

Agricultural Plastic Study Request for Proposals

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Grant Overview

The MN Department of Agriculture (MDA) needs a study of existing programs and structures in place for collecting agricultural plastic in Minnesota. This information will aid in establishing one central data base to assist counties and cities in siting additional collection points for agricultural plastic.

Funding Availability

- Approximately \$56,000
- The MDA expects to award one grant.

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee representing content and community specialists with regional knowledge. We expect to announce selected grantees in two weeks from the close of the application. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract is fully executed and the grant has reached its effective date.

Minimum Requirements

Applicants must meet the minimum requirements in order to be fully considered for this grant opportunity. Applicants must submit written explanation of how they will accomplish the tasks spelled out in the priorities by June 3, 2019 @ 4pm.

Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

The [Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities. This study will aid in establishing one central data base to assist counties and cities in siting additional collection points for agricultural plastic. Agricultural plastic is defined as plastic used to cover feed or grow vegetables during the growth and storage of agricultural commodities. The study should identify counties and/ or organizations with current collection programs, quantify the extent of their program- service area and identify number of farms wanting to participate and the volume of agricultural plastic that would be available to recycle. The study will need to work with MN Milk, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association and similar agricultural organizations in identifying farms wanting to participate. The study should also identify goals, resources and estimates of the amount of plastic for recycling.

This grant will serve:

- Primarily Rural Minnesota, farmers and could include nursery growers in developing a plan and mechanism to recycle plastic.

Grant outcomes will include:

- A database to assist counties and cities in siting additional collection points for agricultural plastic recycling. The grant will produce an assessment and recommendations to determine efficiencies of scale and location toward the collection and recycling of agricultural plastic.
- The grant will address the need and desire of farmers and others to recycle agricultural plastic. This is currently an expense and an environmental hazard that is being landfilled. Recycling will allow this resource to be reused and eliminate the expense of landfilling.
- The study should also assess new and existing recyclers and haulers in order to establish an infrastructure base. Additional components of the study should identify the scope of services recyclers are willing and able to provide, capacity and interest in transportation of materials as well as determine capacity of agricultural plastic recyclers and markets to collect and manage materials. Administration, meetings to inform affected parties as well as allocation of funds towards equipment and advertising to aid in establishment of collection and transportation infrastructure are all eligible expenses and should be included in the proposal.

Eligibility

The applicant will need to work with MN Milk, Minnesota State Cattlemen’s Association and similar agricultural organizations in identifying farms wanting to participate. The study should also identify goals, resources and estimates of the amount of plastic for recycling.

The grant should address the geographic needs of farmers across the state and inclusion of their needs and ability to collect and recycle agricultural plastic.

Competitive Priorities

The applicant will need to clearly define the goals and demonstrate a working relationship with other agricultural groups and counties which will be important to accomplishing the collaborative efforts of the grant.

Collaboration

Collaboration with the agricultural groups and counties will be essential to ensuring accurate and correct information is collected.

Selection Criteria and Weight

The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 100 point scale.

The scoring factors and weight that applications will be judged are based on the:

- 2019, Minnesota Statutes, section 17.101 that allows for conducting research to eliminate or reduce specific production or technological barriers to market development. Since the landfilling of agricultural plastic is an expense as well as an environmental hazard this is causing a barrier to the further development of the agricultural sector and is creating a barrier to future market development.
- This grant also requires 25% match, because it will only cover 75% of the total project.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
<p>Proposed project objectives align with the objectives of the Grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting research to eliminate or reduce specific production or technological barriers to market development • Research is timely and important 	20
<p>Proposed project has shown the capacity to conduct similar research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides titles and/or links to previously conducted research efforts 	10
<p>Proposed project can show working relationships with Counties and Ag. organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that farms interested in participating and haulers willing to participate information will be able to be collected 	20
<p>Budget definition and justification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget narrative clearly details and justifies all project costs • Budget should include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administration ○ meetings to inform affected parties ○ funds towards equipment and advertising to aid in establishment of collection and transportation infrastructure 	30
<p>Preferred projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s past performance as a grantee of that state agency will be considered (5 pts) • Project can meet matching requirements of 25% (5 pts) • Research and outreach addresses inequities and/or disparities experienced by diverse populations (10 pts) 	20
Total	100

Financial Review Process

All Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial review prior to a grant award made of \$25,000 and higher. In order to comply with [Policy on the Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations](#)

Please submit one of the following documents with your application, based on the following criteria:

- Grant applicants with annual income of under \$50,000, or who have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or audit should submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of \$50,000 or more and less than \$750,000 should submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit.

Questions

Questions may be submitted by phone or email to David Weinand at David.Weinand@state.mn.us. All answers will be posted within two business days at www.mda.state.mn.us.

Please submit questions no later than 4:30 p.m. Central Time, on May 27.

Application Content

You must submit the following in order for the application to be considered complete:

- Project Description
- Work plan and Budget
- **If the grant applicant is a nongovernmental organization, please submit the applicable financial statements as required in the [Policy on the Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations](#).
- Affidavit of non-collusion below

Affidavit of Non-collusion

State of Minnesota Request for Proposals

Instructions: Please return your completed form as part of the Response submittal.

