

RESOURCE GUIDE FOR LIMITED- RESOURCE FARMERS



Jo Gravely

A guide to organizations, agencies, programs and other services that help farmers in North Carolina

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THE
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Resource Guide Overview

Why was this guide created?

This resource guide provides information to limited-resource farmers, specifically in North Carolina, about the services currently available to them through government agencies, community-based organizations, universities and federal programs. Useful information and services for farmers are present in North Carolina, but there is a need for this information to be:

- In a centralized location
- Written to ensure access and understanding

We understand that time is precious to producers, so we hope this resource guide can provide clarity and an organized starting point to learn more about services to help you.

In this resource guide you will find a listing of services such as technical assistance, business planning, marketing assistance, legal assistance, educational resources, networking opportunities, and information about available grants and loans. A brief overview of each service provider and their contact information is included.

Note:

Services and programs included in this guide are not a complete listing of all offerings provided by these organizations. The programs and services included in the guide are those that may be particularly beneficial to limited-resource farmers.

What is a “limited-resource” producer?

The term “limited-resource farmer, rancher or forester” is defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the following:

1. A person with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than \$163,200 (for Fiscal Year 2012) in each of the previous two years.

AND

2. A person with a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years. (*According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the national poverty level for a family of four in 2012 is \$28,820.*)

Limited-resource producers, as described by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Resources Conservation Service, may also have one of the following characteristics as well:

- Lack of access to capital, labor or equipment.
- Farm or ranch size is significantly smaller than average size.
- Social, cultural, customs or language barriers, minimal awareness of USDA programs, limited management skills, the level of formal education is below the county average or undereducated, and are less likely to take business risks and adopt new technology.

Overview of Agriculture in North Carolina






The agricultural industry in North Carolina, including food, fiber and forestry, can be described by the following characteristics:¹

- Accounts for 18% of the State's income
- Employs over 17% of the work force
- Contributes \$ 70 billion annually to the State's economy
- Consists of over 52,400 farmers in North Carolina, growing over 80 different commodities
- Is one of the most diversified agriculture states in the Nation
- Ranks second in Christmas tree cash receipts
- Ranks second in the production of hogs and turkeys
- Produces more sweet potatoes and tobacco than any other state
- Ranks seventh nationally in farm profits with a net farm income of \$3.3 billion
- Averages a net income over \$63,000 per farm

¹ This information is directly sourced from North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Statistics Division, NC Agriculture Overview. <http://www.ncagr.gov/stats/general/overview.htm>

How is this guide organized?

This resource guide is divided into six main sections as explained below.

Icon	Section Title	Description of section content
	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	Instruction on new farming techniques; crop, livestock and forestry assistance
	BUSINESS, LEGAL & MARKETING ASSISTANCE	Making a business plan, marketing your agricultural products and crops, filing a lawsuit, preparing a will, farm advocacy and assistance
	NETWORKING & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	Networking opportunities to meet buyers, distributors, etc.; farm tours, conferences, educational resources such as reading materials and workbooks
	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	Information on cost-share programs, grants, loans and federal programs
	OTHER	Services and programs that focus on: serving farmers with disabilities, resolving conflicts between individuals and USDA, giving access to incubator farms, providing help to cooperatives

How do I best use this guide?

- Turn to one of the sections that interests you (*Technical Assistance, Business, Legal & Marketing, Networking & Learning, Financial, Other*)
- Each page in a section includes the following information:
 - ✓ Name of organization/ agency/ program
 - ✓ Who to contact
 - ✓ Fees
 - ✓ Geographic service area
 - ✓ Brief overview
 - ✓ Type of service provided
- In the financial assistance section, some grant applications are also included. Look at these applications to see the criteria, questions asked and information needed in order to complete the application.
- Refer to the appendix to view a glossary of terms, a list of kitchen incubators in NC, or a list of other helpful websites and resources.

Please direct your feedback to:

If you are a farmer and you have any comments or questions about this resource guide, please direct them to Monica McCann, Resourceful Communities Associate Director, at email address mmccann@conservationfund.org or call (919) 951-0110.

Your feedback is greatly appreciated as it will help in the development of future resource guides.

If you are an agency, organization, or professional in the agricultural field or related field, and you have comments or questions about the resource guide, please direct them to Monica McCann, Resourceful Communities Associate Director, at email address mmccann@conservationfund.org or call (919) 951-0110.

Additionally, if you access a service that you found due to this resource guide, please let the service provider know.

Where else can I find this resource guide?

This guide is available in printed format and online. A printable downloadable format (pdf) version of this document can be found online at www.resourcefulcommunities.org.

Who created this guide?

This resource guide was researched, written and compiled by Briana Steele, Food and Farm Resource Intern, at The Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities Program. Please read on to learn more about this organization.

The Conservation Fund

The Conservation Fund (the Fund), established in 1985, is a national nonprofit with a unique dual mission of environmental protection and economic development. Through a variety of strategies, the Fund utilizes innovative measures to protect working lands and waterways. The Fund has protected more than 7 million acres across the U.S. For more information, please visit www.conservationfund.org.

Resourceful Communities, a specialized program of The Conservation Fund

Resourceful Communities serves a network of 150 “resource groups” and 250+ grassroots groups working to implement “triple bottom line” efforts that result in environmental, social and economic benefits for the most economically- and socially-distressed communities across North Carolina. Our approach is unique: We work directly with communities and follow their lead. We provide a range of services, including direct small grant investments for community based efforts; organizational training through workshops and free-of-charge, on-site technical assistance; opportunities to develop peer-to-peer connections; and access to resources through facilitated introductions. For more information, visit www.resourcefulcommunities.org.

Copying and distribution permissions

With acknowledgement of The Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities Program, everyone is permitted to print, download, distribute and make copies of this resource guide.

Organizations and agencies featured in this guide:

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)

Black Family Land Trust (BFLT)

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA)

Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC)

Eastern Carolina Organics (ECO)

Farm Credits of NC

Farm Hand Foods

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

Foothills Connect Business and Technology Center

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)

Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP)

Minority Landowner Magazine

Mountain BizWorks

Mountain Valleys Resources Conservation and Development

National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service

Natural Capital Investment Fund (NCIF)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

NC AgrAbility

NC Agricultural Finance Authority

NC Agricultural Mediation Program (NCAMP)

NC Choices

NC Coalition of Farm and Rural Families

NC Cooperative Extension

NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

NC Specialty Crops Program

Operation Spring Plant

Piedmont Grown

Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI)

Rural Empowerment Association for Community Help (REACH)

ShadeFund

Slow Money NC

Small Business and Technology Development Center

Southeastern African American Farmers Organic Network (SAAFON)

Southeastern NC Food Systems Program or Feast Down East

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG)

The Support Center

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)

USDA Rural Development

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Western NC Agricultural Options Program

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



This section covers technical assistance available to producers.

This section includes information about:

- **Instruction on new farming techniques; crop, livestock and forestry assistance**
- **Transitioning to organic production**
- **On-site farm consultations**

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA)

www.carolinafarmstewards.org

Contact Information:

Phone: (919) 542-2402

Email: info@carolinafarmstewards.org

Geographic Service Area:

North Carolina and South Carolina

Fees:

An introductory year membership costs \$25 and they have less expensive membership rates available for those with limited incomes. A member of CFSA gains access to all of their resources.

Description of organization:

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) helps people in the Carolinas grow and eat local, organic foods by advocating for fair farm and food policies, building the systems that sustainable family farms need to thrive, and educating and organizing communities about organic farming.

Programs and Services Offered:

Technical Assistance

CFSA offers its farm members technical assistance in transitioning to organic practices.



NC Choices, a program of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

www.cefs.ncsu.edu

www.ncchoices.com

Contact Person:

Casey McKissick, Project Director

Phone: (828) 216-2966

Email: casey@ncchoices.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

There is no fee for services.

Description of organization:

The NC Choices program focuses on and promotes the local meat supply chain in NC, from raising the animals on the farm to the steps that occur after the animals leave the farm gate.

CEFS focuses on sustainable agriculture research, education and outreach. They develop and promote food and farming systems that protect the environment, strengthen local economies and provide economic opportunities in NC and beyond.

