

FARMERS' GUIDE

TO PENNSYLVANIA STATE FUNDING & GRANT PROGRAMS



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FARMERS' GUIDE

TO PENNSYLVANIA STATE FUNDING & GRANT PROGRAMS

This guide provides a broad overview of grant programs and funding available to Pennsylvania farmers and agricultural producers through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

To learn more about these opportunities and more, please visit:

www.agriculture.pa.gov

**Deadlines and funding availability will vary depending on individual funding sources/grant program.*

TYPES OF STATE OPPORTUNITIES



PA FARM BILL: The nation's only state-level farm bill provides funding directly to Pennsylvania farmers, non-profits, schools, and other entities with opportunities, support, and resources through a variety of grants and programs.



**Agriculture
and Youth
Grant Program**

Provides direct grants and matching grants to help fund programs that benefit youth, promote development in the areas of agriculture, community leadership, vocational training and peer fellowship.



**Commonwealth
Specialty Crop
Grant**

Provides payments to specialty crops that are not currently eligible for grant payments under the Federal Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.



**Farm to School
Grant**

Provides schools with funding to improve access to healthy, local foods and increase agriculture education opportunities for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.



**Urban
Agriculture
Infrastructure
Grant**

Provides funding as a reimbursement grant to eligible applicants seeking to improve urban agriculture infrastructure in Pennsylvania.



**Very Small Meat
and Poultry
Processor Grant**

Supports the development and expansion of current or future very small meat and poultry processing operations in the Commonwealth by offering reimbursement grants to cover the cost associated with obtaining a grant of inspection from USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), opening a new very small meat and poultry processing operation, expanding the capacity of a current very small meat and poultry processing operation, or a combination of those purposes.

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER: As part of the PA Farm Bill, the Agricultural Business Development Center and its programs focus on growing opportunities and resources to cultivate current and future farmers for the Commonwealth.



**Beginning
Farmer Realty
Transfer Tax
Exemption**

This tax exemption program is designed for new and beginning farmers to promote savings for both state and realty transfer taxes and applies to both the seller (grantor) and to the buyer (grantee/qualified beginner farmer).



**Farm Vitality
Planning Grant**

Funds professional services for those planning for the future of a farm. The program will enhance the long-term vitality of Pennsylvania's farms through sound business planning, efficient transitions of farm ownership, strategic farm expansion, diversification of agricultural production, and building a team of financial and technical expertise as a resource for Pennsylvania's farmers.



**Next
Generation
Farmer Loan
Program**

This program uses federal tax-exempt financing to reduce a farmer's interest rate for capital purchases, such as the purchase of farm land or agricultural machinery and equipment. This program is administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development.

RISK MANAGEMENT GRANTS: These grants assist in covering the expenses associated with implementing safety or risk management protocols.



**Highly
Pathogenic
Avian Influenza
(HPAI) Recovery
Reimbursement
Grant**

Provides reimbursement to farms, integrators, and allied industries directly impacted by HPAI. This covers those who incurred demonstrable financial losses due to inclusion in a control or quarantine zone.



**Good
Agricultural
Practices (GAP),
Good Handling
Practices (GHP)
& Mushroom-
Specific GAP**

Provides direct financial support to producers and processors who successfully complete a USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) or Good Handling Practices (GHP) audit. GAP and GHP are voluntary audits that verify that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards. GAP and GHP audits verify adherence to the recommendations made by the USDA to minimize microbial food safety hazards for fresh fruits and vegetables and industry recognized food safety practices.

MARKETING & PROMOTION: These grants/programs are designed to promote, educate, and inspire agricultural business in specific industries across the Commonwealth.



**Agriculture
Promotion Grant
Program**

Provides grants that will reimburse nonprofit associations representing members statewide, up to 50% of the cost of promotional and consumer education projects promoting beef, hardwoods, maple syrup, mushrooms, vegetables, wine, and projects promoting regional tourism and growing the consumer base for PA products.



**Commodity
Boards, Research,
and Promotion**



These funds provide marketing and research for the following commodity boards:

- PA Malt and Brewed Beverage Industry Promotion Program
- PA Peach and Nectarine Research Program
- PA Potato Research Program
- PA Vegetable Marketing and Research Program
- PA Wine Marketing and Research Program



**PA Agricultural
Surplus System
(PASS)**

PASS is a program that reimburses farmers for their expenses to harvest, package, and process surplus agricultural products, which are then redirected to the charitable food system. The Department of Agriculture also encourages farmers to plan intentional planting for contributions to PASS.



**PA Preferred
Program™**

PA Preferred provides farmers and agribusinesses with a brand identity for the products they grow, harvest, or produce, creating opportunities for Pennsylvanians to easily identify and purchase locally grown and processed items. When buying PA Preferred, consumers are assured they are directly supporting Pennsylvania farmers and building a stronger local economy.



**PA Preferred
Organic Program™**

Products bearing the new PA Preferred Organic label will meet both U.S. Department of Agriculture standards for organic production, and the PA Preferred Program's rigorous standards for goods grown in Pennsylvania.

