your project's goal(s) (what is the problem you're trying to solve) and what facts support them?
- **Objectives/Approach/Method:** What steps do you plan to take to reach the goal(s)?
- **Time Line/Workplan:** How long will each step require?
- **Personnel Credentials:** Who are key staff, consultants/contractors and partners?
- **Communication/Outreach:** To whom and how will you communicate about your work?
- **Evaluation:** How will you measure your progress toward goals and objectives? How will you gather the data?
- **Budget and Budget Narrative:** What will this cost, what is your match contribution? Detail out in budget form and in narrative.

THE APPLICATION – Budget/Budget Narrative

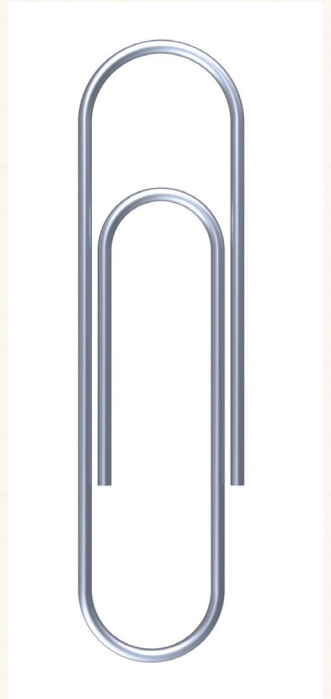
- Describe and justify each budget expense.
- List sources of match.
- Ensure that the language you use in the *project narrative* explaining each objective/activity matches what's in the budget.
- Explain anything in the budget that you think might not be obvious to the reviewer.

Page 3		Budget Sample #2			
		Non-Federal Match**			
	Federal	Cash	In-Kind	TOTAL	
<u>a. Personnel (Salary/wages)</u>					
Cooperative manager to serve as project Coordinator, 300 hours @ \$25/hr	\$2,500	\$5,000		\$7,500	
Project development team (3 Bd members) 24 days each @ \$200/day	-	-	\$14,400	\$14,400	
Hourly project staff to assist manager with project development, trip schedule and grant management, 520 hours @\$15/hr	\$7,800	-	-	\$7,800	
<u>b. Fringe Benefit</u>					
Cooperative manager @20%	\$500	\$1,000	-	\$1,500	
Board members, N/A	-	-	-	-	
Hourly@12%	\$936	-	-	\$936	
<u>c. Travel</u>					
3 out-of-state trips by project team of 4 to visit cooperative-owned processing plants with costs per trip estimated at: daily rate & gas for van @\$110/day for 4 days; hotel @\$80 ea for 3 nights, meals 4 days @\$30/day; parking @\$20	\$2,850	\$2850	-	\$5,700	
<u>d. Equipment</u>					
	-	-	-	-	
<u>e. Supplies</u>					
Educational resources (list)	\$1,000	-	-	\$1,000	
<u>f. Contractual</u> (attach detailed & approved budget)					
Subcontract to XX University for cost and market analysis study	\$10,000	\$10,000	-	\$20,000	
Subcontract to XX firm for development of business plan	\$10,000	\$5,000	-	\$15,000	
<u>Other</u>					
Subscription for marketing service	\$2,664	-	-	\$2,664	
Printing and postage for report	\$500	\$500	-	\$1,000	
Total Direct Costs	\$38,750	\$24,350	\$14,400	\$77,500	
**Sources of Match (see attached letters of commitment)					

THE APPLICATION – Attachments

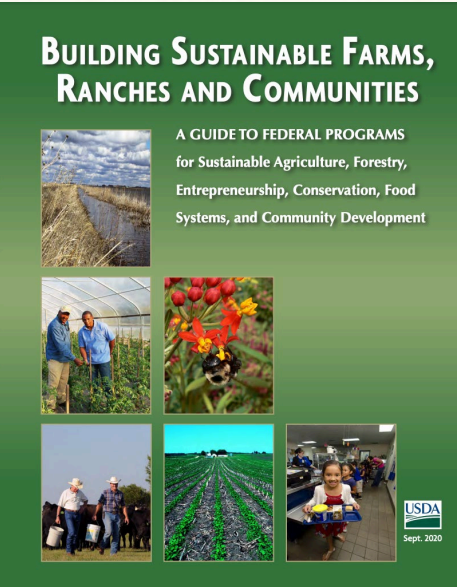
Examples of common attachments (to be submitted at the same time as the completed proposal. **ONLY submit attachments if requested**).

