



CENTER FOR
DairyEXCELLENCE

For Immediate Release

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October 24, 2023

MARKETING, BRANDING AND LABELING GRANTS OPEN FOR VALUE-ADDED DAIRY BUSINESSES

The Grant Program Is Open Until November 17

Harrisburg, Pa. – The Center for Dairy Excellence has a new Marketing, Branding and Labeling Consultant Grant program open for dairy value-added operations that are looking to advance their businesses. Leveraging funds provided through the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center, grant applications are due by November 17, 2023. Up to 11 grants will be awarded, and dairy value-added businesses in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey are eligible to apply.

“For dairy farms and value-added businesses who might bottle their own milk or make their own cheese and yogurt, learning how to navigate the marketplace to boost product sales and effectively market their dairy products can be challenging,” said Melissa Anderson, Programs and Operations Manager at the Center for Dairy Excellence. “The goal of this grant program is to alleviate some of that stress through experienced consultants who can help these businesses build their brands and develop their marketing strategies.”

The Marketing, Branding and Labeling Consultant Grant program is designed for value-added dairy businesses looking to build their brand, develop effective labels, create marketing plans, and identify appropriate strategies to increase product sales and consumer access. If accepted into the program, grant recipients will have access to a consultant who has experience in the dairy value-added space.

If all 11 grants are utilized, each grant will be for \$5,000. Recipients will receive up to \$3,750 to work with a consultant and up to \$1,250 for direct implementation of the consultant’s recommendations. Grant applications will only be accepted from September 15 through November 17, 2023.

“When I was thinking about buying this business and figuring out if it was even an option for me, a few people recommended I talk to certain consultants. They were great, but I didn’t have that kind of money. It was a huge relief when I learned about this grant and the opportunity for Maryland farmers,” said Ariel Herrod of Clear Spring Creamery, a previous grant recipient.

“Thanks to the grant, I could work with the consultants, and they helped me make decisions. I’ve had a better balance in my bank account. We ran some metrics to quantify how the [decisions] have impacted us. Based on items sold, we saw a 23% increase in revenue. It was so beautiful.”

The Marketing, Branding and Labeling Consultant grants provide financial assistance to help value-added dairy businesses access the private consulting resources they need to build their brand and to help cultivate our regional food economy, strengthen regional dairy food processing capacity, and create and improve economic opportunities for individual dairy producers and food businesses. The grant is made possible by the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center, which is a USDA initiative.

“The grant gave us the opportunity to [figure out our next steps] making yogurt. With our consultants’ help, we’ve figured out how to go into this retail industry that’s really hard to puncture,” said Stephanie Painter of The Painterland Sisters in Pennsylvania, a previous grant recipient who worked with a consultant on a similar type of value-added project. “We’re working with distributors and brokers and learning how to deal with small and big wholesale accounts. It’s a whole other language, and without the consultants, we definitely wouldn’t know what we’re doing.”

To participate in the grant program, dairy farms or businesses must complete an application. A \$100 application fee is required upon submission but will be reimbursed if the application is not accepted.

To learn more about the grant and to apply online, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/marketing-branding-grants. Email Melissa Anderson at manderson@centerfordairyexcellence.org or call 717-636-0779 with questions.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center’s mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org.

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