

Dairy Producer Grant Opportunities 2024-2025

Carat – Climate Smart Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Are you looking to identify and implement climate-smart practices that will benefit your dairy operation? These Climate-Smart Grants are part of a CARAT Project conducted by The Pennsylvania State University and partners. Approximately 150 dairy farms will be approved through the pre-qualification process to work with a technical service provider to develop climate-smart plans for their operations, and up to 69 farms will receive funding for implementations of the strategies identified in the plan. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

CARAT information: <https://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/climate-smart-grants/>

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.

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

Dairy Excellence Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Are you looking to improve cow comfort, milk production per cow, or efficiency on your dairy? The Dairy Excellence Grants support improvement projects on PA dairy operations. Applications for this competitive grant will be open from September 1 through November 1. If you are approved for the grant, you will receive a 50 percent match, up to a maximum matching level of \$5,000.

Dairy Excellence Grant information: <https://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/dairy-excellence-grants/>

Transition / Transformation Team Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Are you considering a major business transformation or 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's decision-making process. Grants are available on a first-come, first-served basis,

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

Marketing & Branding Consultant Grant (Center for Dairy Excellence)

Marketing & Branding Consultant Grant is a competitive grant available to value-added dairy businesses looking to build their brand, create a marketing plan, and identify appropriate strategies to increase product sales and consumer access. **Open to dairy farms and small-scale dairy businesses in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey.** Up to 9 grants will be awarded for up to \$6,150 in funds for marketing & brand development assistance. Farms will receive up to \$3,750 to work with a consultant and up to \$2,400 for direct implementation of the consultant's recommendations. **Application period runs: September 15— October 31, 2024.** This is a competitive grant, so winning grant award recipients will be notified by November 15, 2024, with expenses/invoices due by **June 15, 2025.**

Innovation in Dairy Processing and Packaging Grant (NE-DBIC)

New funding is available for research and development projects that support dairy processing innovation across the Northeast.

With a focus on scalable and replicable alternatives to current industry standards, this grant will help processors make informed, long-term business decisions with positive environmental and economic impacts.

Projects funded through this grant must address at least one of the following primary goals: packaging initiatives, novel processing solutions, and/or increased collaboration. Projects may include innovation in sourcing, alternative production solutions, distribution and supply chain logistics, operations, and marketing. Awards will range from \$75,000 to \$350,000, requiring a 25% match. Total program funding is \$1,500,000. The RFA will be released on August 27.

Innovation in Dairy Processing & Packaging Grant information: <https://nedairyinnovation.com/grants/dairy-processor-innovation-grant/>

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 through business planning, efficient transitions of ownership, strategic expansion, diversification of agricultural production, and building a team of financial and technical expertise as a resource for farmers.

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

STATE FUNDING FOR ENERGY PROJECTS

For energy-efficient pollution prevention equipment or processes, or natural resource protection projects:

DEP Small Business Advantage Grant Program (DEP)

Who can apply: Pennsylvania for-profit small businesses, including farms, with 100 or fewer full-time employees

Grant amount: 50 percent match, up to a max of \$7,000. Funding is available first come, first served.

Example: Use SBAG funds to offset the purchase of an energy-efficient grain dryer.

More info: Contact the Small Business Ombudsman Office at 717-772-5160 or visit

www.dep.pa.gov/smallbusinessadvantagegrant

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](#)

For energy efficiency, waste reduction, or pollution prevention equipment:

DEP Small Business Pollution Prevention Assistance Account Loan Program (DEP)

Who can apply: Pennsylvania for-profit small businesses, including farms, with 100 or fewer full-time employees

Loan amount: Up to 75 percent of project cost or \$100,000 max at 2 percent fixed interest rates for up to 10 years. Loans available first come, first served.

Example: Use a PPAA loan to offset the purchase of an efficient chiller.

More info: Contact the Small Business Ombudsman Office at 717-772-5160 or visit

www.dep.pa.gov/smallbusinessadvantagegrant

For cleaner, alternative fuel on-road vehicles and their refueling infrastructure:

DEP Alternative Fuels Incentive Grants (DEP)

Who can apply: Pennsylvania businesses, including farms, to purchase an electric, natural gas, propane, or biodiesel (B20 or greater) vehicle and/or fueling infrastructure.

Grant amount: A proportion of the additional costs of the alternative fuel vehicle versus a gas or diesel engine vehicle and the refueling infrastructure. Funding is awarded on merit.

Example Use AFIG funds to offset the purchase of a propane-powered truck for hay deliveries.

More info: www.dep.pa.gov/alternativefuelsincentivegrant

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR ENERGY PROJECTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS)

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? \(usda.gov\)](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/efn/pubs/eqip/eqip_fact_sheet.pdf)

For purchase or installation of renewable energy systems or energy-efficiency improvements:

Rural Energy for America Program (USDA)

Who can apply: Agricultural producers and rural small businesses.

Funding amount: Loan guarantees on loans up to 75 percent of total eligible project costs. Grants for up to 25 percent of total eligible project costs. Combined grant and loan guarantee funding up to 75 percent of total eligible project costs.

Example: Use REAP funds to offset the costs of installing efficient irrigation pumps. More info: Contact

USDA Rural Development or visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/pa>

Ag Innovation Grant – More to follow once grant is opened.

