

Farm Viability Grant Frequently Asked Questions

As of 1/25/2022

Is there any reason my grant award may be rescinded?

If grant funds are awarded, failure to provide the necessary information to establish an agreement or failure to sign and return a complete grant contract by the deadlines provided at the time of contract issuance will result in rescindment of the award and reallocation of funds back to the program. The awardee may reapply through future funding opportunities, but there is no guarantee of future funding.

When will applications be accepted again?

Applications will be accepted from Tuesday, January 18th at 12:00pm until Tuesday, March 8th, 2022, at 4:00pm.

Who is eligible for the Farm Viability Grant (FVG)?

- Agricultural non-profits
- Municipalities
- Regional councils of governments organized under the provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive
- Groups of municipalities that have established a regional inter-local agreement pursuant to sections 7-339a to 7-339l, inclusive

What is maximum amount an applicant could be awarded?

Up to \$49,999.

Is there an applicant match involved?

Yes. A 40% match for the total project costs must be provided. The match can be through cash or in-kind services.

If I apply by the deadline, does it mean I'll be funded?

No. This is a very competitive grant program. Applications are evaluated by a team of reviewers and is based on the project plan.

How is the grant money paid to someone who's been awarded?

Once a contract is fully executed and a State of CT Purchase Order is issued, grantees may request an advance payment of up to 50% of the total award. The balance of the award will be provided **after** the project is successfully completed, a final financial report outlining all expenses associated with the project have been received and approved, a final project report has been received and approved, and

site inspection by agency staff is conducted (if applicable.) For any building a certificate of occupancy must be obtained as well.

What projects can the FVG grant money be used for?

Projects must directly impact and/or foster agricultural viability. A list of funding priorities for the current year are outlined in the guidance, however all projects which directly impact and/or foster agricultural viability will be considered. A “project” is defined as “a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period of time and within specific limitations (cost, performance, quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team. Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a definitive beginning and end, they have a limited duration. One way to think about this is that a project has an overarching goal that you want to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.”

Can I purchase equipment with the grant?

While it can vary, general purpose equipment - tractors, trucks, boats, etc. - are not an allowable purchase. However, each application and project is unique and may be considered. Equipment directly related to the project may also be an allowable match expense.

Can I pay employees' salaries with the grant?

Employee salaries and fringe benefits paid to execute the project can be reimbursed with grant funds. However, the amount of grant funds for this purpose cannot exceed 25% of grant funds requested. Consultant expenses are allowable expenses. Salaries paid to employees to execute the project are an allowable match expense. Additional information on eligible and ineligible expenses can be found in the grant guidance.

Can I apply for grant funds for a project I've already done?

No, you cannot have started the project for which you're applying.

How long do I have to complete the project?

Projects must be completed within 18 months of contract execution. Contract and project extensions are not allowed.

How do I apply for this grant?

1. Review the grant application guidelines.
2. Applications for the Farm Viability Grant must be submitted on the [DoAg Grants portal](#).

Can I use whatever format I desire to apply for the grant?

No. You must submit the application through the [DoAg Grants portal](#) and attach the required Budget Form, W-9, State Vendor Form, and any budget justification items.

Can I submit my application by mailing it to the Department of Agriculture?

No, applications are only accepted on the [DoAg Grants portal](#).

Can I view the application of an awarded project?

No, we cannot share or distribute applications from projects that were awarded. Applications, which are primarily based on a business/project plan, are considered proprietary information and must remain confidential.

Can someone from the Department of Agriculture help me write my business/project plan and complete the application?

No, agency staff cannot be involved in the development of a business/project plan. Information is available above to help develop a successful application. The [Connecticut Small Business Development Center, UConn Cooperative Extension](#), and [Farm Credit East](#) have varying resources to help you submit an application.

Can I start the project as soon as I know that I've been awarded?

No, you may not start the project until signatures of the grantee, Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Attorney General's Office (if applicable) have signed the contract. You will be notified when you are cleared to begin work on your project.

If I've already received this grant in the past, can I apply again?

Yes. However, past performance and if you currently have an open grant contract will be taken into consideration.