

Dairy Producer Grant Opportunities 2026-2027

Dairy Decisions Consultant Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Are you looking to work one-on-one with consultants to help make decisions that will shape the future of your farm? Consultants can work with farms in one of seven key areas, including employee management, business and financial planning, direct marketing and more. Grants are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Up to \$5,000 will be paid directly to the consultant once the work has been completed.

DDC Grant information: <https://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/programs-resources/dairy-decisions-consultant-grants/>

Applications opened September 1, 2026

Transition / Transformation Team Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Are you considering a major business transformation or are you looking to start the farm transition process? Using a team approach through a Transition or Transformation Team Grant can provide greater insight into your business' decision-making process. Grants are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Up to \$4,000 will be paid directly to the farm once an invoice(s) has been received.

Transition/Transformation Team Grant information: <https://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/programs-resources/team-programs-2/>

Applications opened September 1, 2026

Dairy Productivity Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

First-time investment projects in technologies related to Milking Systems (pipeline, automatic milking systems, robotic milking technology, and direct load milking), Feeding Systems (TMR mixer, feed tracking and inventory technology), and Activity Monitoring Systems (Bolus, Collars or Tags). This is a **competitive**, reimbursable grant with a 25 percent match required to receive up to \$10,000 for the project you described on your application. The total payment you receive will be based on the total cost of the project and will be adjusted to 75 percent of that total cost up to \$10,000.

Applications will be open October 1, 2026, and close on November 1, 2026

Dairy Excellence Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Qualifying projects would include anything related to improving dairy farm efficiency, cow comfort, milking facilities, housing facilities, or feeding system. The project should be focused on improving milk production per cow and/or enhancing overall farm profitability and/or efficiency. Grant funding will be a 50 percent match, up to a maximum limit matching level of \$5,000. This is a **competitive** grant.

Applications will be open October 1, 2026, and close on November 1, 2026

Dairy Farm Improvement and Modernization Grant (NEDBIC)

Eligible projects may modernize outdated systems or introduce innovative solutions to improve farm viability, reduce climate impacts, improve milk quality or value, improve worker conditions, and strengthen the farm's ability to respond to challenges. Projects that only replace old equipment without broader improvements to farm systems are not eligible. The program is open to dairy farms, farm groups partnering

with technical assistance providers, producer associations, and milk buyers. Projects that engage service providers or business planners will be more competitive.

Awards will range from \$15,000 to \$100,000 and require a 25% in-kind or cash match. Approximately \$1,000,000 in total funds are available this round.

Applications will be open October 2026 through December 2026.

Dairy Processor Modernization Grant (NE-DBIC)

Funds will support dairy processors and dairy brands in modernizing their production to allow for increased processing of regional dairy, long-term business viability, and ability to meet consumer demands. Projects funded through this grant will focus primarily on acquiring specialized equipment for dairy processing that offers benefits such as increased capacity, higher efficiency, reduced energy usage, increased quality, or ability to produce new or higher-value products. Projects that benefit more than one dairy business and those that incorporate technical assistance may be more competitive.

Grants will range from \$15,000 to \$250,000 with a 25% (cash or in-kind) match commitment required. Applicants will qualify in tiers based on how much milk or dairy mix they use on an average production day, regardless of the number of days per week they process. Tier descriptions will be released at the same time as the Request for Application (RFA). At least 75% of grant funds must be used for eligible specialized equipment purchases. Total program funding is \$1,500,000.

Dairy Processor Modernization Grant: <https://nedairyinnovation.com/grants/dairy-processor-modernization-grant/>

Application open September 1, 2026, through October 1, 2026.

PA Farm Vitality Grant (PA Department of Agriculture)

The Farm Vitality Planning Grant Program helps fund professional services for those planning for the future of a farm—designed to enhance the long-term vitality of Pennsylvania's farms with business and management strategies, transitioning of ownership and operation to family or new people, diversification of agricultural production with new plans, expanding or seeking financing for growth, Ensuring farms with conservation easements remain profitable and protect public investments.

Grants funding up to \$15,000 covering 75% of project costs, with a 25% (cash) match commitment required. Grant is paid on a reimbursement basis only and proof of payment is required for every invoice. The grant is \$15,000, covering 75% of project costs. In-kind support won't count as a part of the applicant's contribution. All work must be completed prior to submission of reimbursement.

PA Farm Vitality Grant information: <https://www.pa.gov/services/pda/apply-for-the-farm-vitality-grant>

Applications will be open September 1, 2026.

PA Department of Agriculture's Ag Innovation Grant (state funding). The Agricultural Innovation Grant Program helps farmers and other agriculture businesses implement new agricultural technologies, conservation, and renewable energy innovations — expanding their potential to generate profits, enrich soil and water resources, and produce energy on the farm.

Round three (2026-2027) of the Agriculture Innovation grants is open as of August 24, 2026, and will close on September 23, 2026, at 11:59 pm.

[**Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Beginning Farmers Resource Guide**](#). It's a great hub of all kinds of resources for beginning farmers, it also has several pages about funding opportunities that are open to new and experienced dairy farmers. See "Conservation Funding", "Equipment Financing", "Credits and Loans", "Financial Assistance", and "Tax Credits".