- Letters of support and/or commitment
- List of staff/board/partners and their expertise and required biographical information
- Income/Expense statements, budget,
- Articles of incorporation, business certificate, 501(c)3 letter, etc.
- Photos, plans, annual report, other supporting documentation
- For Federal, will be other forms required

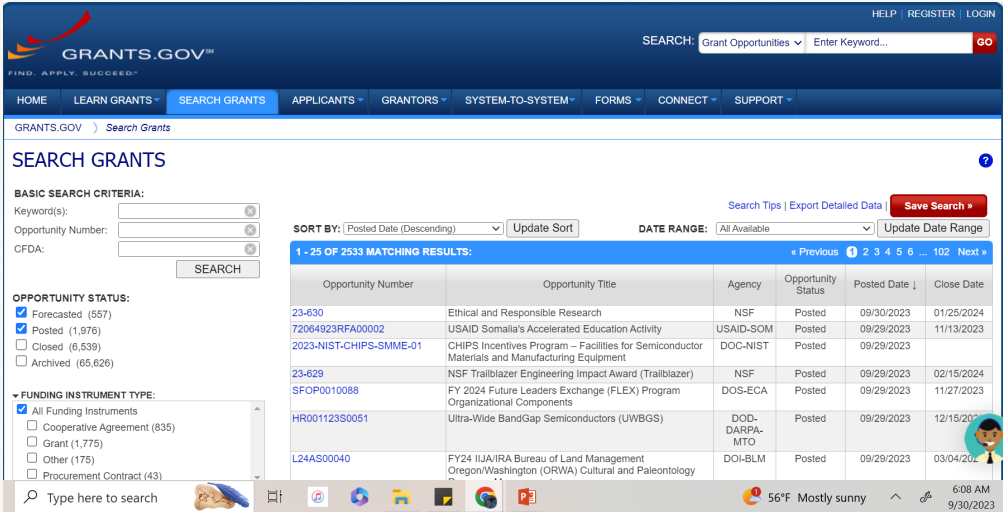


IDENTIFYING GRANTS – Resources for Gov’t Funding Opportunities

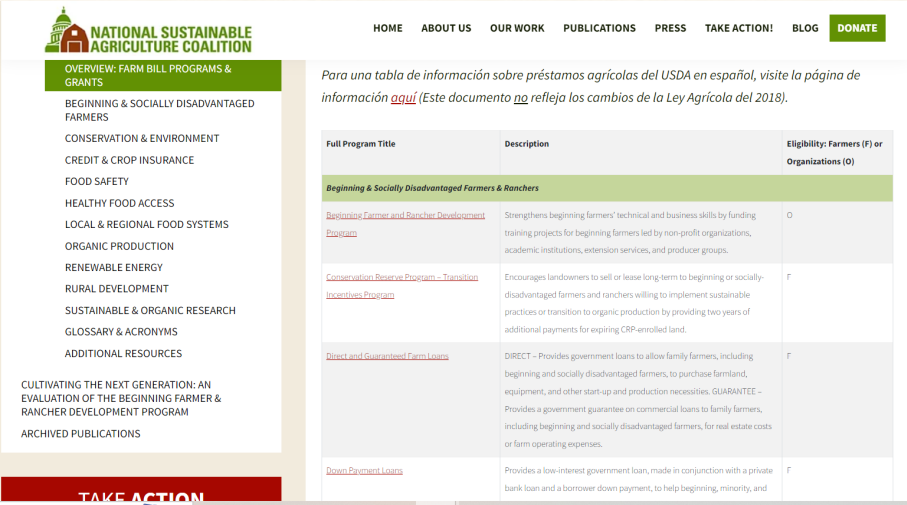
MFAI’s funding Guide: Building Sustainable Farms, Ranches and Communities



