



Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant FY26 Request for Proposals

Applications due by 4 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, 2025

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This program is funded by the Minnesota Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Grant Summary

Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant FY26. The program is funded through United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) through Award# NR236322XXXXC004. All information about the program is available on the [Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant webpage](#).

Applications will be accepted until 4 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on December 18, 2025.

The intent of this grant program is to support commercial urban farmers with grant awards up to \$5,000 to pay for equipment, materials, and services they may need to manage their farm's soil, water, and plant and animal life with conservation in mind.

Grant funds are available to commercial farming entities based in Minnesota that grow or raise farm products in an urban setting, or to serve an urban population, and sell or donate at least \$1,000 of those farm products. A wide variety of entity types are eligible, check [Eligibility](#) section of this Request for Proposals for details.

Fund availability

The MDA has approximately \$100,000 available for eligible projects using a competitive review process.

The minimum grant award is \$500 and the maximum grant amount is \$5,000. The MDA anticipates awarding 20-40 grants; however, the total number of awards and the funding per award will be determined through the proposal review process. Grant contract agreements are anticipated to be for one year, with an expected start date of February 2026 and an expiration date of January 2027.

If selected, a grantee may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract is signed by all parties, and the grant has reached its effective start date.

A funding match is not required.

Definitions

For the purpose of this request for proposals (RFP), the following terms are defined as:

Commercial farm – means a farm from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year.

Conservation practices – means a variety of actions an urban farm may want to carry out to address concerns related to the health of soil, water, plants and animals, and other resources.

Distressed community – is a zip code-based geographic designation which identifies communities where their economic wellbeing is significantly lower than other communities. This designation is determined using the [Distressed Communities Index \(DCI\)](#), developed by the Economic Innovation Group. The DCI combines seven

publicly available metrics to assess the economic well-being of communities including percent of the population 25 years and older without a high school degree and percent of the population living under the poverty line.

Selling farm products – means keeping, offering, or exposing food for sale or use; transporting, transferring, negotiating, soliciting, or exchanging food; having in possession with intent to sell, use, transport, negotiate, solicit, or exchange food; storing, manufacturing, producing, processing, packing, and holding of food for sale; dispensing or giving food; or supplying or applying food in the conduct of any food operation or carrying food in aid of traffic in food whether done or permitted in person or through others.

Urban farm – means an entity growing crops or raising livestock in a Minnesota town of population 5,000 or more people or serving consumers within a town of that population size; or within the boundaries of federally recognized Tribal land and serving Tribal community members, regardless of population size. Activities related to aquaculture and apiculture are also part of this definition. See the [Appendix](#) for list of locations which meet this urban farm definition.

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

- This grant program serves commercial urban farmers in Minnesota. Priority will be given to commercial urban farms that are located within or selling products to a distressed community, as determined by using this [Distressed Communities Index map tool](#).

Grant outcomes will include implementation of conservation practices by urban and peri-urban farmers in Minnesota.

How to apply

Apply for the Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant using the MDA's [online application system](#).

- If you are a new user, you need to create an account first.
- Reference this [how-to guide \(PDF\)](#) if you have questions while setting up your account.
- Once you're logged in, select "Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant."
- If you can't use the online application system, contact us to request other arrangements.

Applications are due **by 4 p.m. CST on December 18, 2025**.

- MDA will not accept late applications.
- Apply early so there is enough time to get help with the online application system if needed. It's best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
- MDA is 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.
- You will receive a confirmation email after submitting your application. Contact Emily Toner at emily.toner@state.mn.us if you don't get this email.

Applicants must submit all sections of the application for it to be considered complete, including attachments.

- MDA will reject incomplete applications, and they will not be evaluated.
- Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this Request for Proposals. They will not be considered or evaluated.

The MDA reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements. We will only accept one application per entity, for example per farm or nonprofit organization.

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.

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 commercial urban farming.
- Answer all questions completely.
- Review the [Project Evaluation Profile](#) included in this document. It is used to score and compare grant applications.
- Make sure your budget is realistic and includes only eligible items. Write a detailed budget narrative that clearly explains how the money will be spent. More detail is better than less.
- We will not accept late applications. Apply early so there is enough time to get help with the application process if you need it. It's best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.