Programs and Services Offered:

Technical Assistance

Production, processing, marketing and other technical assistance provided to farmers and meat processors. If you have questions, you can email Casey McKissick at casey@ncchoices.com or call him directly at (828) 216-2966.

List your farm or processing facility on the NC Choices Website by creating a profile. Through the creation of a free profile, your farm or processor will be added to an interactive map so that people can locate you and your services. A profile request form can be downloaded from this site: www.ncchoices.com/have-your-farm-or-processing-facility-listed-on-nc-choices. Submit website requests to Sarah Blacklin at sarah@ncchoices.com.



Farmhand Foods

www.pastureraisedinncc.com

Contact Person(s):

Tina Prevatte, Co-Founder and CEO

Phone: (919) 265- 4357, Email: tina@farmhandfoods.com

Jennifer Curtis, Co-Founder and COO

Phone: (919) 306-4008, Email: Jennifer@farmhandfoods.com

Drew Brown, Sales and Distribution Manager

Phone: (919) 599-6659, Email: drew@farmhandfoods.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide; Preference is given to farms in NC, but they also work with eligible producers in adjacent states (Virginia, Tennessee and South Carolina) if they are within a viable distance to cooperating processors.

Fees:

There are no fees for services.

Description of Company:

Farmhand Foods is a branded meat company that connects North Carolina's pasture-based livestock producers with local food lovers, restaurants, and retailers. They source pork and beef from a network of remarkable farmers who comply with their production protocols, including raising their animals humanely, on pasture, without feeding antibiotics or animal by-products, or using added hormones. They purchase live animals direct from producers in their network and do the legwork necessary to get a consistent selection of quality local meats into local markets.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance

Farmhand Foods provides the following types of technical assistance to producers in its network:

- ✓ Referrals to and on-site visits with pasture management production specialists
- ✓ Grant writing



Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

www.federationsoutherncoop.com

Contact Person:

Cornelius Blanding, Marketing Director

Phone: (404) 765-0991

Geographic Service Area:

Ten states in the southeast with a concentration in Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Louisiana and Georgia.

Fees:

Annual membership fee of \$250.00 for cooperatives and \$25.00 for individuals

Description of Organization:

The Federation has maintained a membership of low-income grassroots people, organized into cooperatives and credit unions to make quantitative and qualitative changes in their lives and communities. Currently, the Federation's membership includes over 70 active cooperatives, credit unions, associations and community groups, serving more than 20,000 families.

They work with handicraft producers, farmers, landowners, fishermen, consumers, small businesses, people who need housing and other rural residents interested in organizing cooperatives and land-based economic development initiatives as pathways to achieving social and economic justice.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance

Agriculture related technical assistance and other services are provided one-on-one, and at workshops and conferences. They also produce a series of educational materials on land related issues, cooperative development and agriculture.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Foothills Connect Business and Technology Center

Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative

www.foothillsconnect.com

Contact Person:

Travis Edgerton, Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative Manager

Phone: (828) 429-2497, Email: ffmmanager@foothillsconnect.com

Geographic Service Area:

Rutherford County, NC and the surrounding region

Fees:

There is no fee for a farmer to become a part of this program, but a fee of 20% of sales is charged to support the program.

Description of organization and program:

Foothills Connect was started to combat the severe unemployment that occurred in the area after the decline of the textile industry in NC. Foothills Connect offers entrepreneurial assistance to small businesses and has recently expanded to offer internet connection services and starting programs such as the Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative.

The Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative is helping foothills community farmers stay viable in today's market by helping growers access the best markets to ensure more money for their labor and investments.

Services Offered:

Technical Assistance

Staff members, such as Travis Edgerton, are willing to discuss new ideas and production methods with farmers. Mr. Edgerton can be reached at (828) 429-2497.

Marketing Assistance

Through the Farmer's Fresh Market, farmers sell their products online as a way to connect themselves with restaurants and other consumers. Any farmer in this region of NC (near Rutherford County) can join and sell online with this program. The Farmer's Fresh Market takes 20% of all sales, but farmers control the selling price, quantity, and type of product and when it is available to customers. This program has been nationally recognized and it operates with farmers mostly located within 100 miles of this North Carolina region.

To get involved with this program, register on their website, www.foothillsconnect.com and/or call their office at (828) 288-1650.



Minority Landowner Magazine

www.minoritylandowner.com

Contact Person(s):

Victor L. Harris, Publisher and Editor

Phone: (919) 215-1632

Email: ccpublishing@earthlink.net

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Fees:

An annual subscription to *Minority Landowner* costs \$14. There is no cost to receive assistance from the Farm Turnaround Team.

Description of Company:

Minority Landowner Magazine has a national audience of minority, small and limited resource farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. The magazine provides information to help improve productivity on managed land operations to increase opportunities to become profitable, thereby strengthening landownership retention. The magazine also holds an annual conference and has created the NC Farm Turnaround Team, designed to strengthen and save family farm enterprises.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance, Financial Management, Business Planning, Marketing Assistance, Succession Planning

NC Farm Turnaround Team

The NC Farm Turnaround Team will meet at the kitchen table with family farm enterprises to help identify and correct deficiencies and inefficiencies in their land management operation, and provide short-term and long-term strategies for turning things around. The NC Farm Turnaround Team creates an environment where the farmer receives a comprehensive plan for managing the farm. It is a coalition of state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities, and private individuals with expertise in financial management, technical assistance, marketing and succession planning. The application process for this assistance is continuous.

An intake form to apply for assistance from the NC Farm Turnaround Team is attached.



North Carolina
Farm Turnaround Team
Request for Service

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone () _____ Cell or Work Phone () _____

Email _____ Website _____

What county is your farm, ranch or forest located? What are the approximate total acres?

County _____ Acres _____

What are some of the things you raise or grow on your farm? Check all that apply.

Row crops _____ Cattle _____ Poultry _____ Hogs/pigs _____ Timber _____

Fruits/Orchards _____ Vegetables _____ Aquaculture _____ Other _____

The Farm Turnaround Team works with family farm enterprises to help identify and correct deficiencies and inefficiencies in their land management operation in the areas of financial management, technical assistance, marketing and succession planning. Assistance will be provided in all four of these areas. Please rank them in priority order of 1 through 4 based on what you feel are your most pressing needs. A rank of 1 indicates your highest priority.

_____ Financial Management _____ Technical Assistance
_____ Marketing _____ Succession Planning

How soon would you like to work with the Farm Turnaround Team?

_____ Within 1-3 months _____ Within 3-6 months _____ Within 6-12 months

General Information

There is no cost to utilize the services of the Farm Turnaround Team. Confidentiality is important to us, and we will strive to maintain confidentiality in our relationship with farmers who request our assistance.

For questions or assistance in completing this form call (919) 215-1632. Return the completed form by email to cpublishing@earthlink.net or mail to:

North Carolina Farm Turnaround Team
Minority Landowner Magazine
P.O. Box 97033
Raleigh, NC 27624

Signature

Date

North Carolina Cooperative Extension

www.ces.ncsu.edu

How to access Cooperative Extension:

- 1) Find your local county center at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/local-county-center/> or call (919) 515- 2813.
- 2) If you cannot find someone in your county who can assist with your topic of concern, go to the Cooperative Extension site at NC A&T <http://www.ncat.edu/academics/saes/cooperative-extension/index.html>, or call their main number (336) 334-7956.

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of organization:

North Carolina Cooperative Extension has been helping limited-resource farmers throughout their almost 100 year history by providing technical information, training and assistance in sustainable farming practices. They have several key Extension programs aligned for this population both at NC State and NC A&T SU. In NC, Cooperative Extension is a partnership between the two land grant universities and County governments to help bring the resources of the universities to local areas.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension's educational programs provide farmers and agribusinesses with the research-based knowledge they need to produce high-quality crops and livestock in ways that benefit the economy and the environment now and for future generations.

Programs and Services Offered:

In the category of **Agriculture and Food**, Cooperative Extension has programs that cover these areas:

Animal Agriculture: Helps growers use the latest research to improve production and manage animal waste in environmentally sound ways.

