

Minnesota Department of Agriculture Rural Finance Authority and Financial Assistance Programs

The Rural Finance Authority (RFA) partners with local lenders to provide affordable credit to eligible farmers. RFA will participate with a local lender up to 45 percent of the loan amount to the program maximum. This provides the borrower with a lower interest rate on a portion of the loan. The borrower must be a Minnesota resident, a domestic family farm corporation, or a family farm partnership, and have sufficient education or training to farm. They must also have the financial ability to repay the loan, and be the principal operator of the farm or intend to make farming their principal future occupation.

Beginning Farmer Loan Program

The Beginning Farmer Loan Program was established to help people who want to farm in Minnesota. It offers affordable financing, a reasonable down payment and built-in safeguards, such as farm management training and financial planning to help minimize the risk all farmers face.

Seller-Assisted Loan Program

Under this program, a seller actively participates in financing the sale of their farm by providing a portion of the financing. (The seller agrees to subordinate their financing to the lender/RFA). The lender and the RFA provide the balance of the funds with a first mortgage. The RFA portion of the total financing is provided at an affordable interest rate which helps the buyer by reducing the total interest expense of the entire financing. In addition to the affordable rate financing, the program has built-in safeguards such as farm management training and financial planning.

Disaster Recovery Loan Program

The Disaster Recovery Loan Program is designed to help farmers affected by events leading to a disaster declaration. The funds are available to farmers for expenses not covered by insurance. The funds can be used to help clean up, repair, or replace farm structures and septic and water systems, as well as replace seed, other crop inputs, feed, and livestock, when damaged by high winds, hail, tornado, floods or excessive rainfall. The program offers affordable financing to repair existing agricultural buildings to pre-disaster conditions. In the event of avian influenza, funds can be used to replace flocks, make building improvements, or cover the loss of revenue.

Livestock Expansion Loan Program

This loan program is designed to assist livestock and dairy producers with financing toward construction of state-of-the-art facilities. Livestock expansion means improvements to a livestock operation, including the purchase and construction or installation of improvements to land, buildings, and other permanent structures, including equipment incorporated in or permanently affixed to the land, buildings or structures, which are useful for and intended to be used for the purpose of raising livestock. The purchase of livestock is NOT an eligible purpose for this program.

Livestock Equipment Loan Program

The Livestock Equipment Loan Program is designed to help finance the purchase of livestock-related equipment. Loans may be used for the acquisition of equipment for animal housing, confinement, animal feeding, milk production and waste management, including the following, if related to animal husbandry:

Agricultural Improvement Loan Program

This loan participation program assists eligible farmers with financing of capital improvements to their farming operation. The program may help to improve production, efficiency, and increase farm income.

Agricultural improvements include the purchase and construction or installation of improvements to land, buildings and other permanent structures. This includes equipment incorporated in or permanently affixed to the land, buildings, or structures which are useful for and intended to be used for the purpose of farming. For this program, agricultural improvements may also include wind energy conversion facilities with an output capacity of one megawatt or less.

Restraint II Loan Program

The Restraint II Loan Program is designed to help farmers who remain in good credit standing with their local agricultural lender, but are having trouble with cash flow due to adverse events. Only debt of an agricultural nature is eligible for refinancing.

Value-Added Stock Loan Program

The Value-added Agricultural Product Loan Program helps farmers finance the purchase of stock in a cooperative, limited liability company, or limited liability partnership proposing to build or purchase and operate a facility located in Minnesota to process or produce marketable products from agriculture crops.

Beginning Farmer/Aggie Bond Loan Program

The Aggie Bond Loan Program offers affordable financing for a qualified beginning farmer. This is accomplished by securing a reduced interest rate on the loan the applicant is submitting for approval.

Manure Digester Loan Program

The Methane Digester Loan Program helps supplement the funds needed for livestock producers to begin installing digesters on their farms. It is designed to help finance the purchase of necessary equipment and the construction of a system that will use manure to produce electricity.

The Farm Opportunity Loan Program

The Farm Opportunity Loan Program is designed to finance the purchase of equipment to add value to crops or livestock, adopt best management practices, reduce agricultural inputs to improve the environment, and increase on-farm energy production. Eligible loan uses do not include expenses related to seed, fertilizer, fuel, or other operating expenses. Refinancing of existing debt is not an eligible expense.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

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Minnesota Department of Agriculture Rural Finance Authority

RURAL FINANCE AUTHORITY

Financial Assistance Programs



For more information about these programs, contact:

