



**Great Lakes Fruit and Vegetable Expo
December 2021**



Agriculture Development Division

Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD)

Mission

The Agriculture Development Division delivers expertise and leadership to support economic development in Michigan's food and agriculture industry.

What to Expect:

Overview of MDARD programs

Grant Preparation and Applying for Grants



MDARD – Agriculture Development Division Grant Programs

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

To be announced early January 2022

Rural Development Fund Grant

Request for Proposals period has ended for 2022

Value-Add/Regional Food Systems Grant

To be announced early February 2022

Food and Agriculture Investment Program

See MDARD website for specific information



GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY-

- Read the Request for Proposals (RFP) or Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) thoroughly
 - Are you/your organization eligible to apply? Do you need additional staff to assist with preparing the application? Will the grant program meet your needs?
 - What kind of grant is it, performance-based, cost-reimbursement? Is there a Cash Match required?
 - Collaborate – Who are your partners? Local government, local farmers, other organizations who support the project. One to three letters of support.

GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY Cont'd.-

- Arrange for review of content (personnel edits, managerial review)
- Have you allowed enough time to prepare and submit your application.
- Make sure you are set up early, as far as technology, to submit the required documents.

FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS



THE APPLICATION – Start Preparing Early

□ Narrative (telling the story) – May contain:

- Needs statement – What’s the issue to be addressed? Be concise.
- How will your project resolve the issue(s) stated? What will the impact be?
- Keep the narrative easy to understand.
- Be confident in your writing style tone. Keep it positive, not patronizing.
- Know your audience – who will be reading the narrative.
- Build your argument in logical progression.

□ Objectives

- Measurable Outcomes and Performance Targets
- How will you accomplish the objectives
- How will you evaluate and share the results of the project?



THE APPLICATION – Start Preparing Early

Work Plan – What to include

- Name of the Activity – the work to be performed
- Timeframe - when it will happen (Be realistic)
- Responsible person(s)
- Are the activities/work to be performed in line with the objectives?

Budget

- What are the allowable costs?
- Make sure all items are Reasonable, Allowable, Allocable
- Do all your budget lines add up?
- Follow the template provided in the application – do not alter.





QUESTIONS?



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TIPS ON PREPARING AND APPLYING FOR GRANTS SESSION – Resources

Where to look for grant opportunities

MDARD - Grants & Funding Opportunities (michigan.gov)

https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1570_51684---,00.html

Rural Development Fund Grant –

Request for Proposals period – CLOSED 11/18/21

Announce award funding approximately late February 2022

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program –

Public Comment – Submit by December 10, 2021, to mda-grants@michigan.gov

Release Request for Proposals – January 4, 2022

Informational Webinar – January 6, 2022

Proposals Due – February 24, 2022, by 3:00 p.m. EST

Evaluation Meeting – April 2022

MDARD submits recommended projects in State Plan to USDA – June 2022

Value-Add/Regional Food Systems Grant –

Release Request for Proposals – February 2, 2022

Informational Webinar – February 8, 2022

Proposals Due – March 24, 2022, by 3:00 p.m. EST

Evaluation Meeting – May 2022

Announce Award Funding – June 2022

Other Grant Resources:

www.grants.gov

Grants and Loans | USDA

<https://www.usda.gov/topics/farming/grants-and-loans>

Farm Service Agency - [Farm Loan Programs \(usda.gov\)](https://www.fsa.usda.gov)

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/index>

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency

Loan guarantees for this program are streamlined under the OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiative

What does this program do?

The program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing.

Who may apply for this program?

- **Agricultural producers with at least 50 percent of their gross income coming from agricultural operations.**
- **Small businesses in eligible rural areas.**

NOTE: Agricultural producers and small businesses must have NO outstanding delinquent federal taxes, debt, judgment or debarment.

Who may qualify for loan guarantees?

Eligible borrowers are:

- Rural small businesses.
- Agricultural producers.

Additional entities may be eligible for other types of loan guarantees under the OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiative.

