



Dairy Profitability Grant Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 Request for Proposals

Applications due by 4 p.m. on September 24, 2025

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

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Grant Summary

Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Dairy Profitability Enhancement Grant (Dairy Profitability Grant). The Dairy Profitability Grant is available to regional or statewide organizations for administration and delivery of the [Dairy Profitability and Enhancement Program \(DPEP\)](#). All information about the program is available on the program's webpage. Applications will be accepted until September 24, 2025, at 4 p.m. CT.

DPEP is intended to provide information and technical assistance to dairy farms of all sizes to enhance their financial success and long-term sustainability. Assistance to producers from the program may be provided individually, as a team, or through other methods by farm business management instructors, dairy extension specialists, and other dairy industry partners. Topics may include improving milk quality, comprehensive financial analysis, risk management education, enhanced milk marketing tools and technologies, facilitating or improving production systems, including rotational grazing and other sustainable agriculture methods, and value-added opportunities. Activities may be targeted to a specific dairy producing region or be statewide.

Funding availability

There is \$500,000 available per year in fiscal year (FY) 2026 and FY 2027. Applicants may apply for a minimum of \$25,000 and a maximum of \$500,000 for each year.

Applicants must request funding in FY 2026 and may also request funding in FY 2027. FY 2027 awards will be conditional on the applicant performing satisfactory work in FY 2026, as determined by the state. We do not anticipate issuing another Request for Proposals (RFP) for FY 2027 funds.

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process; applications will be reviewed by MDA staff and external reviewers. MDA anticipates awarding one to two grant contracts through this RFP.

If selected, grantees may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement is fully executed, the grant has reached its effective date, and the grantee has been notified by the state's authorized representative that they may begin work.

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.

[Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#) from the [Office of Grants Management \(OGM\)](#) sets up the expectation that grant programs intentionally show how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities.

This grant program will prioritize:

- Applicants that prioritize serving dairy producers throughout the state.
- Applicants that prioritize beginning farmers and farms owned or principally operated by beginning farmers. A beginning farmer is defined as someone who has farmed 10 years or less.

How to apply

- Apply for the Dairy Profitability Grant using our [online application system](#).
 - If you're a new user, you need to create an account first.
 - Once you're logged in, select "Dairy Profitability Grant 2026-2027."
- Applications are due by 4 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Wednesday, September 24, 2025.
 - We will not accept late applications.
 - Apply early so there is enough time to get help with the online application system if you need it. It's best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
 - We are not responsible for any technical or logistical problems that result in a late submission. It is your responsibility to ensure we receive your application before the deadline.

Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated. Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated.

The MDA reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.

By submitting an application, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

Note: All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the applicant.

Application guidelines

- Use plain, easily understood language. Write for reviewers who have general knowledge but may not have a thorough or deep understanding of your organization.
- Although some questions are labeled as optional, we strongly recommend responding to those questions or uploading the appropriate documents.
- Answer all questions completely within the character limits specified in the grant application.
- Review the [Project Evaluation Profile](#) included in this document as it is used to score and compare the grant applications.

Timeline and deadlines

September 17, 2025, at 4 p.m. CT.....Deadline to ask grant program questions.

September 24, 2025, at 4 p.m. CT.....Applications due.

September 25-October 10, 2025.....Phase one of the review process.

October 10, 2025-December 1, 2025.....Phase two of the review process.

Early December 2025.....Applicants notified of decisions; grant agreement negotiations begin.

Early January 2026.....Anticipated start date for projects awarded funding.

Questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Submit your question in writing before 4 p.m. CT on September 17, 2025.
- Email MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us with “Dairy Profitability Grant” in the subject line.

Note: MDA employees are not authorized to give advice on any applications. Applicants who solicit or receive advice from unauthorized MDA employees may be disqualified from eligibility for a grant award.

For help with the online application system:

- Call 651-201-6500, or
- Email MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us with “Dairy Profitability Grant” in the subject line.

Grant Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for this grant opportunity:

- Organizations able to provide information and technical assistance to dairy farms.
- Be a regional or statewide organization.
- Have acceptable performance on prior grants awarded by MDA or other state agencies.
- Be registered with the Secretary of State and Attorney General’s Office, as applicable.
- Be in good standing with the State of Minnesota.
 - No back taxes owed.
 - No defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the last seven years.