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Rural Finance Authority

625 Robert Street North

St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-201-6004, 1-800-366-8927

Fax: 651-201-6120

Email: RFA.MDA@state.mn.us

www.mda.state.mn.us/agfinance

QUICK REFERENCE TO ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Program	Funding Limits	Use of Proceeds	Terms and Maturity	Fees	Qualifications
RFA Beginning Farmer Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No loan maximum RFA participation: 45% of first mortgage to a maximum of \$400,000 	Purchase of farm real estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA portion - 5.5% interest rate Lender and seller portion - negotiate Pay at least 10% down of appraisal value 15-30 year terms RFA participation will balloon after 10 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must farm unit, be or intend to become full-time farmer Net worth of less than \$1,013,000 (including spouse and dependents) Have sufficient education, training or experience to succeed in intended farming practice Agree to enroll in farm business management program and consult with your local Soil and Water Conservation District office Agree to obtain credit life insurance for the amount of debt incurred to purchase the property
RFA Seller-Assisted Loan Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA participation: 45% of loan up to a maximum of \$500,000 	Purchase of farm real estate from seller willing to finance a portion of the purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA portion - 5.5% interest rate Seller portion - negotiate 15-30 year terms RFA participation will balloon after 10 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Beginning Loan, plus Certify as the principal operator of the farm and that farming is the principal future occupation, and that the farm will be used for agricultural purposes only
RFA Agricultural Improvement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limits, but RFA participation 45% of first mortgage to a max. of \$500,000 	Finance capital improvements to farming operation. Can be used to improve land and/or structures, efficiency, productivity, or increase farm income. Also includes wind energy conversion up to one megawatt (limited refinancing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA portion - 5.5% interest rate Lender portion - negotiate 1-15 year terms RFA participation will balloon after 10 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must farm unit, be or become full-time farmer Net worth of less than \$1,013,000 (including spouse and dependents) Have sufficient education, training or experience to succeed in intended farming practice Consult with your local Soil and Water Conservation District office
RFA Livestock Expansion Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limits, but RFA participation 45% of first mortgage to a max. of \$625,000 	Finance improvements to livestock facilities (purchase of livestock not allowed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA portion - 5.75% interest rate Lender portion - negotiate 1-15 year terms RFA participation will balloon after 10 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must farm unit and farm full-time; at least one of the applicants must be the principal operator and actively engaged in a livestock operation Net worth of less than \$2,150,000 (including spouse and dependents)
RFA Restructure II Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limits, but RFA participation 45% of first mortgage to a max. of \$625,000 	Restructure of agricultural debt for farmers in good credit standing but are having trouble meeting cash flow due to adverse events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA portion - 5.75% interest rate Lender portion - negotiate 1-30 year terms RFA participation will balloon after 10 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net worth of less than \$2,150,000 (including spouse and dependents) Have received 50% of gross income from farming in past three years Have operating expenses that do not exceed 95% of income Consult with your local Soil and Water Conservation District office Show financial need and ability to repay loan
RFA Livestock Equipment Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limits, but RFA participation 45% of equipment loan to a max. of \$100,000 	Finance the purchase of livestock equipment for housing, confinement, feeding, watering, fencing, milk production and waste management (no refinancing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA portion - 2% fixed interest rate Lender portion - negotiate 1-10 year terms 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must farm unit and farm full-time; at least one of the applicants must be the principal operator and actively engaged in a livestock operation Net worth of less than \$575,529 (including spouse and dependents)
RFA Disaster Recovery Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA participation: 45% of loan up to a maximum of \$200,000 	Finance, repair or replacement of structures and resources not covered by insurance after natural disaster. Replace flocks, make building improvements, or cover loss of revenue due to avian influenza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0% fixed interest rate 1-10 year terms 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certify that the damage or loss was sustained within a county that was the subject of a state or federal disaster declaration, or due to avian influenza 50% of average annual gross income from farming for the past three years
RFA Value-Added Stock Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFA participation: 45% of loan up to a maximum of \$40,000 No more than 95% of purchased stock value will be loaned 	Finance the purchase of stock shares in commodity processing business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2% fixed interest rate 1-8 year terms 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be a grower of the agricultural product which is to be processed by an agricultural product processing facility Have a total net worth of less than \$575,529 (indexed for inflation), including the assets and liabilities of their spouse and dependents Security value must be 150% of total loan amount
Methane Digester Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$250,000 	Finance the purchase and construction of a system designed to produce electricity from manure May be used as match for Federal loan/grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0% interest rate 1-10 year terms 	\$100 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide evidence that the practices implemented and capital assets purchased will be properly managed and maintained Have not previously received a loan under this program
Farm Opportunity Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% of the principal amount up to \$100,000 per individual; 45% of the principal amount up to \$250,000 per group 	Finance machinery or equipment to add value to crops or livestock; adopt best management practices; reduce or improve management of ag inputs resulting in environmental improvements; or increase production of on-farm energy (no refinancing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% fixed interest rate for 10 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must farm unit and farm full-time Show financial need and ability to repay loan
Agricultural Microloan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$20,000 	Finance the production of specialty crops or eligible livestock	Interest rate to the intermediary lender is set at 0%. The lender may charge a rate of up to 10% to the farmer. Max loan term is 6 years	None	Be a member of a protected group. Be a grower of a specialty crop or livestock. A borrower may receive loan funds up to 70% of the estimated value of the crop or livestock
RFA Beginning Farmer/Aggie Bond Loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$616,000 maximum loan amount \$250,000 for new depreciable farm property (RFA does not participate) \$62,500 max. for used depreciable assets 	Purchase of farmland, buildings, new or used depreciable agricultural property such as breeding livestock, dairy livestock (feeder livestock excluded), and farm machinery (No refinancing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced interest rate for buyer and tax benefit for lender Average depreciable asset loan: 1-10 years Average real estate loan: 20-40 years 	RFA: \$50 application fee (non-refundable) Allocation fee \$20/40/60/80/100 1.5% loan origination fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net worth of less than \$1,013,000 Never have owned more than 30% of county median size farm where you reside Have sufficient education, training or experience to succeed in intended farming practice Agree to enroll in farm business management program and consult with your local Soil and Water Conservation District office