



USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Building Capacity, Access, and Resiliency for Oregon’s BIPOC and Other Producers – Microgrants 2024 Application

Microgrant Purpose:

- Increase the capacity of urban BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) farmers and other producers for growing food, medicines, fibers, or commodities or for expanding their growing operations;
- Increase urban BIPOC farmers' and other producers capacity for implementing climate-friendly and/or conservation practices that improve soil quality and increase their resilience to a changing climate if funding is not currently available through existing USDA programs.

Timeline

Application Opened	July 16th, 2024
Virtual Info Session	July 30th, 2024 @ 3pm PST via Zoom (bit.ly/2024FSAinfo)
Applications Close	August 13th, 2024, 11:59:00 PM Pacific Time
Funds Disbursed to Applicant By	October 2024
Funds Must Be Spent By	January 31st, 2025
Grant Reporting Due	February 28th, 2025

How to Apply

Please submit a proposal by completing an application form at the following [link](#) by the close of business on **August 13th, 2024, 11:59:00 PM Pacific Time**:

<https://form.jotform.com/scerquera/2024FSAapplication>

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Applicants must be stewarding land or ranching in the Portland Metro area (Oregon) QR applicants' commercial production sites must be located partially or wholly in one of the [selected urban areas](#) listed below.**
 - Portland and the neighboring cities of Beaverton, Gresham, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, Lake Oswego, Oregon City, Fairview, Wood Village, Troutdale, Tualatin, and Tigard.
- List of projected expenses (simple budget) for grant funds anticipated use
- Each farm business may only receive this microgrant once. Please ensure you apply at the time that is most beneficial to your farm business
- Applicant must derive a portion of their income from their farm business.

Please note the USDA defines Urban Agriculture to include the cultivation, processing, and distribution of agricultural products (food or non-food) in urban and suburban areas. Urban farming can provide environmental, economic, and social benefits to the surrounding communities. ([USDA](#); website accessed on 2024-06-11)

The term “**Beginning Farmer or Rancher**” means a participant who has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years, and who will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.

The term “**Socially Disadvantaged**” means an Individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. A socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.

Socially disadvantaged groups consist of the following:

- American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- Asians
- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
- Hispanics.

For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals.

([NRCS](#); website accessed on 2024-06-11)

Eligible Expenses or Uses of Microgrant Funding:

- To leverage or implement conservation practices*
- Purchase on-farm infrastructure
- Leasing of processing facility and cold storage
- Provide cost share for supplies and equipment if funding isn't currently available and/or hasn't already been awarded through other existing USDA programs for the designated microgrant recipients.*
- To expand their growing operations if funding is not currently available through existing USDA programs.
- Irrigation improvements to reduce water use*
- Solar-powered water/well pumps*
- Other water efficiency projects (piping, mulching, system automation and remote monitoring, or other irrigation modernization)*
- Shade cloth to protect plants from heat*
- Shading structures for plants (greenhouses, high-tunnels, etc) and/or livestock*
- Opaque plastics and row covers*
- Shade structures for workers*
- Refrigeration and cold storage
- Reduced or no tillage (labor or equipment purchases)*
- Composting, mulching, or addition of other organic amendments (compost, compost systems, spreaders; biochar, chippers or biochar reactors; aggregating organic debris to distribute to farmers; mulchers or equipment to spread mulch)*
- Cover cropping and seeds*
- Rotational grazing (fencing, shade structures, water troughs)*
- Tree planting*
- Planting of drought/heat/climate resilient seeds/varieties*
- Transition to or implementation of dry farming practices*
- Adapting planting and harvest times, transitioning to new varieties, and transitioning to new crops, diversification of overall production to avoid late season heat impacts*
- Increase season extension infrastructure*
- Frost protection for earlier planting to avoid late season heat*
- Purchasing animal feed
- Livestock trailers
- Implements/equipment to improve soil health or support other resilience activities/strategies (no-till seed drill, flail mower, roller crimpers, manure spreader, and others)*
- Creating an on-farm disaster plan (heat/smoke policies, evacuation plan)*

- Purchasing water and/or paying water bills
- Personal protective equipment, on-farm safety gear, etc.
- Market support, equipment, application and vending fees, market labor, etc
- SNAP/FNS authorization, SNAP processing equipment, PNW CSA Coalition membership/fees, etc.
- Other...

Items marked with an asterisk (*) are considered climate-smart projects.

