DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AGRI Livestock Grant

2024 Request for Proposals

Applications due by 4 p.m. on May 2, 2024

Contents

Grant Summary

Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the spring round of the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Agriculture Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Livestock Investment Grant Program. Grant funds are available for equipment purchases, physical improvements, and acquisition of facilities used to help start, improve, or expand livestock operations in the state of Minnesota.

Reminder of grant changes

We made two significant changes to the grant program in FY 2023.

- The Livestock Investment Grant statute ([MINN STAT 17.118](#)) was amended to eliminate the lifetime maximum of $50,000 that applied at individual and entity levels. Instead, the statute requires that the commissioner give preference to applicants who have not previously received a grant.
  - All principal operators may apply for funds this round, regardless of whether they have received a grant in the past or not.
  - Each farm may only submit one application.
- Only expenses incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties are eligible for reimbursement. We expect to have contracts to grantees by July 2024.

Funding availability

We expect to award approximately $650,000 in this round using a competitive review process.

- Applicants may apply for up to 10% of their project's total cost with a minimum expense of $4,000 and a maximum expense of $250,000; grant awards can range in size from $400 to $25,000.
- An individual or farm may only receive one grant in FY 2024.

Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

[Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review (PDF)](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

This grant will prioritize:

- Emerging farmers, including women; veterans; persons with disabilities; American Indian or Alaskan Natives; members of a community of color; young farmers; and farmers who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+).
- Generational transitions
- Production of livestock for Kosher or Halal markets
- Robotic milking equipment

Timeline

April 25, 2024, 4 p.m. Central Time (CT)   Deadline to ask grant program questions.

May 2, 2024, 4 p.m. CT   Applications due.

Mid-June 2024   Applicants notified of decisions; grant agreement negotiations begin.

July 2024   Anticipated start date for projects awarded funding.

How to apply

Applications are due by **4 p.m. CT on Thursday, May 2, 2024**. We will not consider late applications.

- Apply using our online application system.
    - If you are a new user, you'll need to create an account first.
    - Once you're logged in, select "Livestock Investment Grant FY24".
- Apply early so there is enough time to get technical assistance if needed.
    - It's best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
    - We are not responsible for any technical or logistical problems that result in a late submission. It is your responsibility to ensure that we receive your application before the deadline.

Questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Email your question to MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us before **4 p.m. CT on April 25, 2024**.
    - Include "Livestock Grant" in the subject line.
- We will post responses to all questions on the Questions and Answers section of the Livestock Investment Grant webpage.

Note: MDA employees are not authorized to give advice on any applications. Applicants who solicit or receive advice from unauthorized MDA employees may be disqualified from eligibility for a grant award.

For help with the online application system:

- Call 651-201-6500 or email MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us with "Livestock Grant" in the subject line.

Eligible applicants

Applicants must:

- Be the principal operator of a livestock operation in Minnesota.
- Be a resident of the state of Minnesota or be a business entity authorized to farm in Minnesota (see below).
- Hold an appropriate feedlot registration when applicable.
- Be in good standing with the State of Minnesota:
    - No back taxes owed.
    - No defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the last seven years.
    - Acceptable performance on past MDA grants.
    - Compliant with current state regulations or this project will support the organization becoming compliant.

Who is a principal operator?

A principal operator is the person primarily responsible for the day-to-day operation of the farm. The principal operator could be an owner, hired manager, cash tenant, share tenant, or partner.

What business entities need authorization to farm in Minnesota?

The statute on farming by business organizations (MINN. STAT. 500.24) requires that all pension or investment funds, corporations, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, and irrevocable trusts must be certified by the MDA before engaging in farming or having an interest in agricultural land.

How do business entities get authorization to farm in Minnesota?

Go to the Minnesota's Corporate Farm Report web page for applications and more information.

How do I know if I need a feedlot registration?

For feedlot registration rules, contact your local feedlot officer or visit the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Feedlots website.