Collaboration

Eligible applicants may collaborate with other partner organizations, but it's not required. If eligible organizations are submitting a joint application, they must determine which entity or organization will have the grant contract agreement with the MDA and work directly with the MDA to meet grant reporting requirements. Note that this organization may receive a 1099 from the State of Minnesota for income tax purposes.

Applicants must provide at least one letter of support from a collaborator in the dairy industry who is committed to partnering with the applicant to deliver services to dairy farmers.

Eligible projects and expenses

Projects must:

- Aim to provide technical assistance to dairy farms of all sizes. This may be delivered individually, as a team, or through other methods to enhance farm financial success and long-term sustainability.
- Serve Minnesota dairy farms.
- Not start until the grant contract is signed by all parties and has reached its start date.

Expenses must directly serve the Dairy Profitability Grant program. Examples of eligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Staff time, including salary and fringe
- Travel related to administering the program (out of state travel must have prior approval)
- Promotion of the program
- Training and professional development of staff
- Equipment and supplies

Ineligible expenses

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred prior to the full execution of the grant contract agreement or its start date, whichever occurs later, or those incurred after the expiration of the grant contract agreement
- Expenses paid for in cash
- Public relations, entertainment and amusement costs
- Donated or volunteer (in-kind) services. While these may be furnished to an applicant by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor, the value of these services is not an eligible cost.
- Donations and in-kind contributions, including property and services, made by the applicant (regardless of the recipient)
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to comply with Federal, State, local, or Indian tribal laws and regulations
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)

- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists and political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, legal costs, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for deciding whether travel is out of state.

Matching funds

Applicants are not required to provide matching funds to the grant award. Up to 100% of the total project cost may be covered by the grant, with a minimum grant award of \$25,000 and a maximum grant award of \$500,000 per fiscal year.

Application Review Policies and Processes

Review process

During the first phase of the review process, MDA staff and external reviewers evaluate all eligible applications based on the criteria in the Project Evaluation Profile. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The commissioner of agriculture reviews the recommendations and makes the award decisions. Reviewers, staff, and the commissioner may consider geographic distribution as well as the applicant's history as a state grantee, including performance on previous grants, compliance with state rules and regulations, and capacity to perform the work.

During the second phase of the review process, applicants that made it past the first phase will be contacted by MDA staff to submit additional documentation required for the [Organizational Capacity Review](#).

The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers ([MINN. STAT.16B.98](#) and [OGM Policy 08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy](#)).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to give impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

An example of a conflict of interest would be a vendor writing an application (beyond providing budget details, bids, or quotes) for an organization when the vendor stands to profit from the grant award.

Applicants selected for an award a grant award of \$50,000 or greater will need to disclose any actual or known potential conflicts of interest within 30 calendar days and prior to receiving a grant award contract.

In cases where a conflict of interest is in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract agreement.

Organizational capacity and financial review

In accordance with [MINN. STAT. 16B.981](#) and [OGM Policy 08-06: Preaward Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees](#), it is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants of \$50,000 or more. Upon request, applicants need to submit the following documents within 30 days:

Nonprofit organizations

- A copy of the non-profit's two most recent Internal Revenue Service Forms Form 990 or 990-EZ. If the non-profit has not been in existence long enough or is not required to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ, then they must submit the following information:
 - Proof of its tax-exempt status
 - Board-reviewed financial statements for the two most recent business years, or for new organizations, actual financial statements for the periods that are available and pro forma financial projections for at least a two-year period.
 - Documentation of its internal controls
- The two most recent certified financial audits if required to complete one under [MINN.STAT. 309.53, subd. 3.](#)
- Certification that it is in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Certification that none of its current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years.
- Certification that the organization is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
- A performance capacity summary which may include a description of your organization's capacity to complete the project; staffing; budget; and previous experience performing similar work. You will also need to name as a part of this description a list of the previous grants you have received from MDA over the last five years.

For-profit businesses

All for-profit businesses selected for a grant award of \$50,000 or higher must undergo a financial review prior to receiving a grant contract agreement.