[**PENNVEST**](#) provides low-interest loans and grants for new construction or for improvements to publicly or privately-owned drinking water, storm water or sewage treatment facilities, as well as non-point source pollution prevention best management practices. PENNVEST also provides loan funding to remediate brownfields sites, as well as loan funding to individual homeowners for repair or replacement of their malfunctioning on-lot septic system or first time connection to a public sewer collection system. The Advance Funding Program provides low-interest loans to provide funding for the design and engineering needed to improve water and wastewater management systems.

<https://dced.pa.gov/programs/pennsylvania-infrastructure-investment-authority-pennvest/>

[**Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program \(ACAP\)**](#)

Who can apply: Pennsylvania farmers

Grant Amount: Reimbursement grant based on approved, eligible technical and financial costs related to Best Management Practices (BMPs) on farms. Conservation districts will give priority to projects that meet specifications listed under "Guidelines & Uses" on the linked webpage below. Grants over \$500,000 must be submitted to the State Conservation Commission for prior approval.

Example: Vegetative buffer installation around cattle housing

More Info: Contact your local conservation district or Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission ACAP Coordinator, Eric Cromer, at (223) 666-2556 for more information.

Or visit [Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program](#)

[**2026-27 Pennsylvania Resource Enhancement and Protection \(REAP\) Program. \(State Conservation Commission\)**](#)

The Commission will begin accepting 2026-27 REAP Applications on August 1st, 2026, on a first-come, first-served basis. The REAP Guidelines and Application can also be found on the program's webpage: [PA State Conservation Commission - REAP Program](#)

The Commission anticipates that the \$13 million allocation of 2026-27 REAP tax credits will again be exhausted quickly this round.

Here's some of what's new to REAP for 2026-27:

1. Enhanced funding for no-till equipment in conjunction with the installation of riparian forest buffers
2. Early application period for PACS certified farms and PA preserved farms. In addition, PACS certified farms are exempt from the 1 approved project per year policy.
3. Enhanced funding for manure injection
4. Funding for manure aeration systems

Applications will be accepted beginning August 1, 2026 (July 1st for PACS and Preserved Farms). Applications may be submitted via email @AG, SCC REAP (RA-AGSCC-REAP@pa.gov) or mail.

PA Department of Community and Economic Development's Watershed Restoration and Protection Program (WRPP) (state funding). The overall goal of the Watershed Restoration and Protection Program (WRPP) is to restore, and maintain restored stream reaches impaired by the uncontrolled discharge of nonpoint source polluted runoff, and ultimately to remove these streams from the Department of Environmental Protection's Impaired Waters list." Eligible projects "involve the construction, improvement, expansion, repair, maintenance or rehabilitation of new or existing watershed protection Best Management Practices (BMPs)." Eligible applicants include watershed organizations and for-profit businesses, including farm businesses.

Most **Conservation Districts have a Conservation Excellence Grant (CEG) program and Countywide Action Plan (CAP)** funding that farmers should inquire with their county District about. These programs are state-funded.

NRCS's Conservation Stewardship Program (federal funding). CSP offers annual payments for implementing these practices on your land and operating and maintaining existing conservation efforts. Want to take it a step further? CSP also offers bundles where you can select a suite of enhancements and receive a higher payment rate. The program represents a genuine commitment to conservation – CSP contracts are for five years, with the opportunity to compete for a contract renewal if you successfully fulfill the initial contract and agree to achieve additional conservation objectives. An NRCS conservation planner will work closely with you, throughout the entire contract process. Most participants will be eligible for a \$4000 minimum payment during any year that their total annual contract payment falls below the minimum payment amount."

FEDERAL FUNDING

Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS)(EQIP)

Who can apply: Farmers and ranchers who own or lease land for agricultural production.

Funding amount: Cost-share amounts and practices vary from year to year but can cover up to 100% of approved, qualifying expenses. NRCS and EQIP offer producers technical and financial support by implementing structural, vegetative, and management practices. EQIP applications are ranked nationally to choose which contracts receive funding. Unless producers opt of an advanced payment option, producers will have to pay up front and be reimbursed after the practice certified and meets NRCS standards and specifications.

Example: Producers receive assistance on pastureland renovation through EQIP.

More info: Contact your local NRCS office or check out the EQIP fact sheet linked below

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\): Is EQIP Right for Me? \(usda.gov\)](#)

Beginning Farmer Resources

- Commonwealth of PA: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/business-and-industry/agricultural-business-development-center/beginning-farmers>
- Horizon Farm Credit: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/business-and-industry/agricultural-business-development-center/beginning-farmers>

Available help for grant writing:

- Kara Ricconi from the PA SBDC helps with grant writing. riccioni@kutztown.edu
- Sam Gehrett Consulting: Grant writing & development, consulting & grant strategy, and agriculture & dairy specialty support – **sgehrettconsulting@gmail.com**
- PA Small Business Development Centers Agricultural Consulting Services – ag@pasbdc.org
- Lasso is DeLaval's grant partner. We help producers find, apply for, and win grants. Want to learn more or write a grant with Lasso? Reach out to **contact@joinlasso.com**.