Collaboration

Eligible applicants may collaborate with other livestock operations, but it's not required. If eligible organizations are submitting a joint application, they must determine which individual or farm will have the grant contract agreement with the MDA and will work directly with the MDA to meet grant reporting requirements. Note that the individual or farm will receive a 1099 from the State of Minnesota for income tax purposes.

Eligible projects and expenses

For the purposes of this grant, livestock includes beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, poultry, goats, mules, bison, sheep, horses, farmed cervids (deer, elk), ratites (flightless birds including emu), and llamas.

If we accept your proposal, we will reimburse eligible costs included in your project budget. You will have to submit documentation including invoices and proof of payment.

- You must be invoiced and pay for all project materials and services between the grant agreement start date and May 31, 2027.
  - Grants are expected to start on July 1, 2024.
  - Any expenses incurred outside this timeframe are not eligible.

Projects must:

- Aim to improve, update, or modernize livestock operations through infrastructure and equipment.
- Not start until the grant contract agreement is signed by all parties and has reached its start date. No purchasing or contracting of goods and services may occur prior to the full execution of the grant contract agreement or effective date, whichever is later.
- Be completed in three years or less; contracts cannot be extended beyond three years.
- Be conducted in Minnesota.

Project examples include but are not limited to:

- Acquisition, construction, or improvement of buildings or facilities to produce livestock or livestock products
- Development of pasture for use by livestock including, but not limited to, the acquisition, development, or improvement of:
- Lanes used by livestock that connect pastures to a central location
- Watering systems for livestock on pasture, including water lines, booster pumps, and well installations
- Livestock stream crossing stabilization
- Fences
- Acquisition of equipment for livestock housing, confinement, feeding, and waste management including, but not limited to, the following:
- Freestall barns
- Watering facilities
- Feed storage and handling equipment
- Milking parlors
- Robotic equipment
- Scales
- Milk storage and cooling facilities
- Bulk tanks
- Computer hardware and software and associated equipment used to monitor the productivity and feeding of livestock
- Manure pumping and storage facilities
- Hog farrowing facilities
- Hog and cattle finishing barns
- Calving facilities
- Digesters
- Equipment used to produce energy
- On-farm processing facility equipment
- Fences, including but not limited to farmed cervid perimeter fences
- Livestock pens and corrals
- Sorting, restraining, and loading chutes

Ineligible expenses

The following items are not eligible for reimbursement under this grant:

- Expenditures incurred prior to the full execution of the grant contract agreement or its start date, whichever occurs later, or those incurred after the expiration of the grant contract agreement
- General purpose equipment (e.g., skid steer loaders, combines, tractors)
- General purpose buildings (e.g., general equipment storage building, farm shop)
- Animal feed or crop seed
- Crop production equipment (except specialized forage or hay harvesting and handling equipment such as mowing equipment, tedding equipment, and hay balers)
- Crop or pastureland

- Livestock
- Purchase of more than 10 acres of land used to construct livestock buildings or facilities
- Rent-to-own lease agreements where property purchase is optional
- Refinancing existing debt
- Late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Items that are not allowed to be capitalized and deducted under either section 167 or 179 of the Internal Revenue Code in computing federal taxable income
- Construction or improvements outside of the state of Minnesota
- Owner and employees' wages and benefits. Contact program staff for exceptions.
- Advertising, public relations, entertainment, and amusement costs
- Donations and in-kind contributions, including property and services, made by the applicant (regardless of the recipient)
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to follow federal, state, local, or Native American tribal laws and regulations
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)
- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, including costs of membership in organizations substantially engaged in lobbying, and political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, legal costs, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out-of-state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for deciding whether travel is out of state.

Matching funds

The AGRI Livestock Investment Grant is a reimbursement grant for up to 10% of the project cost. You must supply documentation showing payment for the full cost of the project to receive the awarded reimbursement amount.

Sources of funding for the project may include cash, loans, other grants, and liquid capital assets dedicated to the project. State grant funds cannot be used for the grantee portion of the project, but non-forgivable loans from the State may be used as a match.