Timeline and deadlines

Thursday, November 6, 2025.....Application period opens

Thursday, December 11, 2025.....Deadline to submit questions about grant

Thursday, December 18, 2025, 4 p.m. Central Time (CT).....Applications due

February 2026 (estimated).....Applicants notified of decisions

Questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Submit them in writing by December 11, 2025.
- Email Emily Toner at emily.toner@state.mn.us with "Urban Farm Mini-Grant" in the subject line.

- All answers will be posted on the Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant webpage. New questions and answers will be added to this page as they are received. Questions from the public about this program will be posted with answers on the grant webpage to ensure transparency and access to the same information for all potential applicants.

Note: MDA employees are not authorized to give advice or feedback on any application. 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 651-201-6034, or
- Email Emily Toner at emily.toner@state.mn.us with “Urban Farm Mini-Grant” in the subject line.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants – Minimum requirements

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

- Be a commercial farm, meaning you sell or donate at least \$1,000 of your farm products annually (see [Definitions](#) for “commercial farm” and “selling farm products”).
- Farm is in a Minnesota location that meets one of the following criteria:
 - A Minnesota town with a population over 5,000, or selling their products to consumers in one of those towns; or
 - Within the boundaries of federally recognized Tribal land and serving Tribal community members, regardless of population size.
- Able to provide proof of earning less than \$300,000 in agricultural sales per year for the past three calendar years (2022-2024).
- 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.
 - Acceptable performance on past grants with the MDA.
 - Compliant with current state regulations.
 - Be appropriately licensed and authorized to conduct business in Minnesota.
 - Not debarred or suspended from doing business with the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
 - No conviction of felony financial crimes of its principals for the past 10 years.

Examples of eligible applicants include but are limited to:

- For-profit businesses including sole proprietorships and limited liability companies (LLCs)
- Nonprofit organizations
- Tribal sovereign nations, organizations or educational institutions, communities

- Local government or municipalities
- Pre-K to 12, alternative school, or institution of higher education. (public or private)

MDA employees and their spouses, farms, LLCs, or businesses principally operated by them are not eligible applicants and are not eligible to receive funds from this grant program.

Eligible projects

Funds awarded to commercial urban farmers will be used to pay for equipment, materials, and services they may need for a conservation-informed approaches to manage their farm's soil, water, and plant and animal life.

Eligible projects will:

- Aim to conserve an urban farm's soil, water, air, plant, or animal resources.
- Be completed in one year or less.
- Be conducted in the State of Minnesota.
- Provide a complete application in response to this RFP.
- Not start until the grant contract agreement is signed by all parties and has reached its start date. No purchasing or contracting of goods and services may occur prior to the full execution of the grant contract agreement or start date, whichever is later.

Urban farm conservation-related projects that would be a good fit for this grant program include but aren't limited to:

- Soil improvement
 - Soil testing including for nutrients, biology, and contaminants
 - Urban farm composting facilities
 - Multi-species cover cropping
 - Specialty crop rotations
 - Reduced tillage practices
 - Raised bed systems including soil and compost
- Water management
 - Micro irrigation systems
 - Mulching with natural materials
 - Rain barrels and rainwater management
- Plant and animal health
 - Pollinator mixes for plant cover
 - Perennial vegetation including field borders
 - Conservation-minded weed treatment
 - Low tunnel systems
 - Urban forestry

Applicants looking to propose a conservation practice not on this list can justify it by linking it to an [NRCS-defined resource concern](#) and explain the practice in their application.

Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses are those directly related to the project outcomes. Examples of expenses that may relate to a proposed project include:

- Equipment and tools;
- Supplies and materials, such as raised bed materials; hoops and covers for low tunnels; mulch; etc., that contribute towards the conservation practices;
- Fees for services such as soil testing or contractor support to carry out the project work; and
- Perennial plants and seeds needed to carry out conservation practices.