I swear (or affirm) under the penalty of perjury:

1. That I, an officer or employee of the responding entity having authority to sign on its behalf.
2. That the attached proposal submitted in response to Agricultural Plastic Grant Request for Proposal has been arrived at by the Responder independently and has been submitted without collusion with and without any agreement, understanding or planned common course of action with, any other Responder of materials, supplies, equipment, or services described in the Request for Proposals, designed to limit fair and open competition.
3. That the contents of the proposal have not been communicated by the Responder or its employees or agents to any person not an employee or agent of the Responder and will not be communicated to any such persons prior to the official opening of the proposals.
4. That I am fully informed regarding the accuracy of the statements made in this affidavit.

Authorized Signature

Responder's firm name: _____

Print authorized representative name: _____

Title: _____

Authorized signature: _____

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Notary Public

Subscribed and sworn to before me this:

_____ day of _____, _____

Notary Public signature: _____

Commission expires (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Do not submit any other materials (binders, photos, etc.). Unrequested materials will not be reviewed.

Application Submission

All applications must be received no later than 4 p.m. Central Time, on June 3, 2019. Late applications will not be considered. The applicant will incur all costs incurred in applying to this RFP.

Applications may be submitted in person, or email to:

David Weinand
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
625 North Robert St.
St. Paul, MN 55155
David.Weinand@state.mn.us
Fax: 651-201-6120

Review Process and Timeline

The review committee will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. Minnesota Department of Agriculture will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. *The award decisions of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture are final and not subject to appeal.*

RFP posted on the Agriculture web site	April 29, 2019
Questions due no later than 4:30 pm Central Time	May 27, 2019
Applications due no later than 4 pm central time	June 3, 2019
Committee begins review of applications	June 4, 2019
Committee recommendations submitted to commissioner for review	June 10, 2019
Selected grantees announced; grant agreement negotiations begin	June 14, 2019
Work plans approved and grant begins	June 20, 2019

Conflicts of Interest

We will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Department due to competing duties or loyalties
- a grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Public Data

Per [Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#)

- Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in § 13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).

Grant Provisions

2019, Minnesota Statutes, section 17.101 that allows for conducting research to eliminate or reduce specific production or technological barriers to market development. Since the landfilling of agricultural plastic is an expense as well as an environmental hazard this is causing a barrier to the further development of the agricultural sector and is creating a barrier to future market development.

Grant requirements, grant purpose and outcomes, terms and conditions of the funding, allowable expenditures, are all spelled out in the Request for Proposal.

Grant agreement templates are available for review at:
[Office of Grants Management- Grant Agreement Templates](#)

As referenced in Minnesota Statutes, section 17.101.

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses, (Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state).

Accountability and Reporting

Final report and recommendations are due to the Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture by May 31, 2020. The final report should provide information that will aid in establishing one central data base to assist counties and cities in siting additional collection points for agricultural plastic. The report should identify counties and/ or organizations with current collection programs, quantify the extent of their program- service area and identify number of farms wanting to participate and the volume of agricultural plastic that would be available to recycle. The report will also need to show that there were efforts to work with MN Milk, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association and similar agricultural organizations in identifying farms wanting

to participate. The report should also identify goals, resources and estimates of the amount of plastic for recycling.

The report should also assess new and existing recyclers and haulers in order to establish an infrastructure base. Additional components of the report should identify the scope of services recyclers are willing and able to provide, capacity and interest in transportation of materials as well as determine capacity of agricultural plastic recyclers and markets to collect and manage materials. One of the final conclusions should be to determine efficiencies of scale and location toward the collection and recycling of agricultural plastic. Administration, meetings to inform affected parties as well as allocation of funds towards equipment and advertising to aid in establishment of collection and transportation infrastructure are all eligible expenses.

Grant Payments

Per [State Policy on Grant Payments](#), reimbursement is the preferred method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless the Minnesota Department of Agriculture has given the grantee a written extension.

Grant Monitoring

[Minn. Stat. §16B.97](#) and [Policy on Grant Monitoring](#) require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants of \$50,000 and higher
- Annual monitoring visits during the grant period on all grants of \$250,000 and higher
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee's expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants of \$50,000 and higher. For this purpose, the grantee must make expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents available upon request by the State.

The monitoring visit will be scheduled in late 2019 and the financial reconciliation will also occur in late 2019.

Grantee Bidding Requirements

For Non-Government Organizations

Any grant-funded services and/or materials that are expected to cost:

- \$100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.
- Between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids.
- Between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.

For grant-funded projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, prevailing wage rules apply per; [Minn. Stat. §§177.41](#) through [177.44](#). These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council's Targeted Vendor list: [Minnesota Unified Certification Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Program](#)

The grantee must maintain:

- Written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.
- Support documentation of the purchasing and/or bidding process utilized to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single/sole source bid, if applicable.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in MN:

<http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/debarredreport.asp>

For Municipalities

Grantees that are municipalities must follow:

- The contracting and bidding requirements in the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law as defined in [Minn. Stat. §471.345](#)
- The requirements of prevailing wage for grant-funded projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, per [Minn. Stat. §§177.41](#) through [177.44](#). These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in MN:

<http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/debarredreport.asp>

Audits

Per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98 Subdivision 8](#), the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination requirements for all Grantees:

- A. The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. [Minn. Stat. §363A.02](#). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.
- B. The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minnesota Rules, part [5000.3500](#).
- C. The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Voter Registration Requirement:

The grantee will comply with [Minn. Stat. §201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

Contact Information

For more information about this RFP, contact:

David Weinand
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
625 North Robert St
St. Paul, MN 55155
Email: David.Weinand@state.mn.us
Fax: 651-201-6120