Application Review Policies

Review process

A review committee, made up of MDA staff and external reviewers, will evaluate all eligible applications based on the criteria in the Project Evaluation Profile. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The commissioner of agriculture reviews the committee recommendations and makes the award decisions. Both the review committee and commissioner may consider geographic distribution, services to prioritized populations, applicant's history as a state grantee, and capacity to perform the work.

The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers (MINN. STAT.16B.98 and Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making, 2022 (Word)).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potential unable to give impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicant or grantee will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Privacy notice and data classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under this program. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence; however, only completed applications will be considered for a grant. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act as private or nonpublic, although some or all of the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited to MDA staff and contractors with a valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per Minnesota's statute on grants ([MINN. STAT. 13.599](#)):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in application responses (except for data otherwise classified by law, including trade secret information, see below) becomes public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will generally be public data after the evaluation process is completed.

Procedure for claiming protection of trade secrets:

- Trade secret information is classified as not public data. In order to qualify as trade secret information, the data in question must be provided to the MDA by the affected person (i.e. the data must be about the applicant) and otherwise meet the legal definition found in statute ([MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1(b)](#)). In order for an applicant to assert trade secret protection for data submitted as part of this application, the applicant must: 1) clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or process that the applicant believes to be trade secret information; 2) describe what efforts the applicant takes to maintain the secrecy of the data; and 3) adequately explain how the data derive(s) independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons. Merely asserting trade secret protection does not, in and of itself, classify the data in question as not public; determining what data meet the definition of trade secret information is ultimately the legal responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data identified as trade secret information by an applicant will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data do not meet the definition of trade secret information, the data in question will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

All persons, businesses, and individuals applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must comply with applicable laws. Under the law titled Right of Setoff ([MINN. STAT. 270C.65, subd. 3](#)), a grantee consents to disclosure of its social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies, and to state personnel involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws which could result in action requiring a grantee to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

Requirements for Grant Recipients

Grant award agreement and payments

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs](#) webpage.

Upon approval of an application and before beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant must:

- Complete an IRS W-9 form, register as a vendor in SWIFT (the state's accounting system), or confirm that the information we have in SWIFT is still correct; and
- Sign a grant contract agreement showing their intention to complete the proposed tasks. The agreements also authorize the MDA to monitor the progress of the projects. Grant contract agreements must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties. The MDA will not be held liable for any costs incurred by an applicant for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal, nor for any work performed prior to the formal execution of the contract.

Reimbursement procedures

Grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. To receive payments, grantees must submit requests for reimbursements. Grantees may be asked to submit itemized invoices, along with verification of the costs you are requesting reimbursement for and proof of your matching contributions to the grant. Grant payments will not be issued for grants with past due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension. Generalized information on requesting reimbursement can be found in our [expense reimbursement guide (PDF)](#), although there may be additional requirements for this program.

Accountability and reporting

The grantee must submit an annual report each year of the grant. A final report must be submitted prior to receiving final payment. Annual and final reports must include a summary of project results to-date, impact of the grant program, and three to five photos of the project. The MDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the project. Information submitted in any report or survey will be a public record.

The MDA periodically requests follow-up surveys from former grantees to help determine the long-term impacts of the grant. Grantees must respond to these requests for three years beyond the term of the grant agreement. Failure to respond to these promptly may affect a grantee's ability to secure future funding from the MDA.

Bidding requirements

All funded applicants must follow the State's [bidding requirements](#) for larger purchases.

Publicity

All projects funded must publicly credit the MDA, including on the grantee's website when practical. Examples include, "Funds provided in part by the AGRI Program". or "Funds provided in part by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture".

Affirmative action and non-discrimination policy

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified (MINN. STAT. 363A.02). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship (Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Record retention and audits of project

The grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency, the commissioner of administration, and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate (MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 8). The grantee is responsible for the retention of documents and records relevant to the grant. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date; receipt and approval of all final reports; or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements; whichever is later.