To comply with Policy 08-06, applicants may be asked to submit the following documents:

- A copy of the business' most recent federal and state tax returns. If the business has not been in business long enough to have a tax return, then they must submit current financial statements and documentation of internal controls.
- Current financial statements including a balance sheet, income statement, and statement of cashflows.
- Confirmation that the business entity is not under bankruptcy proceedings or have any liens on assets.
- Certification that the business is in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Certification that none of the business' current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.
- Certification that the entity is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
- A performance capacity summary which may include a description of your organization's capacity to complete the project; staffing; budget; and previous experience performing similar work. You will also need to name as a part of this description a list of the previous grants you have received from MDA over the last five years.

Political subdivisions

- Certification that none of its current public officials, board members, or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years.
- Certification that the entity is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
- A performance capacity summary which may include a description of your capacity to complete the project; staffing; budget; and previous experience performing similar work. You will also need to name as a part of this description a list of the previous grants you have received from MDA over the last five years.

If the MDA determines that the awardee has substantial risks that inhibit its ability to perform the required duties under the grant contract agreement, then the MDA may either request more information for the purpose of satisfying the concerns, develop a risk mitigation plan to protect the interests of the state, or not award the grant.

In addition, applicants who are recommended for funding must also complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the state's accounting system, or confirm that the information in SWIFT is still correct.

Privacy notice and data classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under this program. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence. However, only completed applications will be considered for a grant; incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act as private or nonpublic, although some or all of the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited to MDA staff and contractors with a valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per [MINN. STAT. 13.599](#):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [MINN. STAT. 13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in MINN. STAT. 13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

Procedure for claiming protection of trade secrets:

- Trade secret information is classified as not public data. In order to qualify as trade secret information, the data in question must be provided to the MDA by the affected person (i.e. the data must be about the applicant) and otherwise meet the legal definition found in statute (MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1(b)). In order for an applicant to assert trade secret protection for data submitted as part of this application: the applicant must: 1) clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that the applicant believes to be trade secret information; 2) describe what efforts the applicant takes to maintain the secrecy of the data; and 3) adequately explain how the data derive(s) independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons. Merely asserting trade secret protection does not, in and of itself, classify the data in question as not public; determining what data meet the definition of trade secret information is ultimately the legal responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data identified as trade secret information by an applicant will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data do not meet the definition of trade secret information, the data in question will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

All persons, businesses, and individuals applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must comply with applicable laws. Under the law titled Right of Setoff ([MINN. STAT. 270C.65, subd. 3](#)), a grantee consents to disclosure of its social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies, and to state personnel involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws which could result in action requiring a grantee to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

Requirements for Grant Recipients

Grant award agreement

Upon approval of an application and before beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant must:

1. Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the state's accounting system, or confirm that the information in SWIFT is still correct.
2. Submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification.
3. Submit all documentation necessary for the pre-award risk assessment.
4. Sign a grant contract agreement showing their intention to complete the proposed tasks. The agreement also authorizes the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. This agreement must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

The grant contract agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantees should read the grant contract agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant contract agreement. No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant contract agreement is in place and the State's Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may start. The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties. Applicants should anticipate that grant contracts will have an end date in June 2029 and may not be extended.

Grant contract agreement templates are available at [OGM Policies, Statutes, and Forms>Forms and FAQs tab](#).

Accountability and reporting

Grantees will be required to submit annual progress reports during the grant period, a final report at the completion of the project, and additional information about the long-term impact for up to three years after the grant period. Grant payments will not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

The MDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the project.

Information reported to the MDA may be classified as public data. Failure to regularly report, respond to surveys, and promptly respond to information requests may impact the grantee's ability to secure future funding from the MDA.

Authorized representatives

Pursuant to [MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 5\(d\)](#), grantees must clearly post on the grantee's website the names of, and contact information for, the grantee's leadership and the employee or other person who directly manages and oversees a grant contract agreement on behalf of the grantee.

Payments

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the grant agreement has been signed by all parties.

The MDA will perform a financial reconciliation of at least one invoice on grants greater than or equal to \$50,000. Financial reconciliation may be performed on additional payment requests at the discretion of the MDA. For this purpose, the grantee must provide expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents requested by the State.

Grant payments may be used to fulfill federal and state tax liabilities or may be withheld until the grantee has paid any tax liabilities (MINN. STAT. 270C.65, subd. 3 and other applicable laws).