Aquaculture: Focuses on providing growers the information they need to continue growing this industry.

Commercial Horticulture, Nursery and Turf: Helps growers implement research-based production practices, investigate high-value alternative crops, develop sound business plans and explore new marketing options to ensure continued farm profitability, environmental stewardship and quality of life.



Farm Health and Safety: Through training programs, publications in English and Spanish, and more, North Carolina Cooperative Extension provides farm and forestry workers, pesticide applicators and their families with the knowledge to improve health and safety.

Field Crops: Helps growers maintain profitability by providing the latest research-based information and recommendations on the best varieties and production practices for the state's conditions. Extension also helps growers comply with changing regulations, investigate new higher-value opportunities, develop solid business plans and explore marketing options.

Food Safety and Processing: Helps reduce sources of foodborne illness, from the farm gate to the consumer's plate, help food entrepreneurs launch successful businesses and provide processors with information and new technologies to enhance product quality and profitability while meeting State and Federal regulations.

Local Foods: Cooperative Extension is the face of your county's local foods initiative, helping to promote North Carolina's 10% Campaign and to guide efforts to develop the local food economy.

Pest Management: Helps homeowners, commercial pesticide applicators and others prevent and control pest damage in ways that are economical, environmentally sound and safe for human health.

Specialty Crops: Teaches growers how to produce and sell crops ranging from exotic purple potatoes to lettuce, specialty melons and medicinal herbs. Growers who produce these high-value crops are able to diversify and develop new income sources.

Cooperative Extension also works on **Forest Resources**.

Forest Resources: North Carolina Cooperative Extension works in partnership with other agencies to provide research-based educational programs that help young people, landowners, foresters, natural resource managers and others understand and make wise use of valuable forest resources.



Jeanine Davis, Ph.D., Specialist (formerly under the NC Specialty Crops Program)

Associate Professor and Extension Specialist
Department of Horticultural Science, NC State University

Contact Information:

Phone: (828) 684-3562

Email: Jeanine_Davis@ncsu.edu

Websites: <http://ncherb.org> <http://ncspecialtycrops.org> <http://ncorganic.org>

Blog: <http://ncalternativecropsandorganics.blogspot.com>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/JeanineNCSU>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/people/Jeanine-Davis/1442912228

Description of organization:

Jeanine Davis is an extension specialist and researcher. She conducts research on potential new crops, tries to optimize organic production systems for vegetables and herbs, and works to make conventional vegetable production more sustainable. She also gives information to farmers on farming herbs, organic vegetables, hops, truffles, and other crops through workshops, conferences, trainings for extension agents, websites, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter. She answers hundreds of emails and phone calls and does direct one-on-one visits. She also supports the county agents so they can help more farmers.

Programs and Services Offered:

Technical Assistance

Provides information and answers questions in regards to farming and growing crops and plants by way of:

- ✓ Her websites, social networking, email, and phone calls



Agronomic Services Division, North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/

Contact Person(s):

Collen M. Hudack-Wise, Director

Phone: (919) 733-2655

Email: Colleen.Hudack@ncagr.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

Five types of tests (for soil, water, compost, etc.) are offered for minimal or no fee.

Description of Agronomics Services Division:

The Agronomic Division provides science-based, land management information to all who need it—from large-scale farmers to homeowners and weekend gardeners. This division performs sample analysis of plant tissue, soil, groundwater, surface water, waste/compost and more in their testing lab that makes results available online. Rather than relying on guesswork or trial and error, growers can make informed decisions about fertilization, liming, pest control, irrigation, waste management and related matters.

Services and Programs Offered:

Technical Assistance

Regional agronomists (RAs) provide on-site consulting services to help growers troubleshoot nutrient and nematode problems, establish appropriate agronomic sampling programs and implement management recommendations in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

To find your regional agronomist, visit www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/rahome.htm.

Agrotips guide you through the tests that are needed and what steps should be taken on a grower's land during different months of the year. Find this online at <http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/agrotips.htm>.



Southeastern African-American Farmers Organic Network

www.saaфон.org

Contact Person:

Cynthia Hayes, Project Coordinator

Phone: (912) 495-0591

Email: chayes@saaфон.org

Geographic Service Area:

Currently SAAFON farmers are located in six states and the US Virgin Islands: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and St. Croix, Virgin Islands.

Fees:

Farmer participation in their network is free.

Description of Organization:

The Southeastern African-American Farmers Organic Network (SAAFON), a project of the SoGreen Network, Inc., is a network of farmers using sustainable growing methods. Small and limited resource farmers that are either certified organic or growing organically participate. SAAFON accepts 10 new farmer members per year. SAAFON has been recognized as the only African-American farmers' organization/network of its type in the United States.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance & Educational Opportunities

SAAFON's three-and-a-half day annual organic training session helps farmers understand the principles of organic growing and develop a farm plan. Participants walk through the USDA organic certification application. SAAFON supports and advocates for the members of the Network to attend regional and national conferences and workshops to provide the technical assistance necessary for them to stay in compliance with organic certification.



BUSINESS, LEGAL & MARKETING ASSISTANCE



This section covers business assistance, legal assistance and marketing assistance available to producers.

This section includes information about:

- **Assistance in creating business plans**
- **Marketing your agricultural products and crops**
- **Filing a lawsuit**
- **Preparing a will and other estate planning concerns**
- **Farm advocacy and assistance**

ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project)

www.asapconnections.org

Contact Person:

Maggie Cramer, Communications Manager

Phone: (828) 236-1282 ext. 113

Email: maggie@asapconnections.org

Geographic Service Area:

Western NC and the Southern Appalachian Mountains

Fees:

Fees associated with farm tours, conferences and farm listing in directories

Description of Organization:

ASAP's mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

They work to accomplish their mission by providing marketing assistance and training to area farmers; connecting area chefs and foodservice buyers at schools and hospitals with the farmers who best suit their needs; running a Farm to School Program called Growing Minds; and leading a multi-faceted Local Food Campaign and Appalachian Grown branding and certification program. Connect through their community website at fromhere.org.

Programs and Services Offered:

Business Planning

- **Beginning Farmer Resources:** ASAP's Beginning Farmer Project is a collaboration with Mountain BizWorks, Organic Growers School, and other partners. Together, they work to foster the success of new, beginning, and growing farms in the Southern Appalachians. From 2010 to 2013, they aim to make the path to farm success clearer, easier to find, and more well-worn. Find resources on a variety of topics—from access to capital to step-by-step business planning, including QuickBooks support and training—as well as contact information for all partners at www.asapconnections.org/beginning_farmers.html.
- **Farm Assessments:** ASAP offers one-on-one farm assessments that gauge farm capacities, plans, and desires in relation to market opportunities. Assessments direct farmers to and prepare them for suitable local market outlets.



Marketing Assistance

- **Appalachian Grown Certification:** Appalachian Grown helps your farm stand out in the marketplace as the right choice for folks interested in knowing where their food comes from. ASAP's Appalachian Grown program certifies family farms in Western North Carolina and the Southern Appalachians and partners with the businesses that support these farms. Used with agricultural products from certified farms, the Appalachian Grown logo helps consumers, retailers, and wholesalers better distinguish and identify local foods.

For more information about the program and its affordable marketing/promotional materials, and to download a certification form, visit

www.asapconnections.org/aboutappalachiangrown.html.