What are the borrowing restrictions for loan guarantees?

- Individual borrowers must be citizens of the United States or reside in the U.S. after being legally admitted for permanent residence.
- Private-entity borrowers must demonstrate that loan funds will remain in the U.S.

What is an eligible area?

- Businesses must be located in rural areas with populations of 50,000 residents or less.
- Check eligible business addresses.
- Agricultural producers may be in rural or non-rural areas.

How may the funds be used?

Funds may be used for renewable energy systems, such as:

- Biomass (for example: biodiesel and ethanol, anaerobic digesters, and solid fuels).
- Geothermal for electric generation or direct use.
- Hydropower below 30 megawatts.
- Hydrogen.
- Small and large wind generation.

- Small and large solar generation.
- Ocean (tidal, current, thermal) generation.

Funds may also be used for the purchase, installation and construction of energy efficiency improvements, such as:

- High efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC).
- Insulation.
- Lighting.
- Cooling or refrigeration units.
- Doors and windows.
- Electric, solar or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots.
- Switching from a diesel to electric irrigation motor.
- Replacement of energy-inefficient equipment.

Agricultural producers may also use guaranteed loan funds to install energy efficient equipment and systems for agricultural production or processing.

What funding is available?

- Loan guarantees on loans up to 75 percent of total eligible project costs.
- Grants for up to 25 percent of total eligible project costs.
- Combined grant and loan guarantee funding up to 75 percent of total eligible project costs.

What is the maximum amount of a loan guarantee?

The loan guarantee percentage is published annually in a Federal Register notice.

How do we get started?

Applications for this program are accepted year-round at your [local office](#).

Who can answer questions?

Contact your [State Rural Development Energy Coordinator](#).

What law governs this program?

- Grants – Code of Federal Regulation, [7 CFR 4280, Subpart B](#).
- Guaranteed Loans – Code of Federal Regulation, [7 CFR 5001](#).
- This program is authorized by Title IX of the [Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018](#), (2018 Farm Bill).

Why does USDA Rural Development do this?

This program helps increase American energy independence by increasing the private sector supply of renewable energy and decreasing the demand for energy through energy efficiency improvements. Over time, these investments can also help lower the cost of energy for small businesses and agricultural producers.

NOTE: Because citations and other information may be subject to change, please always consult the program regulations listed in the section above titled “*What Governs This Program?*” You may also contact [your local office](#) for assistance. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at [rd.usda.gov](#). *USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*

Value Added Producer Grant

What does this program do?

The Value Added Producer Grant program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. Generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the goals of this program.

Who may apply for this program?

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are eligible to apply for this program.

How may funds be used?

Grant and matching funds can be used for planning activities or for working capital expenses related to producing and marketing a value-added agricultural product. Examples of planning activities include conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing the proposed value-added product. Examples of working capital expenses include:

- Processing costs
- Marketing and advertising expenses
- Some inventory and salary expenses

How do I get started?

You need to read the [Federal Register notice](#) for the details on what is needed for an application. Make sure you start putting together the required information at least a month before the application deadline because you may need to provide letters of commitment or support from other organizations, a work plan and budget, and other information that will take you some time to look up or write. You may also need to fill out required forms. You can get copies of those forms from your nearest Rural Development Office.

Who can answer questions?

If you have questions, you can contact your nearest [RD Office](#).

Will I need to send any reports if I receive a grant?

If you receive a grant, you will need to send regular financial and performance reports. Your grant agreement will tell you how often you need to send the reports, what forms you need to use, and what information you need to put in the reports.

Where can I get more information?

In addition to many Federal regulations, the VAPG program has a regulation that is just for this program. It contains details about the program's purpose, what you can and can't do with grant money, application requirements, and information about how applications will be selected for funding. Remember that you need to read the Federal Register notice to get all the details about how to apply, but the program regulation also has useful information that you will need before applying for a grant.

What governs this program?

The VAPG program is authorized under section 231 of the Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-224), as amended by section 6203 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79) (see 7 U.S.C. 1632a).

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