Grants.gov search



NSAC’s: Grassroots Guide to Federal Farm and Food Programs



IDENTIFYING GRANTS – TIPS FOR NON-FEDERAL PROGRAMS

- Look local first
 - Are there applicable county, city or state grants?
 - Are there private foundations that want to support a cause like yours? (typically non-profit only)
- Conduct basic internet searches using key words, like, “Grants for farmers”, “Grants in Ohio for food projects”
- Ask aligned individuals and groups and/or prospective partners
- Sign-up for free philanthropy newsletters, i.e. Philanthropy News Digest

https://duckduckgo.com/?q=ohio+grants+for+farmers&t=chrometp&ia=web

Microsoft Office Ho... Truscott Admin

https://ohioline.osu.edu > factsheet > anr-63
Grants and Low-Interest Loans for Ohio Small Farms | Ohioline
The two methods to get free or low-cost assistance for new farm enterprises are **grants** and low-interest loans. This fact sheet includes a summary of these methods and resources for acquiring them. Procuring **Grants** and Low-Interest Loans Planning must happen before a farm considers applying for **grants** and loans.

https://ohiodnr.gov > wps > portal > gov > odnr > buy-and-apply > apply-for-grants > grants
Grant Opportunities - Ohio Department of Natural Resources
CWRR **grants** are 50/50 cost share reimbursement **grants** focused on improving community safety, education, and preparedness. Conservation Club Competitive Partnership **Grant** Designed to encourage participation in wildlife-related recreation activities through a competitive **grant** program. Cooperative Boating Facility **Grant**

https://grants.ohio.gov
The Ohio Grants Partnership
Introducing the Upgraded **Ohio Grants** Portal. August 10, 2023. **Ohio Grants** Summit 2023. July 17, 2023. FY 2024 Cemetery **Grant** Program. July 13, 2023. odx-all-news. Expand All Sections. Web Content Viewer. Actions. The **Ohio Grants** Partnership is a section within the Office of Budget and Management.

https://grants.ohio.gov > funding-opportunities
Funding Opportunities - The Ohio Grants Partnership
Funding Opportunities Funding opportunities posted by the federal government can be found at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html Funding opportunities posted by the State of Ohio can be found in the below table.

https://ofbf.org > foundation > grantseekers
Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation Grants

AVAILABLE GRANTS – Examples

- SARE – Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education
 - Research and Education – Due October 10th
 - Partnership Grant – Due October 17th
 - Farmer/Rancher – Due December 5th
 - Youth Educator – Due November 7th
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
 - VAPG – Value Added Producer Grant (Spring)
 - FMLFPP – Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (Spring)
 - UAIP – Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production (Spring)
 - 2501 – Underserved and Veteran Farmers, Ranchers, and Foresters (Summer)
 - NRCS EQIP (Natural Resources Conservation Service) – High Tunnel Program and Organic Initiative



AVAILABLE GRANTS – Examples

- State Ag. Departments
 - Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin – (anticipated summer 2025) : helps farms and business more efficiently process, market and distribute food in local markets.
 - Specialty Crop Block Grant – Anticipated early 2025: enhances the competitiveness of Wisconsin's specialty crop industries in domestic and foreign markets. (Not open for individual farmers.)
 - Dairy Processor Grant – Due October 7th : fosters innovation, improves profitability and sustains the long-term viability of Wisconsin's dairy processing facilities.
- The Fruit Guys Community Grant (typically opens in January): supports sustainable agriculture projects with large positive impacts on the environment, local food webs, and farm diversity. Farms and non-profits can apply. \$5,000
- American Farmland Trust – Brighter Future Fund (typically opens and closes in July): grants to farmers and ranchers to advance AFT's mission to protect farmland, promote sound farming practices, and keep farmers on the land.

MFAI RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

MFAI's website offers numerous documents to support your grant writing.

<http://michaelfields.org/grant-advising-resources/>

These include:

- How to design projects, identify funding prospects, and successfully write grants
- Grant-writing Do's and Don'ts
- Strategies for writing budgets for federal grants
- Electronic Submission
- Recorded presentations

Grants Advising: Assists with identifying best fit opportunities, talking through grant guidelines, and reviewing proposals.

A group of people are working in a garden. In the foreground, a person with dreadlocks and sunglasses is using a shovel. Behind them, another person wearing a straw hat is also working. To the right, a person in a dark tank top and jeans is using a long-handled tool. In the background, a greenhouse is visible under a blue sky with white clouds.

Q & A

Wren Almitra

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www.michaelfields.org/grants-advising-resources