If we accept your proposal, we will reimburse eligible costs included in your project budget. You will have to submit documentation including invoices and proof of payment.

- Invoice and pay for all approved purchases within 30 calendar days from the end of the grant contract award.
- Any expenses incurred outside this timeframe are not eligible for reimbursement without a formal amendment to your contract.
- Any expense incurred before the grant agreement execution date will not be reimbursed.

Ineligible expenses

The grant will not fund:

- High tunnels or hoop houses (see the [NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) for potential funding)
- Post harvest infrastructure
- Land or property purchases
- Urban farm staff time

Other ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred before the grant agreement is signed by all parties or its start date (whichever is later). Any payments made by the grantee before a grant contract agreement is signed by all parties and reached its effective (start date) are at the applicant's risk and not eligible for reimbursement.
- Expenditures incurred after the expiration of the grant contract agreement.
- Expenses paid for with cash unless specifically approved by an MDA grant administrator in advance.
- Expenditures incurred before the grant agreement is signed by all parties.
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to follow federal, state, local, or Tribal nation laws and regulations.
- Entertainment, amusement, diversion, social activities, gifts, or any costs directly associated with such purchases (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, alcohol, and gratuities).
- Late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds.
- Advertising, public relations, entertainment, alcohol, and amusement costs.
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods, services and payroll taxes.

- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project).
- Application costs, including any costs required for producing or providing the documents necessary of the pre-award capacity assessment.
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal, state, or local government funding. Projects which have already received funding from another federal grant or subaward programs may not receive funding for the same activities and expenses.
- 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.
- Lobbyists, political contributions.
- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions, regardless of purpose for which funds will be used.
- Political activities in accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 United States Code 1501-1508 and 7324-7326).
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal, state, or local government funding. Projects which have already received funding from another federal grant or subaward programs may not receive funding for the same activities and expenses.

Application Review Process

All eligible applications will be reviewed by MDA staff and-external reviewers based on the criteria in the evaluation profile. The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 100-point scale. See the [Project Evaluation Profile](#) for more information.

Review process

Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The commissioner of agriculture receives the recommendations of the reviewers and makes the award decisions. Reviewers, staff, and the commissioner may consider geographic distribution, services to prioritized populations, applicant's history as a state grantee—including performance on previous grants, and applicant's capacity to perform the work related to the grant request.

The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request feedback on their application.

Grantee capacity review

The MDA is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants ([MINN. STAT. 16B.981](#), [OGM Policy 08-02: Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#), and [OGM Policy 08-06: Preaward Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees \(PDF\)](#)).

All applicants will complete the capacity summary as a part of their application describing previous grants from the MDA and history of performing work related to the grant request.

Grant applicants may be required to submit financial, capacity, and internal control documents including descriptions of internal controls over business expenditures. Examples of documents that may be required include federal and state tax returns and financial statement (for for-profit applicants) or most recent board reviewed financial statements, an IRS Form 990, or their most recent certified financial audit (for nonprofit applicants).

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.

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 Subd. 2-3](#) and [OGM Policy 08-01: Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy \(PDF\)](#)).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the MDA 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.

An example of a conflict of interest would be a vendor or distributor writing an application for the applicant when the vendor stands to profit from the grant award.

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.

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 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 Minnesota's statute on grants ([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 application responses (except for data otherwise classified by law, including trade secret information, see below) becomes 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 MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will generally be public data after the evaluation process is completed.

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 contract agreements

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant contract agreement. 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 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 and federal requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

Upon approval of an application, completion of the grantee capacity review, and before beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant selected for a grant award must:

- 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 correct.
- Submit other required documentation and certifications within 21 calendar days of award notification.
- Sign a grant contract agreement showing their intention to complete the proposed tasks within 21 calendar days of being sent to the grantee. Failure to sign the contract within 21 calendar days may result in the award being rescinded.

Accountability and reporting requirements

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to monitor progress on state grants by requiring grantees to submit written progress reports at least annually until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant contract agreement have been met.

