

ORANGE COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Version 2.0

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ORANGE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Application for Individual Farmers or Collaborative Farmer Projects

The grant program assists farmers in developing new sources of agricultural income through the provision of cost-share grants. Individual grant limit is \$10,000. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that their operation is a verifiable farm business.

Farmer Eligibility

- **The farm tract and farming operation on which the funds are to be used must be in Orange County**
- Collaborative/Group grants must include at least 3 farmers and may include agricultural groups and agencies

Agricultural Grant Subcommittee

- The Agricultural Economic Development Grant Subcommittee will be made up of five (5) members including:
- The Agricultural Representative from the Orange County Economic Development Advisory Board
- One member from the Orange County Cooperative Extension Staff
- The Agriculture Economic Developer from Orange County's Economic Development staff.
- Two farmers who are members of the Orange County Agricultural Preservation Board

Procedures

1. Applicants will be referred to the Orange County Economic Development Department's website, where they will complete and submit their application.
2. Applicants will be provided interview dates and times (if required) no later than two (2) weeks prior to the Agriculture Economic Development Grant Subcommittee's next meeting date.
3. County staff will provide completed applications to the Subcommittee for their review after the closing deadline, all applications for that period have been received, and before the next scheduled meeting.
4. Quarterly meetings will begin at the start of each funded fiscal year and will continue until funds are expended for that funding year. At its scheduled

quarterly meetings, the Subcommittee will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of complete grant application(s) and decide whether or not to take action on the request, based on the information provided. All Applications must be complete to include the detailed budget template provided. Additional information may be provided if necessary to add clarity or better justification for how funds will be used.

5. The Subcommittee shall approve, deny or request additional information from the applicant based on the strengths and weakness of the application. They will submit grant determinations to County staff at the review meetings and follow with written confirmation to staff if staff is not in attendance.
6. The applicant will be informed in writing by County staff of the Subcommittee's decision to deny, grant, grant with condition, or seek more information. If the Subcommittee denies a grant request, it shall provide a copy of the score sheet(s) to the applicant.
7. Should the Subcommittee deny an application, the Subcommittee will not consider any applications from that applicant for at least six months. Should an applicant think that their application has been improperly denied, then the applicant may notify, in writing, the Subcommittee. The notice to the Subcommittee shall state why the applicant thinks the grant should be approved. The application shall then be given further consideration by the Subcommittee and its decision is final.
8. At its discretion, the Subcommittee may impose any additional terms to a grant request. The Subcommittee may require an itemized budget detailing the proposed use of grant funds.
9. Applicants agree to utilize grant funds for their intended use. Each venture receiving a grant must provide an accounting of how all funds were used and key milestones reached by the venture **within 180 days of the receipt of the grant.**
10. If an applicant fails to complete item #9 in a timely manner, the County has the right to require all grant funds back from the applicant, and may initiate legal proceedings against the applicant.
12. The Subcommittee shall provide annual reports to the Economic Development Department and the BOCC of the number of grants requested, approved and denied, and a 2-3 page written analysis of the program's success metrics to date.
13. Documents, including but not limited to financial statements, business plans, customer and supplier lists, description of inventory or assets, contractual obligations and existing liabilities, submitted during the application process shall be treated as confidential information.

Expenses

- Suitable expenses are those associated with the production and marketing of diversified farm enterprises, value-added and agri-tourism endeavors. Funds are not intended for farmer or full-time employee salaries or normal farm operational costs (utilities, insurance, rent, etc.). Funds should be used as stated in the applicant's proposal.

Funding Limits

The maximum amount any one farm can receive within 3 years of initial funding is \$10,000. Multiple applications and subsequent awards of less than the \$10,000 limit may be made within the 3-year period by one farm entity but may not exceed \$10,000 in total awards for the 3-year period

Collaborators

Collaborators/ Mentors are not required, but increases the likelihood of success of your project. Mentors may include County Agriculture Economic Development Coordinators, other farmers, marketing and production specialists, extension agents, crop consultants, non-profit organizations, business and other agricultural advisors. The best collaborators bring needed expertise to the project and have a clear role in helping the project succeed.