Voter registration requirement

The grantee will provide voter registration services for its employees (MINN. STAT. 201.162).

AGRI Background and Program Goals

The Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Program (AGRI) was established to advance Minnesota's agricultural and renewable energy industries ([MINN. STAT. 41A.12](#)). AGRI has made significant economic impacts by increasing productivity, improving efficiency, and assisting the development of agricultural products.

The primary goal of the AGRI Livestock Investment Grant is to encourage long-term industry development for Minnesota livestock farmers and ranchers by helping them improve, update, and modernize their livestock operation infrastructure and equipment.

Project Evaluation Profile

Evaluation criteria	Maximum score
Project addresses goals of the AGRI Livestock Investment Grant • Applicant clearly articulates how the project helps start, improve, or expand livestock operations in the state of Minnesota	Yes or No
New farmer or generational transition • Farmer has been the principal operator for 10 years or less (5 pts) • Project meaningfully contributes to a generational transition (5 pts) • Applicant has not previously received an AGRI Livestock Investment Grant (5 pts)	15
Project impact • Applicant clearly explains how the project will have a meaningful impact on their farm	10
Farm safety and accessibility improvements • Project addresses farm safety or accessibility needs of the farmer or employees	10
Environmental impact or responding to a natural disaster • Project addresses major environmental benefits or corrects compliance issues with feedlot regulations • Project repairs damage caused by a natural disaster or will make the farm more resilient to changes in climate and severe weather	10
Diversity, equity, and inclusion • Applicant is an emerging farmer or historically underserved communities are reflected in the operation's priorities. Emerging farmers includes women; veterans; persons with disabilities; American Indian or Alaskan Natives; members of a community of color; young farmers; and farmers who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+). • Applicant has plans to produce and sell product in an alternative market, including Halal or Kosher	10
Technology improvements and robotic dairy milking equipment • Project adequately describes technology updates that will improve efficiency for the operation (5 pts) • Project includes robotic dairy milking equipment (5 pts)	10
Market demand for animal welfare • Project helps protect or expand market access by responding to demand for animal welfare by improving conditions for livestock or contributing to better animal handling	5
Farm management plan and programs • Project contributes to the implementation or continuation of a farm management plan or program	5
Project readiness, budget, economic outcomes Applicant: • Includes a budget that clearly details project costs (5 pts) • Details how their proposed project will improve profitability and efficiency (5 pts) • Includes a plan for paying for the project, including the portions not reimbursed by this grant (5 pts) • Clearly explains the importance this grant to completing the project (5 pts) • Demonstrates adequate planning and includes a work plan and timeline for their project (5 pts)	25
Total	**100**

Application Questions

We're providing this preview of the application questions for your convenience. You will answer these questions in our online application system. Please log in and review the online application before you begin preparing your answers. Additional instructions for the questions may be provided within the full application.

Contact information

Applicant information

- Applicant name
- Mailing address
- Applicant telephone
- Applicant email
- County
- Minnesota State House District (Use the District Finder if you don't know your district.)

Authorized representative

- If awarded a grant, the person that will sign the Livestock Investment Grant contract agreement for this organization. This is often yourself or other leadership in your operation.
  - Name
  - Telephone
  - Email

Organizational structure

- Select one:
  - Sole proprietorship
  - Partnership
  - LLP
  - LLC
  - Corporation (Incorporated)
  - Estate
  - Trust
  - Other

Farm operation

- Name of farm (if applicable)
- Farm address
- What is your feedlot registration number? (If applicable)

Number of livestock

- Use the following table as a guide to give an estimate of the number of livestock on your operation. This is one way that the MDA measures the impact of this grant program. Note: You are NOT required to increase the number or types of livestock for this grant.