- **Business of Farming Conference:** Held annually the last Saturday in February, ASAP's conference features more than a dozen workshops by fellow farmers, buyers, and other experts. The conference lunch period includes opportunities to meet buyers and discuss potential matches between farmers' products and buyers' needs.
- **Local Food Guide:** Your farm can be listed in ASAP's *Local Food Guide*, a free print and online directory of the area's family farms, farmers tailgate markets, and businesses that use local agricultural products. The guide is created annually, with 100,000 copies distributed to more than 400 regional locations each year. Farm listings are affordable; advertisements are also available. Data is collected each winter, and the guide is printed each spring. Find their online *Local Food Guide* at appalachiangrown.org
- **Trip Planner:** ASAP's online *Local Food Guide* includes an interactive Trip Planner for locals and visitors planning a food and farm adventure in the Southern Appalachians. Farms listed in the *Local Food Guide* as accepting visitors are automatically included in the trip planner search. Find the planner at www.appalachiangrown.org/map.
- **The *Mixing Bowl*: Farm to Business Trade Directory:** ASAP's *Mixing Bowl* is a buyer's guide to the products that local farms offer and a farmer's guide to the products that wholesale buyers are seeking. Data is collected each winter, and the directory is published each spring/summer. Advertisement placements are available.
- **Farm Tour:** ASAP's farm tour is an opportunity for you to open your farm to the public, educating them about your crops/offerings and growing practices and to connect with customers both old and new. The two-day event occurs annually each fall; applications for the tour are accepted late winter/early spring. Find more information at www.asapconnections.org/farmtour.html.



Marketing Assistance and Financial Assistance

- **Appalachian Grown Cost-Share:** If you're an Appalachian Grown certified farmer in North Carolina, you can apply for matching funds from ASAP for your promotions and marketing materials. Funds can go toward advertisements in print, on the radio, or in other media; graphic design, product labeling, signs, and more. Funds are provided through the NC Tobacco Trust Fund and Golden LEAF Foundation. For more information and to apply, visit www.asapconnections.org/agmaterials.html or email costshare@asapconnections.org

The Appalachian Grown Cost Share Application is available in the grants & loans section of this guide.

To learn even more about ASAP's offerings and work in the region, visit asapconnections.org, or call 828-236-1282.



Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

Bringing New Farmers to the Table, www.ncnewfarmers.org

Other Affiliated Organizations:

A collaboration of the National Center for Appropriate Technology, Carolina Farm Stewardship Association, The Branan Law Firm, PLLC, and NC Cooperative Extension.

Contact Person(s):

Joanna Lelekacs, State Coordinator, Incubator Farm Project

Phone: (919) 244-5269

Email: Joanna_Lelekacs@ncsu.edu

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

No fee for legal education services. Fees associated with conferences, farm tours, etc.

Description of program:

Bringing New Farmers to the Table aims to increase the number of new or transitioning farmers in NC.

Services Offered:

Legal Education Services

An attorney is available to answer questions regarding:

- ✓ Business planning
- ✓ Estate planning
- ✓ Getting started
- ✓ Farm agreements
- ✓ Land
- ✓ Legal risk management

The attorney also has a workbook called “Planning the Future of Your Farm: A Workbook on Farm Transfer Decisions”. It is available for reference at

<http://www.brananlaw.com/workbooks-and-workshops/>

You may contact the attorney, Andrew Branan with The Branan Law Firm, PLLC, who is providing these services at abranan@gmail.com.



NC Choices, a program of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

www.cefs.ncsu.edu

www.ncchoices.com

Contact Person:

Casey McKissick, Project Director

Phone: (828) 216-2966

Email: casey@ncchoices.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

There is no fee for services.

Description of organization:

The NC Choices program focuses on and promotes the local meat supply chain in NC, from raising the animals on the farm to the steps that occur after the animals leave the farm gate.

CEFS focuses on sustainable agriculture research, education and outreach. They develop and promote food and farming systems that protect the environment, strengthen local economies and provide economic opportunities in NC and beyond.

Programs and Services Offered:

Marketing Assistance

List your farm or processing facility on the NC Choices Website by creating a profile. Through the creation of a free profile, your farm or processor will be added to an interactive map so that people can locate you and your services. A profile request form can be downloaded from this site: www.ncchoices.com/have-your-farm-or-processing-facility-listed-on-nc-choices. Submit website requests to Sarah Blacklin at sarah@ncchoices.com.

A profile request form for producers and processors are also on following pages.





NC Choices Producer Profile Request

In order to be approved for a Farmer Profile listing on the new NC Choices website your farm must meet the following minimum requirements:

- 1) You raise and market livestock and/or poultry, with a principle focus on meat production.
- 2) Your farm and your animals are located within North Carolina or adjacent counties in TN, VA, SC, GA.
- 3) Meat that you sell to consumers or wholesale buyers is raised without the use of antibiotics or added synthetic hormones. And all feed is 100% free of animal byproducts.
- 4) You employ a production system designed to optimize animal health and welfare and conserve and protect natural resources. For example:
 - a. Swine -- deep-bedded hoop barn systems and/or outdoor pasture-based management.
 - b. Beef -- grass-based forage management systems.
 - c. Poultry – pasture-based and/or very low-density housing.
- 5) You and/or members of your family are directly involved in at least 75% of the daily operation of the farm.

Please complete the information below to be included or update your website listing on www.ncchoices.com. Be sure to include a digital photo of you and/or farm family (i.e., not just a scenic shot of your farm) as an attachment to the return email.

Farm Name: _____

Town, State and County the farm is located: _____

Products Offered: _____

Name of Owner/Operator: _____

Description:

Contact Information:

Address (if desired): _____

Phone Number (if desired) _____

Email Address (recommended) _____

Website _____

NC Choices Processor Profile Request

Business/ Facility Name: _____

Town, State and County the facility is located: _____

Level of Inspection (USDA, NCDA): _____ Species: _____

What types of Value Add Processing do you offer (ie. Smoked meats, ready to eat, etc.): _____

Name of Owner/Operator and/or Manager: _____

Description:

Contact Information:

Address (if desired): _____

Phone Number (if desired) _____

Email Address (recommended) _____

Website _____

Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC)

www.ctnc.org

Contact Person:

Melanie Allen, Conservation and Diversity Coordinator

Phone: (919) 828-4199, ext.21

Email: Melanie@ctnc.org

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees

There are no fees for services.

Description of organization:

Conservation Trust of North Carolina (CTNC) works to protect land and water through statewide conservation and cooperative work with land trusts and works to preserve North Carolina's natural resources as a legacy for future generations.

Programs and Services Offered:

Business Assistance

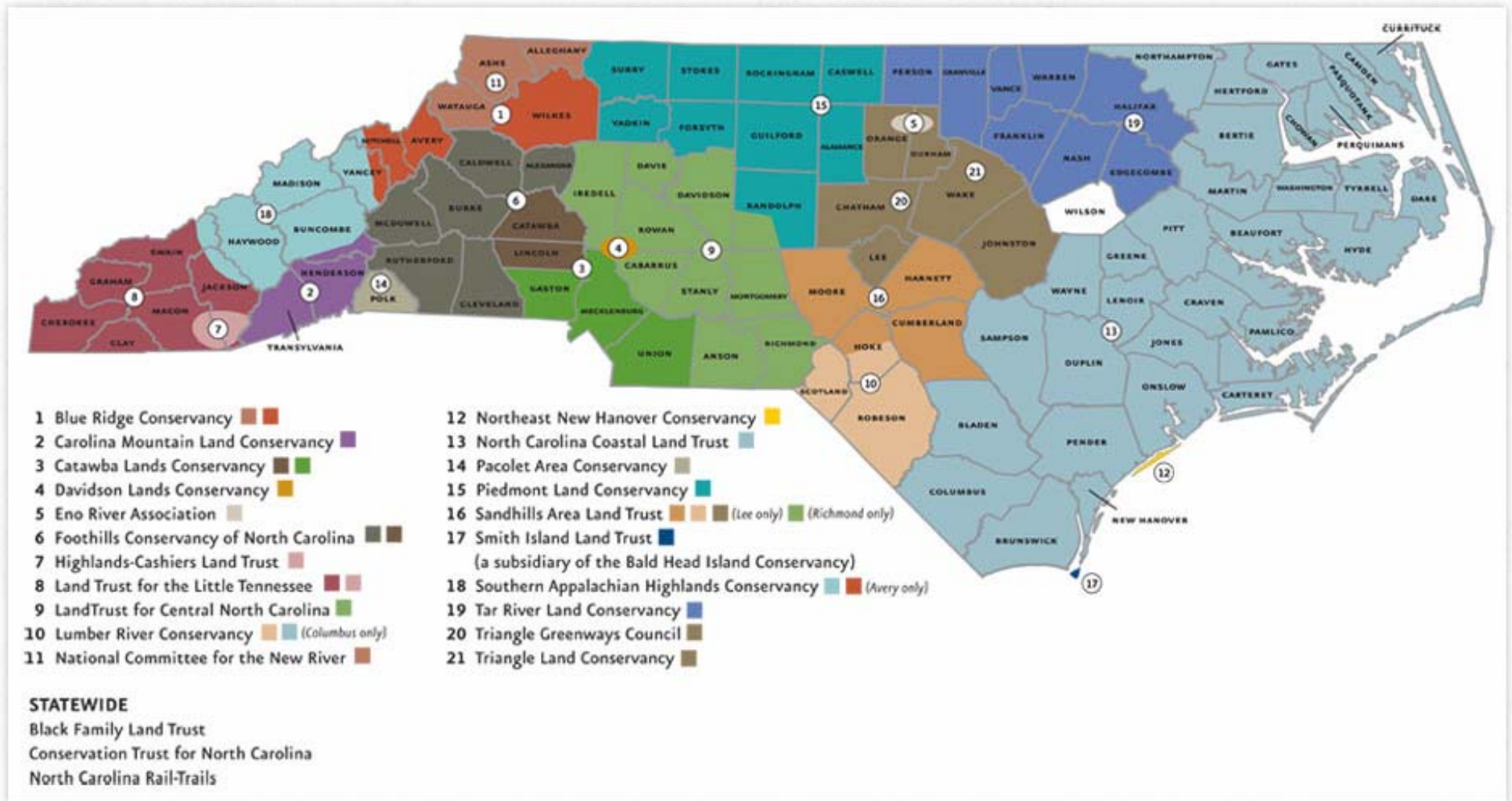
- **Estate Planning / Succession Planning:** Land trusts work with interested landowners to protect farms, forests, wildlife habitats and other natural areas. If you are a landowner interested in the conservation of family lands, conservation agreements, and other preservation options, you may contact your local land trust or CTNC.
- **Guide to Conservation Agreements (Easements):** In partnership with other North Carolina Land Trusts, CTNC has published a guide that explains voluntary conservation agreements titled "Voluntary Conservation Agreements: A guide for North Carolina Landowners".

To view the guide online, visit www.ctnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/CTR-019_VolConsBook_FINAL_2010.pdf

Or to obtain a printed version, contact your local land trust or email info@ctnc.org

- **Land Trust Directory:** To find a land trust that serves your area, visit www.ctnc.org/land-trusts/find-your-local-land-trust/ to download the directory or to see a listing online. The following page contains a reference map to help you locate the land trust that serves your area.





North Carolina's Local Land Trusts



Eastern Carolina Organics (ECO)

www.easterncarolinaorganics.com

Contact Person:

Trace Ramsey, Production Coordinator

Phone: (919) 542-3264

Email: trace@easterncarolinaorganics.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

There are no fees for services.

Description of organization:

ECO markets and distributes wholesale North Carolina organic farm produce to retailers, restaurants, buying clubs, and other wholesalers. ECO is farmer- and employee-owned, and 80% of their sales go back to the growers.

Programs and Services Offered:

Marketing Assistance

ECO enables participating organic growers to profitably sell their products and support efforts to improve production and packaging techniques.

ECO is always looking to speak with and possibly partner with new farms in their effort to build the local organic food movement. In particular, ECO is interested in building relations with Carolina growers who:

- ✓ Are certified organic or are willing to get certified
- ✓ Have experience in farming and can produce at least 1 acre of vegetables
- ✓ Have crop appropriate infrastructure, such as:
 - Computer/Internet access
 - Irrigation
 - Post-harvest washing, packing, and refrigeration
 - Transportation
 - Greenhouse

ECO growers also work closely with the Production Coordinator to set crop plans for the year, based on market demand and farm resources.

If you are interested in becoming an ECO Grower or want more information on their programs, visit www.easterncarolinaorganics.com or email Trace Ramsey, Production Coordinator at trace@easternnorganics.com



Farm Credits of North Carolina

AgCarolina Financial, www.agcarolina.com

Cape Fear Farm Credit, www.capefearfarmcredit.com

Carolina Farm Credit, www.carolinafarmcredit.com

Contact Information:

Linda Strickland, Senior Vice President – Marketing, AgCarolina Financial,

Phone: (919) 250-9500, ext. 214, Email: LStrickland@AgCarolina.com

Maggie Hamm, Marketing Manager, Carolina Farm Credit, Phone: 1-800-521-9952

Skipper Jones, Marketing Manager, Cape Fear Farm Credit, Phone: (910) 323-494

Geographic Service Area:

Carolina Farm Credit serves the western half of NC. Cape Fear Farm Credit serves Southeastern NC. AgCarolina Financial serves the Triangle and Northeastern NC.

Fees:

For the Ag Biz Planner Program, a grant of \$500 is awarded to each chosen participant to cover the cost of tuition. There is a \$100 deposit fee upon acceptance to the program, but if the program is completed in nine months, the deposit fee is returned.

Description of organization:

Farm Credits of NC branches provide reliable loans and other services to those in agriculture.

Programs and Services Offered:

Business Planning

Ag Biz Planner Program: An online financial and business planning course offered to young, beginning, small and minority farmers/farm families across NC. Participants should be current or former tobacco farmers or reside in tobacco communities. Each of the three farm credit agencies in NC hosts the program. In this program you will create a customized business plan that will be of benefit to you when you apply for loan programs.

There are ten online modules and you are given six months to complete the course.

Course topics include:

- ✓ Megatrends of Agriculture
- ✓ Understanding Lending Decisions
- ✓ Strategic Business Planning



- ✓ Farm Business Management Factors and Benchmarks
- ✓ Preparing for Your Lender
- ✓ Growth and Transition Management
- ✓ Constructing an Income Statement and Cash Flow Projection
- ✓ Personal Financial Management
- ✓ Constructing a Balance Sheet
- ✓ Communications, Ethics, and Professionalism

The deadline to apply to the program is September 1st. The program starts in October and ends in March. For more information about this Ag Biz Planner program visit www.agcarolina.com/YBSM.html.



Farmhand Foods

www.pastureraisedinncc.com

Contact Person(s):

Tina Prevatte, Co-Founder and CEO

Phone: (919) 265- 4357, Email: tina@farmhandfoods.com

Jennifer Curtis, Co-Founder and COO

Phone: (919) 306-4008, Email: Jennifer@farmhandfoods.com

Drew Brown, Sales and Distribution Manager

Phone: (919) 599-6659, Email: drew@farmhandfoods.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide; Preference is given to farms in NC, but they also work with eligible producers in adjacent states (Virginia, Tennessee and South Carolina) if they are within a viable distance to cooperating processors.

Fees:

There are no fees for services.

Description of Company:

Farmhand Foods is a branded meat company that connects North Carolina's pasture-based livestock producers with local food lovers, restaurants, and retailers. They source pork and beef from a network of remarkable farmers who comply with their production protocols, including raising their animals humanely, on pasture, without feeding antibiotics or animal by-products, or using added hormones. They purchase live animals direct from producers in their network and do the legwork necessary to get a consistent selection of quality local meats into local markets.

Program Services:

Marketing Assistance

Farmhand Foods buys animals from farmers and sells meat to restaurants and retailers, thus relieving farmers of the responsibility for marketing. They emphasize transparency and traceability so that their customers know exactly which farmer is supplying the product and understand their production practices. All farmers are profiled on their website and co-branding strategies are emphasized.

To connect with Farmhand Foods, read their production protocols at http://www.pastureraisedinncc.com/files/misc/FHF_protocols_FAQ.pdf.



If you are currently producing beef or pork according to these protocols or are interested in doing so, call Jennifer Curtis at (919) 306 -4008 or email her at Jennifer@farmhandfoods.com.

If you are interested in selling livestock through Farmhand Foods, call Jennifer Curtis at (919) 306-4008 to find out how.