Ineligible Expenses or Uses of Microgrant Funding:

- Cannabis or hemp, regardless of tested THC level
- Staff time (salaried or hourly, full-time or part-time employees) that is unrelated to the specific grant-funded project being implemented
- Community or backyard gardens and other hobby-gardening projects that do not represent a commercial production venture

If you are unsure whether an activity is eligible for microgrant funding, contact fsamicrogrants@ecotrust.org.

Please note that if funds are being utilized/ or supporting a project that has environmental disturbances additional approval will be required from USDA FSA. Please review this [list of potential environmental disturbances](#).

Selected Urban Locations:

The intended area includes Portland and the neighboring cities of Beaverton, Gresham, Hillsboro, Milwaukie, Lake Oswego, Oregon City, Fairview, Wood Village, Troutdale, Tualatin, and Tigard. Applicants' commercial production sites must be located partially or wholly in one of the above locations.

Grant Award Requirements:

If awarded, the recipient (or beneficiary) must:

- Submit a short (no more than one-page) narrative report that demonstrates how funds were used – **inclusive of financial summary and receipts/ invoices that show proof of payment.** Language translation is available upon request.
- Spend the entirety of their grant before their report is due on February 28, 2025 (Savings accounts for later use are not eligible for these funds).

Additional Information:

- The awardee's name will be included in a public announcement of grant recipients.
- Ecotrust and USDA will work with some grant recipients to share their stories through national communications channels. We will also ask that you sign a USDA photo release form so that USDA may highlight your story. Grant recipients have the option to opt out of this coverage. We encourage grant recipients to opt in as success stories help demonstrate the need to increase funding levels to USDA programs that benefit urban farmers.
- Please note that this grant is taxable income. Please consult with your tax advisor on any potential impacts this might have on your tax liability.

If you require translation services to complete this application, please contact fsamicrogrants@ecotrust.org to request translation services in a timely manner.

The following information should be submitted to the online application form at <https://form.jotform.com/scerquera/2024FSAApplication>

Demographic Information

The microgrants program prioritizes applications from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and other underserved producers. This includes all Black/African diasporic and Indigenous/Native folks, Black, African American, African descended, African diaspora, Indigenous, Native, Native American, First Nations, Alaska Native, Indigenous Latinx, Afro Latinx, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Pasifika, Asian, and more.

How do you identify your gender?

textbox

Please check the box for all the applicable statements:

- I grew up in a household where English was not the primary language
- I have experienced barriers that impact my eligibility to access USDA programming
- I have barriers to accessing support and resources due to disability, legal status, criminal history, etc.
- I do not have access to reliable infrastructure such as water, electricity, etc. for farming purposes
- I have difficulties with reliable transportation
- I do not own the land I am stewarding
- I identify as a beginning farmer, having operated a farm or ranch for no more than 10 consecutive years
- I served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard
- I identify as a Black, Indigenous, and/or other Producer of Color
- The farm business for which I am applying for this grant is at least 50 percent owned by socially disadvantaged individuals

Contact Information

Name:

Pronouns:

Business Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

Which entity will be receiving funds?

- Individual / Sole Proprietor
- Business
- Fiscal Sponsor

Do you derive a portion of your income from your farm business?

- Yes
- No

Have you received funding from any of the following before? Please note this will NOT impact your application.

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- National Resources and Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
- Farm Service Agency (USDA FSA)
- I have not qualified with any of the agencies listed above in the past.
- None
- Other

Where is your farm business located? Applicants' commercial production sites must be located partially or wholly in one of the Selected Urban Locations listed below.

- Portland
- Beaverton
- Gresham
- Hillsboro
- Milwaukie
- Lake Oswego
- Oregon City
- Fairview
- Wood Village
- Troutdale
- Tualatin
- Tigard

Do you have a USDA Farm Number? If so, please enter the number in the 'other' section. You do not need a USDA Farm Number to be eligible for this opportunity. If awarded, applicants are encouraged to register as an urban or suburban grower, voter, with the FSA Office to be considered eligible for future county elections and resources.