The grantee must submit an annual report each year of the grant, the deadline for the report will be included in the award contract. A final report must be submitted prior to receiving final payment. Annual and final reports must include a summary of project results to-date, impact of the grant program, and three to five photos of the project.

The MDA conducts follow-up surveys to help us determine the long-term impacts of the grant. Grantees must respond to requests for follow-up information for three years beyond the term of the grant agreement.

The MDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements throughout the grant. Grant payments will not be made on grants with past-due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

Information submitted in any report or survey will 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.

Monitoring

The grant contract agreement allows the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The MDA will perform a monitoring visit for all grantees with awards of \$25,000 or more prior to approving final payment. Other grantees may receive monitoring visits at the discretion of the MDA.

Payments

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

Grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis as required by the Policy 08-08: Grant Payments located on the Current Policies tab of the [Office of Grants Management Policies, Statutes, and Forms website](#). 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.

Requests must include two types of proof for each expense: 1. proof of purchase (e.g., invoices, itemized receipts, etc.) and 2. proof of payment (e.g., cleared checks, credit card statements, bank statements, etc.). Documentation must be included with the invoice at the time of submission for reimbursement. A financial reconciliation will be performed, and any additional requests must be submitted prior to the reimbursement. Additional details can be found in the [MDA Reimbursement Guide \(PDF\)](#). The MDA will generally not reimburse expenses paid for in cash. Contact the MDA for exceptions.

The MDA may retain up to 10% of the total award pending receipt of an acceptable and timely final report in a format specified by the MDA.

Authorized representatives

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 ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 5\(d\)](#)).

Contract and bidding requirements

All grantees must abide by the state's bidding requirements, based on their entity type.

Municipalities

Grantees that are political subdivisions or municipalities must use these guidelines:

- A. Municipalities are required to comply with the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law ([MINN. STAT. 471.345](#)).
- B. The grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules, as applicable ([MINN. STAT. 177.41 through 177.50](#)).
- C. Municipalities and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government (see [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#) and [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#)).
- D. 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.

Nongovernmental entities

Grantees that are nongovernmental entities must use these guidelines:

- A. Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a

- targeted vendor.
- B. Services and/or materials that are expected to cost 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.
 - C. 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:
 - a. [Office of State Procurement – Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged, and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
 - b. [Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business \(MCUB\) Program Directory](#)
 - c. [Central Certification \(CERT\) Directory](#)
 - D. 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.
 - E. The grantee must maintain support documentation of the purchasing or bidding process used to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single source bid, if applicable.
 - F. Notwithstanding the above, the State may waive bidding process requirements when:
 - a. Vendors included in response to competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or
 - b. It is determined there is only one reasonable and available source for such materials or services and that grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.
 - G. The Grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules per [MINN. STAT. 177.41](#) through [177.50](#), as applicable.
 - H. The grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: see [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#) and [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#).

Audits

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 and either the legislative auditor or the state 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.

The grantee is also subject to requests by federal agencies. 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 in [2 CFR 200.334](#), whichever is later.

All grantees (other than federal agencies and for-profit businesses) are responsible to comply with [2 CFR 200 Subpart F – Audit Requirements](#). The standards require any grantee that expends \$750,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year to have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year. All auditees are to submit their audit reports directly to the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#).

Publicity

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

Federal compliance

Grant recipients are required to comply with all applicable provisions of 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and the USDA Farm Production and Conservation Business Center's [October 2024 Award Terms and Conditions](#).

Grant provisions

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs](#) webpage.

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](#).

Voter registration

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 solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.

Project Evaluation Profile

Yes / No Eligibility

- Farm of the applicant is located in or serving consumers in an urban area or tribal nation in Minnesota.
- Applicant sold at least \$1,000 of their farm products in the most recent year.
- Applicant earned less than \$300,000 in agricultural sales per year for the past three years (2021-2023).

Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant evaluation criteria	Points possible
Project purpose • The suggested work aligns with conservation outcomes for urban farming. (20 pts) • Applicant clearly explains the conservation-related practices to be carried out with the funds. (10 pts)	30
Impact on urban farm • Suggested use for the funds will result in clear impacts for the urban farm. (15 pts) • Applicant shows past engagement with sustainable farming practices. (5 pts)	20
Urban farm is located or selling products in a distressed community.	10
Work plan • Applicant clearly explains the steps needed to carry out the proposed work. (10 pts) • Applicant lays out a realistic timeline for completing each part of the work. (5 pts)	15
Budget • Applicant includes a detailed budget and all costs are clearly explained. (15 pts) • Budget shows evidence of being based on quotes or other cited costs. (5 pts) • The grant funds are important for the completion of the project. (5 pts)	25
Total	100

Both the review committee and commissioner may consider geographic distribution, diversity in agricultural enterprise, applicant's history as a state grantee, and capacity to perform the work in their decisions.

Application Questions

Contact and entity information

- Point of contact first and last name
- Job title
- Point of contact phone number
- Point of contact email address
- Entity name
- Entity type (select one):
 - ☐ For-profit business
 - ☐ Nonprofit organization
 - ☐ Tribal organization
 - ☐ Municipality
 - ☐ School or university
 - ☐ Other. If other, please explain.
- Entity address
- Mailing address (if different)
- Minnesota county where urban farm is located (choose from dropdown menu)
- Mailing address (if different)

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 person listed above? (Yes/No)
- If no, provide the following
 - Name
 - Title
 - Authorized representative phone number
 - Authorized representative email address

Eligibility

Confirm that the following statements apply to you and/or your entity.

- This application is for an urban farm located in the state of Minnesota, including Tribal lands. (Yes)
 - Select from dropdown menu the urban area or Tribal land where the farm is located or selling products.
- I/We sold at least \$1,000 of agricultural products from this urban farm in the previous calendar year. (True)

- I/We earned less than \$300,000 in agricultural sales per year for the past three calendar years (2022-2024) and can provide documentation to prove this. (True)
- I/We do not owe the State of Minnesota any back taxes and have not defaulted on any State of Minnesota-backed financing in the last seven years. (True)
- My entity is compliant with current state regulations. (True)
- I attest that I have the authority to apply on behalf of the entity and no other application is being submitted from this entity for the Urban Farm Conservation Mini-Grant. (Yes)
- I attest that none of the entity's staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. (Yes)
- I understand that if my application is successful, the MDA cannot reimburse for any expenses incurred or work performed prior to the start date of the contract (expected to be March/April 2026). (Yes)
- I am not an employee of the MDA or spouse of an MDA employee. (Yes)

About your urban farm

- Farm name (if applicable):
- Farm website (if available):
- Describe your urban farm. (800-character limit)
- What crops do you grow or intend to grow?
 - Barley
 - Beans, edible
 - Corn, field corn
 - Corn, sweet corn
 - Hay
 - Hemp, industrial
 - Herbs and spices
 - Flowers
 - Fruit
 - Medicinal plants
 - Nursery crops
 - Oats
 - Soybeans
 - Sugar beets
 - Sunflower, for oil
 - Tree nuts
 - Wheat
 - Vegetables
 - Other (please list):

- Not growing crops
- What livestock do you raise or intend to raise?
 - Aquaculture
 - Bees/honey
 - Bison
 - Cattle/calves
 - Dairy
 - Fish/aquaculture
 - Goats
 - Hogs
 - Poultry/eggs
 - Sheep
 - Other (please list):
 - Not raising livestock
- What plants or animals do you forage or wild harvest for the purpose of selling?
 - Berries
 - Cattail
 - Fiddleheads
 - Fish
 - Hazelnuts
 - Leeks
 - Maple syrup
 - Medicinal plants
 - Milkweed pods
 - Mushrooms
 - Nuts
 - Spruce tips
 - Wild rice
 - Other (please list):
- Where do you sell or donate your farm products? (400-character limit)

Project purpose

- Grant funds requested (minimum \$500, maximum \$5,000).
- Select one or more natural resource conservation concerns that you would address with this grant:
 - ☐ Soil and land improvement, includes practices such as:
 - Soil testing including for nutrients, biology, and contaminants
 - Urban farm composting facilities
 - Multi-species cover cropping
 - Specialty crop rotations
 - Reduced tillage practices

