AGRI Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant

Eric Nooker, Grant Administrator
The AGRI Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant (SustAg Demo Grant) Grant Program supports innovative on-farm research and demonstrations.

Program funds projects that explore sustainable agriculture practices and systems that could make farming more profitable, resource efficient, or personally satisfying.

Findings are published in the Minnesota Department of Agriculture’s annual Greenbook.
Award Amount

• Up to $250,000 will be awarded in Fiscal Year 2023
• Maximum award $50,000
• The first $25,000 does not need to be matched by the applicant

$25,000 Project Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Cost</th>
<th>Match Requirement</th>
<th>Total Grant Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
$75,000 Project Example

- For requests between $25,000 and $50,000, applicants must provide a dollar-for-dollar match on the amount above $25,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Cost</th>
<th>Match Requirement</th>
<th>Total Grant Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First $25,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining $50,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost: $75,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eligibility and Priorities

Who is eligible?

• Minnesota farmers, educational institutions, individuals at educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations

This grant will prioritize:

• Projects led by a farmer or group of farmers

• Emerging farmers, including historically underserved communities, such as immigrants, women, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) or Native American Tribal Communities, and other minorities
Project Requirements

• Projects must show:
  • The ability to maximize direct or indirect energy savings or production;
  • A positive effect or reduced adverse effect on the environment; or
  • Increased profitability for the individual farm by reducing costs or improving marketing opportunities

• Every project must:
  • Be located in Minnesota
  • Publicize and hold an outreach event in the form of a field day or other virtual event in the final season/year of the project
Additional Project Requirements

• If you are a farmer:
  • You must involve at least one Technical Cooperator

• If you are not a farmer:
  • You must have at least one Farmer Cooperator

• Projects do not have to be brand new but should be new to Minnesota or the part of the state where they’re being proposed
# FY 2022 Project Evaluation Profile

## Project Evaluation Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA</th>
<th>MAXIMUM SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the project leader a farmer or group of farmers?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this project show positive effects on the environment, farm profitability, or energy savings or production?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical or Farmer Cooperator(s)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do Technical Cooperators provide the expertise this project needs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are the Farmer Cooperators meaningfully involved?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do Commitment Letter(s) describe the expertise, role in project, and hourly rate charged (if any) of the Cooperator?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do the applicant(s) seem to have the necessary qualifications to do this project?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are emerging farmers meaningfully involved in carrying out the project?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Rationale</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is there a compelling reason to do this project?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will this project inform or demonstrate best management practices?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Could the demonstrated technologies or techniques be adopted and used by other farmers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Design and Methods</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do the design and methods follow from the rationale and objectives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are the objectives clear and answerable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will the plan of work accomplish the objectives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are there supporting documents detailing the design of the project?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is the project approach appropriate to achieve the project's goals?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project Ideas

- Increase Environmental Sustainability and Soil Health
- Nutrient and Pesticide Management
- Seed Breeding and/or Conservation
- Season Extension and Post-Harvest Storage and Handling
- Novel Enterprise Diversification
Applying

• Application period opens fall 2022
• To learn more, contact me at:

Eric Nooker  
eric.nooker@state.mn.us  
651-201-6643
Grants Line  
651-201-6500
Grant Writing Tips

- Review previous grantees in Greenbook or on past projects webpage
- Request to see the application of recent grantees
- Contact grantees to learn about their experience
- Review grant webpage Q and A section
- Read the Request for Proposals
  - Check project eligibility
  - Pay attention to how points are awarded
- Start preparing early, have a plan
- Sign up for email updates
Other Grant Programs

• AGRI Livestock Investment Grant
  • Grants provide a 10% reimbursement for the purchase, construction, or improvement of buildings or facilities for livestock production. Closes: 4 pm April 5.

• AGRI Value-Added Grant
  • Grants provide 25% of the cost of equipment or physical improvements that will add value to/increase sales of Minnesota agricultural products. Closes 4 pm March 24.

• Produce Safety Mini-Grant
  • Mini-Grant helps reimburse Minnesota produce farmers for expenses that improve on-farm food safety systems including supplies such as wax boxes, sanitizers, and water testing for generic E. coli. Closes March 12.
Thank you!

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