Foothills Connect Business and Technology Center

Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative

www.foothillsconnect.com

Contact Person(s):

Travis Edgerton, Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative Manager

Phone: (828) 429-2497, Email: ffmmanager@foothillsconnect.com

Geographic Service Area:

Rutherford County, NC and the surrounding region

Fees:

There is no fee for a farmer to become a part of this program, but a fee of 20% of sales is charged to support the program.

Description of organization and program:

Foothills Connect was started to combat the severe unemployment that occurred in the area after the decline of the textile industry in NC. Foothills Connect offers entrepreneurial assistance to small businesses and has recently expanded to offer internet connection services and starting programs such as the Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative.

The Farmer's Fresh Market Initiative is helping foothills community farmers stay viable in today's market by helping growers access the best markets to ensure more money for their labor and investments.

Services Offered:

Technical Assistance

Staff members, such as Travis Edgerton, are willing to discuss new ideas and production methods with farmers. Mr. Edgerton can be reached at (828) 429-2497.

Marketing Assistance

Through the Farmer's Fresh Market, farmers sell their products online as a way to connect themselves with restaurants and other consumers. Any farmer in this region of NC (near Rutherford County) can join and sell online with this program. The Farmer's Fresh Market takes 20% of all sales, but farmers control the selling price, quantity, and type of product and when it is available to customers. This program has been nationally recognized and it operates with farmers mostly located within 100 miles of this NC region.

To get involved with this program, register on their website, www.foothillsconnect.com and/or call their office at (828) 288-1650



Land Loss Prevention Project

www.landloss.org

Contact Information:

Local Phone: (919) 682-5969

Toll Free Phone: 1-800-672-5839

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

There is no fee for LLPP's services, but landowners, farmers and individuals must meet income qualifications to obtain legal services.

Description of organization:

The Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP) was founded in 1982 by the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers to provide legal assistance to limited-resource farmers and landowners in North Carolina. The organization works in three main areas: litigation, public policy and promoting sustainable agriculture, and the environment.

Programs and Services Offered:

Business Planning and Legal Assistance

The Sustainable Development and Environment Unit helps family farmers and landowners explore sustainable agricultural alternatives and guides business development that is environmentally friendly and economically viable for rural communities.

LLPP works to increase limited-resource farmer participation in USDA programs and services and educate minority and women farmers on USDA legal claims processes.

- **Smart Growth Business Center:** Proactive legal services and education focused on risk management and sustainable business development. Services provided include direct legal assistance and education on business entity formation, contractual review, counseling concerning program availability and requirements, and addressing credit management.

Legal Assistance

- ✓ Foreclosure Prevention
- ✓ Debt Restructuring



- ✓ Estate and Transition Planning
 - Making sure landowners preserve their land ownership by drafting wills, payment of property taxes, and obtaining deeds and property tax records.
- ✓ Environmental Justice Issues
 - Advocating for and helping those dealing with landfill siting and hazardous waste issues.

For assistance, please call their toll free number at 1-800-672-5839.



Minority Landowner Magazine

www.minoritylandowner.com

Contact Person(s):

Victor L. Harris, Publisher and Editor

Phone: (919) 215-1632

Email: ccpublishing@earthlink.net

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Fees:

An annual subscription to *Minority Landowner* costs \$14. There is no cost to receive assistance from the NC Farm Turnaround Team.

Description of Company:

Minority Landowner Magazine has a national audience of minority, small and limited resource farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. The magazine provides information to help improve productivity on managed land operations to increase opportunities to become profitable, thereby strengthening landownership retention. The magazine also holds an annual conference and has created the NC Farm Turnaround Team, designed to strengthen and save family farm enterprises.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance, Financial Management, Business Planning, Marketing Assistance, Succession Planning

NC Farm Turnaround Team

The NC Farm Turnaround Team will meet at the kitchen table with family farm enterprises to help identify and correct deficiencies and inefficiencies in their land management operation, and provide short-term and long-term strategies for turning things around. The NC Farm Turnaround Team creates an environment where the farmer receives a comprehensive plan for managing the farm. It is a coalition of state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities, and private individuals with expertise in financial management, technical assistance, marketing and succession planning. The application process for this assistance is continuous.

An intake form to apply for assistance from the NC Farm Turnaround Team is attached.



North Carolina
Farm Turnaround Team
Request for Service

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone () _____ Cell or Work Phone () _____

Email _____ Website _____

What county is your farm, ranch or forest located? What are the approximate total acres?

County _____ Acres _____

What are some of the things you raise or grow on your farm? Check all that apply.

Row crops _____ Cattle _____ Poultry _____ Hogs/pigs _____ Timber _____

Fruits/Orchards _____ Vegetables _____ Aquaculture _____ Other _____

The Farm Turnaround Team works with family farm enterprises to help identify and correct deficiencies and inefficiencies in their land management operation in the areas of financial management, technical assistance, marketing and succession planning. Assistance will be provided in all four of these areas. Please rank them in priority order of 1 through 4 based on what you feel are your most pressing needs. A rank of 1 indicates your highest priority.

_____ Financial Management _____ Technical Assistance
_____ Marketing _____ Succession Planning

How soon would you like to work with the Farm Turnaround Team?

_____ Within 1-3 months _____ Within 3-6 months _____ Within 6-12 months

General Information

There is no cost to utilize the services of the Farm Turnaround Team. Confidentiality is important to us, and we will strive to maintain confidentiality in our relationship with farmers who request our assistance.

For questions or assistance in completing this form call (919) 215-1632. Return the completed form by email to cpublishing@earthlink.net or mail to:

North Carolina Farm Turnaround Team
Minority Landowner Magazine
P.O. Box 97033
Raleigh, NC 27624

Signature

Date

Mountain BizWorks

Food, Agriculture and Rural Enterprises of the Carolinas (FARE of the Carolinas)

www.mountainbizworks.org

Contact Person:

Jo Ann Miksa-Blackwell, Director

Phone: (828) 919-1000

Email: joann@mountainbizworks.org

Geographic Service Area:

Western NC

Fees:

8-week business training has a fee. Call JoAnn Miksa-Blackwell at (828) 919-1000 to find out more information about this.

Description of organization and program:

Mountain BizWorks is a nonprofit community development financial institution serving Western North Carolina. Through lending, consulting and training, Mountain BizWorks helps start and grow small businesses. They provide the tools and resources that businesses need for long-term success, helping them grow from pre-launch ideas to sustainable enterprises that create jobs – jobs that sustain families and support asset building.

Through FARE of the Carolinas, Mountain BizWorks provides a combination of loans, training and technical assistance to help start and grow agricultural ventures, including farms, food producers and distributors, value-added product producers, agri-businesses, and other rural enterprises.

Programs and Services Offered:

Business Technical Assistance

They offer one-on-one technical assistance to help agricultural entrepreneurs address specific business issues, such as: marketing specific lines of business; analyzing cash flow; forecasting profit and loss; identifying break-even points; navigating difficult industry issues; connecting to agricultural resources including other farmers and vendors; diversifying businesses; and getting products to market. Their technical assistance is provided by experienced business coaches, and at locations convenient for clients.

Business Training

They provide customized classroom training for agricultural entrepreneurs who seek to start or grow their businesses. These group classes address business-



planning, bookkeeping, marketing, and recordkeeping. Classes are designed to provide entrepreneurs with customized tools and formulas for building sustainable business operations and making sound business decisions. Experienced business coaches teach the classes, which are held throughout the year at various locations throughout western North Carolina.

To learn more about FARE of the Carolinas, or to inquire about loans, classes or technical assistance, call (828) 253-2834 or visit www.mountainbizworks.org.



Marketing Division, North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

www.ncagr.gov/markets/

Contact Person:

Tom Slade, Director

Phone: (919) 707-3100

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of Marketing Division:

The Marketing Division promotes the sale of North Carolina products, develops and expands markets, reports farm market prices on major commodities, and determines and certifies official grades of farm products. They administer the NC Egg Law and the Farm Products Marketing and Branding Law. They operate regional farmers markets in Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Lumberton and Raleigh.