- Raised bed systems including soil and compost
- ☐ Water management, includes practices such as:
 - Micro irrigation systems
 - Mulching with natural materials
 - Rain barrels and rainwater management
- ☐ Plant and animal health, includes practices such as:
 - Pollinator mixes for plant cover
 - Perennial vegetation including field borders
 - Conservation-minded weed treatment
 - Low tunnel systems
 - Urban forestry
 - Invasive species and pest control
 - Wildlife habitat cultivation
- ☐ Air quality improvement or greenhouse gas reduction
- ☐ Other, please explain.
- Explain the conservation practices that you would implement for your urban farm with the grant funds. Give a detailed explanation of the work that these funds would enable and how that fits with the goals for your urban farm. Keep in mind that these funds are specifically intended for urban farmers to implement practices with conservation outcomes. (1,200-character limit)

Impact on urban farm

- Explain how these conservation practices can provide a “sustained and significant” impact for the future of your urban farm. Sustained means for more than one year and significant means a meaningful improvement. If possible, give one or more measurable impacts these conservation practices will result in for your urban farm. Examples of measurable impacts include labor hours/staff time saved with improved efficiency, water usage reduction, reduction in water runoff, saving money, or other type of quantified change. (1,200-character limit)
- Describe the sustainable or conservation-minded farming practices that occurred at this urban farm in the past. (800-character limit)

Priority audience

Using this Distressed Communities Index [map tool](#), answer the following:

- Is your urban farm’s address located in a distressed or at-risk community? Yes/No
- Is any location where you sell or donate your farm products located in a distressed or at-risk community? Yes/No
 - If yes, list name and street address where you sell or donate your farm products.

Work plan

- Expected start date for using these funds. (No earlier than March 2026)
- Expected end date for completing use of the funds. (No later than January 2027)

- Use the work plan table to explain the steps needed to carry out the conservation practices described in your project’s purpose. Include specific dates by which each step would ideally be completed. (10 rows available; example below)

Timeframe	Description of task or action	Responsible party
April 2026	Order micro irrigation equipment	Farm manager
May 2026	Install micro irrigation equipment	Farm manager

Budget

- Complete a budget table detailing all expenses that will be paid for by the grant funds. The budget table should reflect the total grant funds requested. (15 rows available; example below)

Item	Quantity	Cost per item	Total amount	Source of estimate
Drip irrigation kit, 1000’	5	\$198	\$990	ABC Garden Supplies
Digital hose end timer	5	\$52	\$260	ABC Garden Supplies

Budget narrative

- Explain why each expense listed in the budget table is necessary for your proposed conservation practices. This information can be written into the application text box, and you may also upload an attachment. (1,200-character limit)
- Describe the necessity for grant funding to complete this project. Where applicable, note what other funds and resources besides this grant will be used. (500-character limit)
- Have you previously applied for any grant(s) from any source for a similar purpose? (Yes/No)
 - If yes, briefly describe your previous grant(s) including funding source, grant purpose, date, and amount awarded.

Appendix: Eligible urban areas and tribal lands

City	County
Albert Lea	Freeborn
Albertville	Wright
Alexandria	Douglas
Andover	Anoka
Anoka	Anoka
Apple Valley	Dakota
Arden Hills	Ramsey
Austin	Mower
Baldwin (township)	Sherburne
Baxter	Crow Wing
Becker (township)	Sherburne
Belle Plaine	Scott
Bemidji	Beltrami
Big Lake	Sherburne
Big Lake (township)	Sherburne
Blaine	Anoka
Bloomington	Hennepin
Brainerd	Crow Wing
Brooklyn Center	Hennepin
Brooklyn Park	Hennepin
Buffalo	Wright
Burnsville	Dakota
Byron	Olmsted
Cambridge	Isanti
Carver	Carver
Champlin	Hennepin
Chanhassen	Carver
Chaska	Carver
Chisago City	Chisago
Circle Pines	Anoka
Cloquet	Carlton
Columbia Heights	Anoka
Coon Rapids	Anoka
Corcoran	Hennepin
Cottage Grove	Washington
Credit River (township)	Scott
Crookston	Polk
Crystal	Hennepin
Dayton	Hennepin
Delano	Wright
Detroit Lakes	Becker
Duluth	St. Louis
Eagan	Dakota

