

GRANT FUNDING



Know what you are looking to fund before you start your search!

- List some project ideas
- Which are best for grant funding and which are better for loans or investments?
- Grant funds typically fund “projects” that trial something new/different where results benefit others interested in doing something similar
- Develop your needs into project ideas

Finding the Money!

- Michael Fields Agricultural Institute grant newsletter – sign up for their grant announcements by emailing grants@michaelfields.org and asking to be on the email list. They do a great job of putting sending information on new agricultural grants when they become available. Michael Fields also has grant writing assistance for underserved farmers. Use the same contact email to ask about getting assistance searching and applying for grants.
- Grants.gov – federal website with listing of all federal grants available. Searchable by topic. Sign up for notification on grants of specific topics
- Grant workshops for farmers and food entrepreneurs – these are hosted by UW Extension, Michael field, DATCP and USDA. There are typically four workshops in different areas of the state held during September and October. They focus on a half day of grant writing tips/techniques and have day on finding grant and other funding opportunities. To be on an email list for the. info when the workshops are available, contact Diane Mayerfeld at dbmayerfeld@wisc.edu
- Building Sustainable Farms federal program guide – Go to: <https://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub-summaries/?pub=279>. This is a fabulous resource for federal agricultural funds. Each program has a full page of information about it. The most recent addition is 2014.
- Got Moo-la – A DATCP directory of grants, loans, banks, investors and other resources for agricultural and food businesses seeking funding. Currently the only way to get a copy is to email laura.gray@wi.gov Once it is updated, it will be available for download on www.datcp.wi.gov.
- Foundation Center software – Comprehensive, searchable directory for foundation funding. There is a hefty fee to access it on-line at <http://foundationcenter.org/products/foundation-directory-online>. However, the University of WI system has a subscription and allows public use. You should contact your closest UW to see if they have a copy or if you can access it on-line.



Is it a good fit?

- Read the RFP
 - Are you an eligible applicant?
 - Does your project fit their funding priorities?
 - Does the timeline work for your needs
 - Are your activities and expenses eligible?
- Contact the Program Staff
 - Ask enough questions to truly understand what is and is not funded
- **Don't chase grants – if it doesn't fit, it's not worth applying!**

Is it a good fit – additional things to consider

- What is a program's funding pool, average amount and duration of grants, percent of applicants who typically get funded? Is funding available up-front or (more typically) only on a reimbursement basis?
- What projects has the program funded in the past? Does its form of assistance suit your needs?
- What are financial match requirements, and restrictions on a program's funding use?
- Do a program's application deadlines and funding timeframes suit your project's needs? Does the program fund multi-year projects?
- Think creatively and broadly about your project's needs. Problems for which you seek help from grants are often complex, and often more than one type of assistance may contribute to their solution.

Creating a fundable project

- VERY specific purpose/problem to solve
- Urgency or need in addressing your problem/project
- Clear strategy to mitigating the problem/achieving the purpose
- Specific resources required to accomplish goals (money, people, supplies, etc.)
- Defined timeline
- Basis for evaluating the project results when complete
- Defined and effect plan to communicate results to beneficiaries

What aspects of your project are important for the grant you choose?

- Check out the scoring criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
1. Grant Application	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the project well organized, thought out, and explained in a way that makes sense and sounds like it can be carried out successfully?	
2. Project Purpose	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project?• Are the project objectives clear and appropriate?• Is the project important and timely?	
3. Potential Impact and Industry Support	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the project have a positive impact on the targeted specialty crop industry? Will it be effective at enhancing the competitiveness of that industry?• Does the number benefiting justify the investment?• Is it apparent that the project is important to and supported by the impacted specialty crop industry?• Will industry be actively involved in the project?	
4. Expected Measurable Outcomes	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did the applicant select one of the specific required outcomes and associated indicators provided in the RFP?• Did the applicant explain how the project will accomplish the outcome measure(s) and indicator(s)?• Does the project seem likely to achieve the outcome measures?• Are the chosen outcome(s) relevant to the program priorities and connected to the overall proposal?	

- Figure out what is most important and be sure your project fits these things
- Follow all the rules

General Writing Tips

- You are the best one to tell your story. If you have to hire a grant writer, you should still drive the explanations and information
- Be clear and concise, specific and straight forward
- Know and follow all the directions
- Connect your project to the funding mission/goals/priorities as often as possible without being obnoxious!
- Do NOT include information that is not requested. Speak to the specifics of the application.
- More explanation is better when it comes to budgets
- Make sure your project problem, need or purpose directly aligns with your plan to solve the problem, your plan to evaluate its success, and your audience with whom you will share results
- Have someone not involved in the project directly read your proposal and suggest edits

My Favorite Ag Grants

- **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Grants** - <http://www.sare.org/> is the website for the national program. Then look at <http://www.northcentralsare.org/State-Programs/Wisconsin/SARE-in-Wisconsin>. This is the WI information for the SARE grants. You can also contact Diane Mayerfeld Phone: 608.262.8188, Email: dbmayerfeld@wisc.edu. She helps run the program in our state. There are several grants under this broad category. The Farmer/Rancher grants are probably the most applicable, but they also have a research partner grant that may be good too. The application is not very difficult and are often due in early fall but the due date varies from year to year. The SARE website has a fabulous searchable database on all the projects that have been funded. The funding maximum is around \$8000 per applicant for farmer rancher and the research partner grant is around \$30,000 or more.
- **USDA Value Added Producers Grant (VAPG)** - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants> it's an excellent grant program meant for private business to expand their own business. The grant is for making value-added products from things you grow/produce so it would only be useful once you establish your operation. You have to make a value-added product to qualify for this grant. However, washing and packaging is considered "adding value", it just won't help you until you actually start growing something. Mike Daniels (Mike.Daniels@wi.usda.gov) is the USDA staff member who works with this program in WI. This grant can fund up to \$200,000 for an implementation project or up to \$75,000 for a planning grant. It can pay for a lot of different aspects of your value-added product project. The deadline tends to be in the fall but it really varies from year to year. The application for this grant is difficult and we have some trained grant writers in the state who charge for their services, but I'd highly recommend using one. This grant is very meticulous about what activities are and are not eligible so definitely look at the application AND contact Mike to ask him advice if you think you'd like to apply. Follow his advice to the letter. He truly knows what does and does not get funded and he is extremely helpful.
- **The Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin (BLBW) program** is an economic development program designed to help the Wisconsin agricultural and food industry find ways to improve food production, processing, marketing, and distribution with the ultimate goal of expanding Wisconsin's local food system. Projects must increase local food sales in Wisconsin. Maximum award for this grant is \$50,000 with a 1:1 match requirement. Eligible applicants include individual independent producers selling locally, individual independent processors using WI ingredients (that make up 51% of their product by weight, groups of independent producers (i.e. four farms working together), and Farmer/Rancher Cooperatives, Grower Associations and non-profits. Contact Kietra Olson (Kietra.olson@wi.gov) for questions.
- **Farmers Market (FMPP) and Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) grants** - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp> and <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp>. These are two separate programs; FMPP isn't necessarily about farmer's markets, but about selling directly to consumers. The LFPP is about reducing barriers to getting local foods into local markets. FMPP awards are for \$50,000-\$500,000 depending on your type of project while the LFPP awards are for \$25,000-\$500,000 depending on type of project. Applications are usually due in spring. These are great projects but you must have benefit to other growers/community/etc. for your project to be eligible.