Services and Programs Offered:

Marketing Assistance

North Carolina Farm Fresh: Certified Roadside Farm Market Program: The Certified Roadside Farm Market Program promotes North Carolina roadside markets that sell produce grown by the operator and other local farmers. The goal is to increase direct sales to consumers of farm products grown and sold by North Carolina farmers. The program also seeks to assist roadside farm markets with improving their marketing skills, to improve the quality of products sold, and to promote fair and honest marketing practices.

To view the membership criteria for this program, visit

<http://www.ncfarmfresh.com/CertifiedCriteria.asp>

Membership Application and Grower Certification Forms for this program are on the following pages.



Certified Roadside Farm Market Program
North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Application

1. Business Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____
Zip Code _____ County: _____
Shipping Address (if different from the mailing address): _____
City: _____ State: _____
Zip Code: _____ County: _____
Owner/Manager: _____
Contact # 2: _____

2. Phone Numbers:
Office: _____ Home: _____
Mobile: _____ Fax: _____

3. List your web site address if you have one: _____

4. List your email address: _____

5. Dates that you are open for business to the public:
We are open year round _____ Yes _____ No. If no, provide the dates you are open in the space below.
From: _____ Through: _____

6. Check the days of the week you are open to the public and provide the hours open each day.
Monday _____ Friday _____
Tuesday _____ Saturday _____
Wednesday _____ Sunday _____
Thursday _____

(continued on p.2)

11. List any special services or attractions your business provides to the public or special events open to the public.

I certify that this roadside farm market business meets all applicable program requirements as stated in the NCDA&CS Certified Roadside Farm Market Membership Criteria, complies with all Federal, State and local laws, rules and ordinances, including all applicable license and permit requirements, and that I have given true, accurate and complete information on this form to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant _____
Date _____

Enclose photographs of your roadside market facility with this application. Photographs should include pictures of the structure used to display and sell produce, entrances to the facility, driveways and parking, and on-premise sign with the name of the roadside market.

Note: Please complete additional forms for multiple locations. You may make additional copies or call NCDA & CS @ (919) 733-7887 for more forms.

Send forms to: Shirley Nicholson
Division of Marketing
1020 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1020
Fax: (919) 715-0155
shirley.nicholson@ncmail.net

Certified Roadside Farm Market Program
North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

Growers Certification

This is to certify that: (Please type of print)

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work/Cell Phone _____

City/State/Zip _____

Appeared before me this _____ day of (month) _____, (Year) _____,
And affirms that he/she is a farmer in _____ (county) and produced the
crops and acreage indicated below. Further, that he/she operates a roadside farm market.

Affirmed: (Farmers Signature) _____
FSA Farm # _____

Certified: (County Extension Agent's Signature) _____
Office telephone: _____ County: _____

List the crops below that you grow:

Vegetables and fruits _____

Ornamental plants _____

Office of Small Farms Ag Policy, North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

www.ncagr.gov/SmallFarms/

Contact Person(s):

Main phone number: (919) 707-3065

Mr. Archie Hart, Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Agriculture

Email: archie.hart@ncagr.gov

Mr. Cliff Sutton, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, Email: cliff.sutton@ncagr.gov

Mr. Jacob Crandall, Agriculture Marketing Specialist, Email: jacob.crandall@ncagr.gov

Mr. James Dunn, Agriculture Program Specialist, Email: james.dunn@ncagr.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

There is no fee for services.

Description of Office of Small Farms Ag Policy Division:

This office provides services to small, limited-resource and minority farmers who are traditionally underserved. These services are provided through outreach to assist this audience in making informed decisions and to provide advocacy for excluded populations.

Services and Programs Offered:

Marketing Assistance

- Provide marketing strategies and marketing development help for farm products including vegetables, free range meats, and value added products
- Develop marketing strategy and infrastructure for limited-resource producers including row crop growers



Piedmont Grown

www.piedmontgrown.org

Contact Person:

Noah Ranells, Program Manager

Phone: (919) 245-2330

Email: info@piedmontgrown.org

Geographic Service Area:

37 counties in NC Piedmont Region. The counties are: Alamance, Alexander, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Catawba, Chatham, Cleveland, Davidson, Davie, Durham, Forsyth, Franklin, Gaston, Granville, Guilford, Harnett, Iredell, Johnston, Lee, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Moore, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Stokes, Surry, Union, Vance, Wake, Warren, and Yadkin.

Fees:

Cost of certification is \$25 for farms and \$50 for local food system businesses. Supporting individuals can enroll in Piedmont Grown for \$25 contribution. Supporting businesses and supporting organizations can enroll for \$50.

Description of organization:

The mission of Piedmont Grown is to promote local food systems through the certification of food and farm products grown or raised in the North Carolina Piedmont Region. They link consumers to local farm fresh foods, build local markets for farmers and food entrepreneurs, and grow healthy and prosperous communities. Their website also offers on-farm tourism opportunities.

Programs and Services Offered:

Marketing Assistance

Piedmont Grown Certification: The Piedmont Grown certification program allows consumers to easily identify farm products grown, raised, or made in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina. Details of the program include:

- ✓ Annual recertification process
- ✓ Cost of certification listed in fees section above.
- ✓ Benefits of enrollment:
 - Free 4" bumper sticker or window cling
 - Annual Farm to Trade Marketing Event
 - Promote development of our local food system
 - Quarterly newsletter with information for farmers, consumers, and other local food businesses
 - Access to grant funds for increasing local food awareness (as available)



Upon enrollment in the certification program, you can be featured on their interactive local food map and directory, so that you can be located by interested parties as a source of local food.

To find out more information about Piedmont Grown Certification or to become certified visit www.piedmontgrown.org.



Rural Advancement Foundation International USA (RAFI-USA)

www.rafiusa.org

Contact Person(s):

Scott Marlow, Executive Director

Phone: (919) 542-1396, ext. 210

Email: smarlow@rafiusa.org

Joe Schroeder, Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

Phone: (919) 542-1396, ext. 208

Email: joe@rafiusa.org

Geographic Service Area:

International with a focus on the Southeastern US

Fees:

There is no fee for services.

Description of organization:

RAFI works to develop and improve markets, communities and policies that help support family farms.

Programs and Services Offered:

Legal Assistance

RAFI has two decades of experience fighting to keep family farmers on the land. We provide confidential advice and advocacy to farmers. We do not provide direct financial relief. If you are a farmer in need of assistance, please call RAFI at (919) 542-1396. If you need immediate assistance, please call Farm Aid at (800) FARM-AID.

Business and Marketing Assistance

RAFI works one-on-one with individual farmers and collaborative groups interested in transitioning or expanding their farm enterprise. Through the Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund, they maintain a community of over 500 innovative farmers who serve as mentors and resources for farmers in North Carolina and throughout the Southeast Region, regardless of their participation in the grant program. Their resource and referral work is a free service open to all farmers in need of help.



Southeastern NC Food Systems Program/ Feast Down East

www.feastdowneast.org

Contact Person(s):

Dr. Leslie Hossfeld, Executive Director

Phone: (910) 962-7849

Email: hossfeldl@uncw.edu

Jane Steigerwald, Director

Email: steigerwaldj@uncw.edu

Geographic Service Area:

This program serves Southeastern, NC, including Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, Columbus, Duplin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Robeson, and Sampson Counties.

Fees:

There are no fees to participate in their services.

Description of organization:

Southeastern NC Food Systems Program/Feast Down East works to connect farmers to places and sources for them to sell their food. This program helps small and limited-resource farmers gain access to markets such as restaurants, grocers, schools and hospitals in an effort to help people gain access to and eat more local food.

Programs and Services Offered:

Marketing Assistance

- **Farm to Chef Directory:** The purpose of the Farm to Chef Directory is to link chefs/restaurant owners in Southeastern NC to local farmers. Submit your contact information to their farm to chef directory. *The application is on the following page.*
- **Food Down East Processing and Distribution Program:** The program buys agricultural products and locally-produced value-added foods from farmers and they are delivered to restaurants, grocers, schools, universities, hospitals and assisted living facilities in Wilmington and surrounding areas. Farm fresh foods are also sold through the Feast Down East Buying Club. Customers may also purchase products online as well.
- **Market your CSA:** If you have a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) in Feast Down East's service area, get added to a listing of CSA's on their website.