City	County
East Bethel	Anoka
East Grand Forks	Polk
Eden Prairie	Hennepin
Edina	Hennepin
Elk River	Sherburne
Fairmont	Martin
Falcon Heights	Ramsey
Faribault	Rice
Farmington	Dakota
Fergus Falls	Otter Tail
Forest Lake	Washington
Fridley	Anoka
Glencoe	McLeod
Golden Valley	Hennepin
Grand Rapids	Itasca
Ham Lake	Anoka
Hastings	Dakota
Hermantown	St. Louis
Hibbing	St. Louis
Hopkins	Hennepin
Hugo	Washington
Hutchinson	McLeod
International Falls	Koochiching
Inver Grove Heights	Dakota
Isanti	Isanti
Jordan	Scott
Kasson	Dodge
La Crescent	Houston
Lake City	Goodhue, Wabasha
Lake Elmo	Washington
Lakeville	Dakota
Lino Lakes	Anoka
Linwood (township)	Anoka
Litchfield	Meeker
Little Canada	Ramsey
Little Falls	Morrison
Livonia (township)	Sherburne
Mahtomedi	Washington
Mankato	Blue Earth
Maple Grove	Hennepin
Maplewood	Ramsey
Marshall	Lyon
Medina	Hennepin

City	County
Mendota Heights	Dakota
Minneapolis	Hennepin
Minnetonka	Hennepin
Minnetrista	Hennepin
Montevideo	Chippewa
Monticello	Wright
Moorhead	Clay
Morris	Stevens
Mound	Hennepin
Mounds View	Ramsey
New Brighton	Ramsey
New Hope	Hennepin
New Prague	Le Sueur, Scott
New Ulm	Brown
North Branch	Chisago
North Mankato	Nicollet
North Oaks	Ramsey
North St. Paul	Ramsey
Northfield	Rice
Oak Grove	Anoka
Oakdale	Washington
Orono	Hennepin
Otsego	Wright
Owatonna	Steele
Plymouth	Hennepin
Prior Lake	Scott
Ramsey	Anoka
Red Wing	Goodhue
Redwood Falls	Redwood
Richfield	Hennepin
Robbinsdale	Hennepin
Rochester	Olmsted
Rogers	Hennepin
Rosemount	Dakota
Roseville	Ramsey
Sartell	Stearns
Sauk Rapids	Benton
Savage	Scott
Shakopee	Scott
Shoreview	Ramsey
Shorewood	Hennepin
South St. Paul	Dakota
Spring Lake Park	Anoka
St. Anthony	Hennepin
St. Cloud	Benton, Sherburne, Stearns

City	County
St. Francis	Anoka
St. Joseph	Stearns
St. Louis Park	Hennepin
St. Michael	Wright
St. Paul	Ramsey
St. Paul Park	Washington
St. Peter	Nicollet
Stewartville	Olmsted
Stillwater	Washington
Thief River Falls	Pennington
Thomson (township)	Carlton
Vadnais Heights	Ramsey
Victoria	Carver
Virginia	St. Louis
Waconia	Carver
Waite Park	Stearns
Waseca	Waseca
West St. Paul	Dakota
White Bear Lake	Ramsey
White Bear (township)	Ramsey
Willmar	Kandiyohi
Winona	Winona
Woodbury	Washington
Worthington	Nobles
Wyoming	Chisago
Zimmerman	Sherburne

Anishinaabe Reservations

Bois Forte Reservation

Fond du Lac Reservation

Grand Portage Reservation

Leech Lake Reservation

Mille Lacs Reservation

Red Lake Reservation

White Earth Reservation

Dakota Communities

Lower Sioux Indian Community

Prairie Island Indian Community

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

Upper Sioux Community