Livestock type	Current number (before project)	Estimated number (after project)
Beef cattle		
Dairy cattle		
Swine		
Sheep/Goats		
Poultry		
Horses		
Bison		
Other		

Eligibility

- Confirm that the following statements apply to your application. For this application, the grant recipient (farm or individual) is the applicant.
    - The applicant does not owe the State of Minnesota any back taxes and has not defaulted on any State of Minnesota backed financing in the last seven years. (True)
    - The applicant is compliant with current state regulations, or this project will support the organization becoming compliant. (True)
    - The applicant is a current Minnesota resident or the business is authorized to farm in Minnesota. (True)
    - I am the principal operator or have the authority to apply on behalf of the farm and no other application is being submitted from this farm. (True)
- The MDA is unable to reimburse for any work that is performed prior to the start date of the contract. Has work started on your proposed project or will work start before the grant contract agreement is signed by all parties? (Yes or No)
- Are any of the principals of the farm an employee of the MDA or part of an MDA employee's family or household? (Yes or No)
    - If yes, briefly describe the individual's role with the MDA and their relationship to the applicant/organization.

Previous Livestock Investment Grants

- Have you or anyone associated with your farm received a previous AGRI Livestock Investment Grant? (Yes or No)
    - If yes, briefly describe your previous grant project(s), including date(s) and amount(s) awarded. (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Project summary

Project title

- Farm name and item you're requesting.

  Examples:
  - ➢ Petersen Farm, sheep barn
  - ➢ Easy 8 Ranch, electronic ID for cattle

Grant request

- Total project cost (number only)

- Total grant request (the grant reimburses for 10% of the first $250,000). Maximum $25,000, minimum $400 (number only).

Match confirmation

- I confirm that no other State of Minnesota funds will be used as a match for this project. (Yes)

Project date

- Expected project start date

  - o Must be after both you and the State of Minnesota sign the contract.

  - o Award notification is in mid-June and contracts may be signed as early as July 2024.

  - o You may not order equipment until after the grant contract agreement is signed.

- Expected project end date

  - o Contracts may last a full three years from the start date.

  - o You will have up to two months after your contract end date to submit for a reimbursement.

  - o All items and services must be paid for and installed by the end date of the contract.

NOTE: This application is being scored based on the Project Evaluation Profile. Answer all questions that apply to your project to maximize your score. Please answer the questions below as completely as possible.

Project description

- Describe your project in three to five sentences, including what you are going to do; how it fits into your farm's plan; and how the project helps start, improve, or expand your livestock operation. (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Project impact

- What impact will this project have on your farm? (1,000 characters, including spaces)

New farmers or generational transition

- How many years have you been the principal operator of your farm? (number only)

- Does this project support a beginning farmer? (Yes or No) (A beginning farmer, for this application, has farmed 10 years or less.)

    o If yes, please explain. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

- Does this project meaningfully contribute to a generational transition that is being planned or implemented? (Yes or No)

    o If yes, please explain. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

Farm safety and accessibility improvements

- Does this project improve farm safety or accessibility on your operation? (Yes or No)

    o If yes, describe the farm safety or accessibility improvements that would result from this project. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

    Examples:

    ➢ Improvements to create a work environment less likely to result in physical harm to workers.

    ➢ Improvements to allow farmers or employees with disabilities or physical conditions to contribute to the day-to-day operations of the farm.

Environmental impact

- Does this project provide major environmental benefits or correct environmental compliance issues, including feedlot regulations? (Yes or No)

    o If yes, explain how this project provides major environmental benefits or corrects environmental compliance issues, including feedlot regulations. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

Responding to natural disasters

- Are you rebuilding after a natural disaster that happened within the last two years or making the farm more resilient to changes in climate or severe weather? (Yes or No) (Examples of natural disasters include wind, flood, drought, fire, snow, and ice.)

    o If yes, describe the natural disaster and the damage it caused, and say which parts of the project are related to repairing the damage. Or describe how your project makes the farm more resilient to changes in climate or severe weather. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

NOTE: This section is optional but answering it may earn you points in the application review process.