Advance funds

In order to make advance payments, agencies must prepare a written justification or include a justification in the grant contract agreement or notice of grant award that details the specific need to utilize advance payments. The written justification must be approved prior to encumbrance by the appropriate contact within the agency's financial management area. These requests will be reviewed as a part of the grant contract agreement negotiation process. The MDA reserves the right to not honor requests for initial advanced payments or subsequent advances. Advance funds must be reconciled within one year of the start of the grant contract. Any cash advance that violates the terms of the grant agreement or does not adequately support the approved project will need to be repaid.

Monitoring and site visits

The grant agreement allows the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The MDA will perform a monitoring visit for all grantees with awards of more than \$25,000 before a final payment is approved and annual monitoring visits for all grantees receiving more than \$250,000. Other grantees may receive monitoring visits at the discretion of the MDA.

Bidding requirements

All funded applicants must abide by the state's bidding requirements. See a list of the state's [bidding requirements](#) for details. We anticipate that most grantees will need to follow the non-governmental/nonprofit organization tab. The grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.

Publicity

All projects funded must publicly credit this funding, including on the grantee's website when practical.

Affirmative action and non-discrimination policy

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.

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](#)).

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](#).

Audits of project

Per [MINN. STAT. 16B.98 subd. 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 Commissioner of Administration, the State granting agency, the State Auditor, the Attorney General, and the Legislative Auditor as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant contract 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.

Voter registration requirement

The grantee will provide voter registration services for its employees ([MINN. STAT. 201.162](#)).

Right of Cancellation

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract agreement solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.

Project Evaluation Profile

Evaluation criteria	Maximum score
<p>Project overview and need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant clearly describes their project. • Applicant explains the need and potential impact of the project for Minnesota dairy farms including how it will enhance the financial success and long-term sustainability of dairy farms in Minnesota. • Proposed outcomes of project are realistic for the size of the budget request. • Applicant identifies dairy farms they will serve. 	20
<p>Qualifications and experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has organizational capacity to manage the grant. • Applicant has a history of performing the type of work funded by the grant. • Applicant has relevant assets such as key personnel, current budget, past grant experience, or internal financial policies or controls. • Applicant has strong understanding and experience working with dairy farmers. • Applicant includes a letter of support. 	20
<p>Priority areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant is working in partnership with other agricultural organizations (e.g. Farm Business Management, University of Minnesota Extension, Sustainable Farming Association, etc.) • Applicant works with beginning farmers or has a plan to work with beginning farmers. 	10
<p>Work plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant provides a detailed work plan that identifies major tasks. • Applicant has detailed description of each step of the grant project, along with a timeline that includes milestones and dates. 	15
<p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget clearly details all project costs. • Applicant connects the budget to the project’s results and explains how they arrived at the budget estimates. • Budget is cost effective and reasonable. • Applicant indicates how project costs will be tracked. 	20
<p>Outreach and evaluation plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s plan for outreach is thorough and effective. • Applicant has a clear plan for reaching beginning farmers who have not participated in the past. • Applicant explains how they will evaluate the impact of the program, both quantitatively and qualitatively. 	15
<p>Total</p>	100

Application Questions

Contact information

Applicant information

- Point of contact name
- Point of contact title
- Point of contact telephone number
- Point of contact email address
- Organization legal name
- Organization mailing address
- Organization county
- Organization telephone number
- Organization email
- Minnesota State House District (use the [District Finder](#) if you don't know your district.)

Authorized representative

- If awarded a grant, is the person authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the organization the same as the point of contact listed above? (Yes or No)
 - If no, provide the following information for the authorized representative:
 - Name
 - Title
 - Telephone number
 - Email

Eligibility

- My organization is a: (Check all that apply)
 - Business
 - Nonprofit organization
 - Agricultural cooperative
 - Local unit of government
 - Educational institution
 - Other
- Confirm that the following statements apply to you and your organization.
 - My organization is a regional or statewide organization serving Minnesota. (True)
 - My organization is in good standing with the Minnesota Secretary of State. (True)
 - If my organization is a nonprofit, it is appropriately registered with the Minnesota Office of the Attorney General. (True or Not Applicable)
 - I attest that I have the authority to apply on behalf of the organization and no other application is being submitted from this organization. (True)