RESEARCH GRANTS: These grants are designed to research to help promote, protect, and innovate Pennsylvania's agriculture systems in new and sustainable ways.



**Agriculture
Research Grant
Program**

Research grants span across many topics from animal health and welfare to controlling plant diseases and pests. Other topics include but are not limited to: organic farming methods, sustainable soil practices and advancing human and environmental quality. For a full list of topics, please visit the PA Department of Agriculture's website.

ACCESS TO CAPITAL: These programs offer a variety of resources to help farm and food businesses access working capital for expansion and innovation.

 <p><u>PA Industrial Development Authority</u></p>	<p>Provides low-interest loans and lines of credit for eligible businesses that commit to creating and retaining full-time jobs and for the development of industrial parks and multi-tenant facilities.</p>
 <p><u>Small Business Advantage Grants</u></p>	<p>Provides reimbursement grants ranging from 50% to 80% of eligible project costs to Pennsylvania small businesses to improve energy efficiency or reduce pollution or waste by: upgrading or replacing equipment or supplies; improving processes; or reducing runoff into affected waterways.</p>
 <p><u>Next Generation Farmer Loan Program</u></p>	<p>The Next Generation Farmer Loan Program uses federal tax-exempt financing to reduce a farmer's interest rate for capital purchases, such as the purchase of farm land or agricultural machinery and equipment.</p>
 <p><u>PA Economic Development Financing Authority</u></p>	<p>PEDFA administers both a tax exempt and a taxable bond program which can be used for land and building acquisition, building renovation and new construction, machinery and equipment acquisition and installation, designed infrastructure, refinancing and working capital.</p>
 <p><u>Neighborhood Assistance Program</u></p>	<p>NAP is a tax credit program that encourages businesses to invest in projects which improve distressed areas. Eligible applicants include non-profits, charitable food organizations, governments, and businesses.</p>

ORGANIC: As a national leader in organic production, Pennsylvania provides this cost-share program as a way to help farmers and producers transition to USDA Organic Certification.

 <p><u>Organic Certification Cost Share</u></p>	<p>Provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products for the costs of obtaining or maintaining organic certification under the USDA's National Organic Program. Certified operations may receive 75% of costs associated with organic certification</p>
--	---

LAND AND CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP: These initiatives is to foster, preserve, and safeguard Pennsylvania's farmland for the benefit of future generations.



**Farmland
Preservation
Programs**

These programs were developed to strengthen Pennsylvania's agricultural economy and protect prime farmland. These programs enable state and county governments to purchase conservation easements from farmers. Programs include but are not limited to:

- Easement Purchase Program
- Agricultural Security Areas
- Century and Bicentennial Farm Program



**Conservation
Excellence Grant**

Provides financial and technical assistance for the implementation of best management practices on agricultural operations in high-priority locations within the Commonwealth.



**Resource
Enhancement &
Protection
(REAP) Program**

REAP is a first-come, first-served program that enables farmers, businesses, and landowners to earn PA income tax credits to offset the cost of implementing conservation practices.



**Dirt, Gravel, and
Low Volume
Road
Maintenance
Program**

This program is an innovative non-point source pollution control program for local municipal road officials to eliminate stream pollution caused by runoff and sediment from dirt, gravel and low volume roads. Eligible applicants are state and local entities that own public roads.



**Clean and Green
Tax Assessment
Program**

Clean and Green is a preferential tax assessment program, that bases property taxes on use values rather than fair market values. This ordinarily results in a tax savings for landowners. A property must be ten acres in size, and in Agricultural Use, Agricultural Reserve, or Forest Reserve. Agricultural Use applications may be less than 10 acres in size if the property is capable of generating at least \$2,000 annually in farm income.

LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE?



CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE: Designated hubs and partners of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture that offer a range of resources, guidance, and educational materials to support diverse agricultural businesses and farms.

 Organic Center of Excellence	Provides support and resources for organic farm and food businesses through integrity testing, marketing, and other business development services. More information can be found at: www.agriculture.pa.gov
 <u>Center for Poultry and Livestock Excellence</u>	Supports the animal ag industry with biosecurity planning and disease prevention, processing capacity, and food safety and quality assurance, with a focus on poultry, swine, lamb, sheep and goat needs across the commonwealth. More information can be found at: www.poultryandlivestockexcellence.org
 <u>Center for Beef Excellence</u>	Focused on education, production and management, advisory teams and support to other organizations to strengthen the beef industry across Pennsylvania. More information can be found at: www.beefexcellence.com
 <u>Center for Dairy Excellence</u>	Center for Dairy provides grants, resources and programming to help dairy farmers remain competitive, successful and financially stable. More information can be found at www.centerfordairyexcellence.org
 Center for Plant Excellence	Center for Plant Excellence that will expand supply chain opportunities and boost resources available to Pennsylvania's diverse plant industries. More information can be found at: www.agriculture.pa.gov



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



717-787-4737



**2301 N. Cameron St.,
Harrisburg, PA 17110**



www.agriculture.pa.gov

SCAN ME