- This program prioritizes grant-making to emerging farmers. Please mark any group(s) with which you identify.

    - ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Natives
    - ☐ Beginning farmer (farming 10 years or less)
    - ☐ LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual)
    - ☐ Member of a community of color
    - ☐ Persons with disabilities
    - ☐ Veteran
    - ☐ Woman
    - ☐ Young farmer (35 and younger)

- Does your operation have specific plans to process and sell product in an alternative market, including Halal or Kosher? (Yes or No)

    - o If yes, describe specific plans to process and sell product in an alternative market. (500 characters, including spaces)

Technology improvements and robotic dairy milking equipment

- Does your project include technology improvements? (Yes or No)

    - o If yes, describe any technology improvements included in your proposed project and how the improvements will impact your operation. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

- Does your project include the purchase of robotic milking equipment? (Yes or No)

Market demand for animal welfare

- Does your project help protect or expand market access by responding to demand for animal welfare? This includes improving conditions for livestock and contributing to better animal handling. (Yes or No)

    - o If yes, describe how your project will help protect or expand market access by responding to demand for animal welfare. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

Farm management plans and programs

- Does your farm participate in any of the following farm management plans or programs? Select all plans and programs that apply. If you don't participate in any, select N/A.

    - Annual Nutrient Management Plan
    - Beef Quality Assurance
    - Environmental Quality Assurance (EQA)
    - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
    - Farm Energy Audits
    - Farmers Assuring Responsible Management TM (FARM)
    - Green Star Farm Initiative
    - Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program
    - Organic System Plan
    - Pork Quality Assurance
    - Regular Soil Testing
    - USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs
    - Other (list below)
    - N/A

    - If you participate in any other farm management plans or programs, list them here:

- Describe your farm's participation and how the project contributes to the implementation of a farm management plan or program or leads to greater success in an existing program. (500 characters, including spaces)

(Optional) Supporting documentation

- You may attach up to three letters of support from someone other than yourself (e.g., lender, Farm Business Management instructor, Extension educator, consultant, etc.) Each letter can be no longer than two pages.

Project readiness, budget, and economic outcomes

Budget

- Create a budget using the table below. Don't attach bid sheets or quotes from vendors instead of a budget in this format. If specific contractors are named in the application, you won't need to use a formal bidding process. This can save you time and effort later.

    Example:

Item	Quantity	Cost per unit	Total estimate	Source of estimate
Barn Concrete	1	$15,000	$15,000	ABC Concrete Company
Fence Panels	100	$15	$1,500	ABC Fleet

Budget narrative

- Justify your budget and explain how you plan to pay for your project. (2,000 characters, including spaces)

    o Explain how you expect this project will improve the efficiency or profitability of your farm. Note that your operation doesn't currently need to be profitable. It's important that you give a clear description of how this project will change the viability and economic health of your farm operation.

    o Explain how you plan to pay for your project (e.g., financing, other grants, private investment, personal investment, organization funds, etc.). Other state grant funds cannot be used to pay for this project, but non-forgivable loans from the state may be used as a match.

    o Explain the importance this grant has in your ability to complete the project. If you don't receive a grant, what are your alternatives for financing the project?

(Optional) Documents showing project costs and ability to pay for project

- Submit documents such as:

    o Quotes or estimates from businesses for equipment or services.

    o Letters of commitment written by financial institutions or other organizations that will be providing funding through loans or credit.

    o Letters from your financial institutions showing you have sufficient cash reserves to fund this project.

Work plan and timeline

- Create a work plan using the example format shown below. You should include the steps that you will take to successfully complete your project. For example, you might include target dates for requesting quotes, installing and testing equipment, and full launch of the equipment. You may also upload your work plan as an Excel or Word file.

    Example:

Timeframe	Description of task or action item	Responsible party
May 2024	Request quotes for barn concrete	Self
August 2024	Place order for fence panels	Self
September 2024	Break ground on project	Self and ABC Concrete