- The current principals of the organization have not been convicted of a financial crime such as theft, embezzlement, or forgery in the last 10 years. Principals include public officials, board members, and staff with the authority to access funds provided by the MDA or determine how those funds are used. (True)
- Is this organization suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government? If your project is recommended for phase two of the review process, you will need to sign a certification. (Yes or No)
- I attest that all information supplied in this application is true, correct and reliable to the best of my knowledge. (Yes or No)
- I attest and understand that the submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject me and my organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available by law to the state. (Yes or No)
- I attest and understand that the supporting documentation for the claims and assertions made within this application is available to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for its review. (Yes or No)

Previous grants

- Has your organization received previous MDA or USDA grant funding for development of the dairy industry? (Yes or No)
 - If yes, briefly describe your previous grant project(s), including date(s) and amount(s) awarded. (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Grant request

- Project name (Example: MN Dairy Financial Cohort)
- Applicants must request funding in FY 2026 and may also request funding in FY 2027. FY 2027 awards will be conditional on the applicant performing satisfactory work in FY 2026, as determined by the state. We do not anticipate issuing another Request for Proposals for FY 2027 funds. Applicants should be aware of the timeframe that each year’s funding may be used:

Fiscal Year	Anticipated Award Period
2026	Winter 2025-Winter 2026
2027	Winter 2026-Winter 2027

- Total grant request – FY 2026
- Total grant request – FY 2027
- Project start date
- Project end date

Project overview and need

- Describe what your organization will do with this grant funding. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
- Describe the need and potential impact of project. Include how it will enhance the financial success and long-term sustainability of dairy farms in Minnesota. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
- Describe the intended outcomes of your project. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
- Who are the dairy farms you will serve? (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Qualifications and experience

- Provide a summary of your organization. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
The summary should stand alone to describe:
 - The mission and goals of your organization.
 - The services and products provided by your organization.
 - The ownership and leadership of your organization.
- Provide a summary of your organization's capacity. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
 - Describe your organization's capacity to manage the grant, if received.
 - Describe your history of performing the work that will be funded by the grants
- Describe any other relevant assets such as key personnel, current budget, past grant experience, or internal financial policies or controls to demonstrate your organization's capacity to manage the grant. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
- Describe your organizations experience working with dairy farmers. (1,000 characters, including spaces)
- Letters of Support
 - Provide at least one letter of support from a collaborator in the dairy industry who is committed to partnering with the applicant to deliver services to dairy farmers. (e.g., lenders, farm business management instructor, extension educator, consultant, etc.) Each letter can be no longer than two pages.

Priority areas

- Describe how you will partner with other agricultural organizations (e.g., Farm Business Management program, University of Minnesota Extension, producer organizations, etc.) (1,000 characters, including spaces)
- Describe how your organization will be directly targeting or serving dairy farms that are owned by beginning farmers. (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Work plan

- Complete the following table or upload a table with the same information. Describe the activities you plan to undertake and include the steps you will take to successfully complete your project. You should include target dates for major tasks or events.

Example work plan:

Timeframe	Description of task or action item	Responsible party
December 2025	Begin development of outreach plan	Project director
February 2026	Host event on risk management and an introduction to how farms can participate in the program	Project director and staff

Budget

- Create a budget using the table below or upload a budget as an Excel or Word file. There is \$500,000 available per year in FY 2026 and FY 2027. You must apply for FY 2026 funding and may also apply for funding in FY 2027. You must submit a budget for the entire funding amount you are requesting.

Example budget:

Item	Quantity and Cost Per Unit	Total Estimate	Source of Estimate	Fiscal Year (2026 or 2027)
Team Coordinators	8 contractors x \$25,000	\$200,000	(8 contractors x 1,000 hours x \$25/hour)	2026
Mileage	25,000 miles x \$0.70	\$17,500	Previous budget (8 coordinators x 3,125 miles x \$0.70)	2026
Coordinator Professional Development	16 x \$250	\$4,000	Dairy Days Conference	2026

Budget narrative

Respond to the following prompts: (4,000 characters, including spaces)

- Detail how the funds will be used and justify each expense listed in the budget table.
- Explain how the expenses outlined in the budget table connect to the project's results and how you arrived at the budget estimates.
- Explain how these funds will be tracked separately from other parts of your organizational budget.

Outreach and evaluation

Respond to the following prompts: (4,000 characters, including spaces)

- Describe your outreach plan.
- Describe how you will reach beginning farmers who have not participated in the past.
- Describe how you will evaluate the impact of the program, both quantitatively and qualitatively.