- Yes
- No
- No, please help me obtain one
- Other

Project Proposal

Eligible projects include, and are not limited to, the following list. *Please note that if funds are being utilized/or supporting a project that has [environmental disturbances](#), additional approval will be required from USDA FSA.*

Please select all the projects applicable from this list or add additional project proposals in the designated ‘other’ section. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are considered climate-smart projects:

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- Leasing of processing facility and cold storage
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- To expand their growing operations if funding is not currently available through existing USDA programs.
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- Solar-powered water/well pumps*
- Other water efficiency projects (piping, mulching, system automation and remote monitoring, or other irrigation modernization)*
- Shade cloth to protect plants from heat*
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- Purchasing water and/or paying water bills
- Personal protective equipment, on-farm safety gear, etc.
- Market support, equipment, application and vending fees, market labor, etc
- SNAP/FNS authorization, SNAP processing equipment, PNW CSA Coalition membership/fees, etc.
- Other...

How will this project help increase your capacity for growing food, medicines, fibers, commodities, etc.? Or, how will this project increase your capacity for implementing climate-friendly and conservation practices that improve soil quality and increase resilience to a changing climate?

Tell us about your project or activity – Provide as much detail and information as you can, including – the technique, approach, and the intended outcomes. Up to 5,000 characters including spaces. *There are no preferences for what applicants produce on their operations or for the current scale of the farm operation.*

text box

Please attach a simplified budget (if purchasing items, please make a budget that shows the name, amount, and purpose). The total budget must add up to \$5,000.

If preferred, upload a PDF or spreadsheet here: [fill in table or file upload](#)

EXAMPLE		
Item(s)	Cost	Purpose
<i>Drip tubing, emitters, filters, valves, fittings, and pressure regulators</i>	\$2,000.00	<i>Drip irrigation system to conserve water</i>
<i>Farm employee</i>	\$500.00	<i>To install irrigation. 20 hours at \$25/hr</i>
<i>Thermal AC greenhouse film</i>	\$1,000.00	<i>Improved bee pollination, decreased pathogens in season extension</i>
<i>Soil moisture retention cloth</i>	\$1,500	<i>Improves irrigation efficiency; decreases evapotranspiration</i>
TOTAL	\$5,000	

Item(s)	Cost	Purpose

Ecotrust and its Urban Agriculture projects will be creating some Urban Farmer profiles and narratives related to this grant project. Are you interested in partnering with us and other farmers to tell your story? *Please note this will not impact your application.* -

multiple choice

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, let's talk more

In a sentence or two, share a bit about your business's vision, mission, and/or values.

textbox

Microgrant Environmental Review Process

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the implementing regulations in 40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508, and FSA's NEPA implementing Regulations in 7 CFR Part 799 for cooperative agreements entered under the FSA Urban and Innovative Agriculture Community-Based Organization Fund. After review at the programmatic level, USDA determined that, in general, cooperative agreements entered under Section 1001 of the Build Back Better Act, Food Systems Transformation Effort do not have the potential for significant impacts to the human environment. FSA has determined that the following categories of activities are categorically excluded from further review under the National Environmental Policy Act, per 7 CFR § 799.31:

- Educational or informational (i.e., outreach) activities; and
- Procurement actions for goods and services conducted in accordance with Executive Orders.

However, a site-specific review will be needed for activities funded through the cooperative agreement, or subsequent microgrant programs, if any of the following conditions are true:

1. Disturb ground to a level that has not been previously disturbed, remove any trees, remove any tree roots, or use mechanical means to remove damaged fencing or debris that will impact below the level of previous disturbance.
2. Place a farm storage or other facility on a farm eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places and would have a visual impact to the historic character of the farm.
3. Modify, renovate, or remove a structure or building that is 50 years old or older.
4. Involve an activity including new land clearing, impacts to any water body, wetland, floodplain, riparian buffer, threatened or endangered species, their critical habitat, or cultural resources that would otherwise require consultation.
5. Result in any extraordinary circumstances in accordance with Handbook 1-EQ (Rev. 3) Par. 25.
6. Change the existing land use or remove the land from agricultural use.
7. Involve FSA actions or programs not specified in this P-850, not approved in that municipality, or for which an individual site-specific FSA-850 or environmental assessment is required.

For microgrants, the grantee must satisfy any site-specific NEPA requirements identified by FSA prior to drawing down funds or incurring expenses related to the microgrant. Once these conditions have been successfully completed, FSA will notify the grantee that the review is complete. At that time, the distribution and expenditure of microgrant funds will be authorized.

Before the NEPA process is completed, Federal regulations specify acceptable actions in 40 CFR § 1506.1.

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In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, and American Sign Language) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online, at www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-programdiscrimination-complaint-form.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA.

The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation.

The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

or fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442;

email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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