Farm to Chef Directory: Farmer Questionnaire

This form is for farmers who would like to be included in the **Feast Down East**, Southeastern North Carolina Food Systems Program **Farm to Chef Directory**. The Directory aims to connect farmers and their local produce with local restaurants. Please Email completed form to: steigerwaldj@uncw.edu or call Jane 910-383-1916 to discuss pick-up or mailing options.

Basic information (required)	
Farm Name	
Contact Name	
Email	
Phone number	
Mailing Address	
Physical Address of Farm	
Website	
Brief description of farm	
Products (by season, if possible)	
Best Time to Contact	

Other Information (optional)	
Are you interested in other local food events such as:	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer Chef Partnership Meetings
	<input type="checkbox"/> Education and awareness community events
	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer training events
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Are you currently working with any local chefs/restaurants? If so, would you be willing to share their names with us?	
Have you worked with local chefs in the past?	
If yes, to either of the above, how were you connected?	
Please comment on how your farm to chef relationship worked:	
What prevents you from accessing restaurant markets?	
Would you be interested in developing agreements with chefs to produce specific products for them?	

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG)

www.ssawg.org

Contact Information:

Email: info@sawg.org

Geographic Service Area:

SSAWG works across 13 Southern States.

Description of organization:

Southern SAWG takes a regional approach to creating a sustainable agricultural system by:

- 1) Aiding and supporting organizations and individuals who are working toward a sustainable farm and food system in their own states and communities and
- 2) Performing functions and holding events that work best on a regional level.

Programs and Services Offered:

Marketing Assistance

Free *Choosing Your Markets* course materials available online at www.ssawg.org/about-this-course/. In this course you will learn the benefits, challenges and resources needed for marketing through farmer's markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's), on-farm markets, internet marketing, and direct sales to restaurants and grocers.



NETWORKING & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



This section covers learning opportunities and networking opportunities available to producers.

This section includes information about:

- Specific networking sessions to meet distributors and buyers of agricultural goods
- Farm tours
- Conferences
- Educational materials such as reading material, guidebooks, and instructional workbooks covering various topics such as crop insurance, tax information, marketing strategies, and more, available online or in print.

Black Family Land Trust

www.bflt.org

Contact Person:

Ebonie Alexander, Executive Director

Phone: (919) 683-5263, Email: info@bflt.org

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Fees:

There is no fee for their direct services.

Description of organization:

Black Family Land Trust (BFLT) was founded in 2004. It is the only land trust dedicated to the preservation of African American-owned land. The mission of the BFLT is to provide educational, technical and financial services to ensure, protect, and preserve African American land ownership. The core program of BFLT is the Wealth Retention and Asset Protection (W.R.A.P.) program. The six components of this program are mentioned below.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources

- **Estate Planning:** Stopping the cyclical nature of heir property.
- **Conservation and Environmental Protection:** Using tools, such as easements, to help maintain the land.
- **Reconnecting the African-American community with the land:** Looking at agriculture and land from an entrepreneurial perspective.
- **Education:** Ensuring landowners understand the process of landownership (for example, getting a farm number if they need one).
- **Financial Literacy:** Teaching how to manage the asset of land. This component is designed for rural America and inter-generational as well.
- **21st Century farming techniques:** Informing how to put the land back in production for ways other than agriculture.

To learn more about Black Family Land Trust, or to inquire about their W.R.A.P program and other services, contact Ebonie Alexander at (919) 683-5263 or email info@bflt.org



Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA)

www.carolinafarmstewards.org

Contact Information:

Phone: (919) 542-2402

Email: info@carolinafarmstewards.org

Geographic Service Area:

North Carolina and South Carolina

Fees:

An introductory year membership costs \$25 and they have less expensive membership rates available for those with limited incomes. A member of CFSA gains access to all of their resources.

Description of organization:

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) helps people in the Carolinas grow and eat local, organic foods by advocating for fair farm and food policies, building the systems that sustainable family farms need to thrive, and educating and organizing communities about organic farming.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources & Networking Opportunities

- **Internship Referral Service:** The referral service allows farmers to advertise internship opportunities on their farm. The service is offered on the CFSA's website and is intended to help farms find students and those who want to gain more hands-on experience in farming, a chance to work on a real farm.
- **Farm Tours:** Participate in their Upstate, Piedmont or Eastern Triangle Farm Tour. The Piedmont Farm Tour also offers a special tour for beginning farmers.
- **Classes and Workshops:** CFSA hosts educational workshops and classes throughout the year. Check out their calendar online at www.carolinafarmstewards.org/classesworkshops/
- **Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference:** This conference features top-notch speakers, hands-on workshops and tours, great networking opportunities, and local, organic meals.

Work Exchange and Beginning Farmer and Rancher Scholarships and Minority Farmer Scholarships are available to help make the conference more affordable. Visit <http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/beginning-farmer-rancher-scholarship/#more-2504> for a scholarship application.



- **Organic Commodities and Livestock Conference:** At this conference you will learn more about:
 - ✓ growing organic
 - ✓ raising livestock sustainably
 - ✓ marketing organic products
 - ✓ food safety and good agricultural practices



Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

Bringing New Farmers to the Table, www.ncnewfarmers.org

Other Affiliated Organizations:

A collaboration of National Center for Appropriate Technology, Carolina Farm Stewardship Association, The Branan Law Firm, PLLC, and NC Cooperative Extension.

Contact Person:

Joanna Lelekacs, State Coordinator, Incubator Farm Project

Phone: (919) 244-5269

Email: Joanna_Lelekacs@ncsu.edu

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

No fee for legal education services. Fees associated with conferences, farm tours, etc.

Description of program:

Bringing New Farmers to the Table aims to increase the number of new or transitioning farmers in NC.

Services Offered:

Educational Resources

Resources such as webinars, case studies, and other educational materials are available in the “New Farmer Toolbox.” Topics include:

- Business planning
- Risk management
- Access to farmland
- Capital and credit
- Marketing

Find these materials in the New Farmer Toolbox online at:

<http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu/whatwedo/foodsystems/newfarmertoolbox.html>

Educational Resources & Networking Opportunities

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association provides the following through the project:

- **Internship Referral Service:** The service is offered on the CFSA’s website and it allows farmers to advertise internship opportunities at their



farm. It is intended to help farms find students and those who want to gain more hands-on experience in farming and give them the chance to work on a real farm.

- **Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference:** The conference has special programming for beginning farmers on basic farm planning, marketing, how to avoid common startup pitfalls, and applying for grants and loans. Other conference workshops cover cutting edge issues in sustainable agriculture, including organic weed and pest control, plant diseases, soil fertility, heritage livestock, food safety and processing, and direct marketing. All of it is essential information for new farms to thrive.

Work Exchange and Beginning Farmer and Rancher Scholarships and Minority Farmer Scholarships are available to help make the conference more affordable. Visit their website for a scholarship application.

- **Farm Tours:** Participate in their Upstate, Piedmont or Eastern Triangle Farm Tour. The Piedmont Farm Tour also offers a special tour for beginning farmers.



NC Choices, a program of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

www.cefs.ncsu.edu

www.ncchoices.com

Contact Person:

Casey McKissick, Project Director

Phone: (828) 216-2966

Email: casey@ncchoices.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

There is no fee for services.

Description of organization:

The NC Choices program focuses on and promotes the local meat supply chain in NC, from raising the animals on the farm to the steps that occur after the animals leave the farm gate.

CEFS focuses on sustainable agriculture research, education and outreach. They develop and promote food and farming systems that protect the environment, strengthen local economies and provide economic opportunities in NC and beyond.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational & Networking Opportunities

Carolina Meat Conference: This conference provides educational sessions in the areas of production, processing and marketing. It also provides an opportunity to network between producers, processors and food professional buyers. This annual conference is held in December. During December 2012, the conference will be in Winston-Salem. 10 to 20 scholarships are offered for limited-resource farmers to attend the conference.



Minority Landowner Magazine

www.minoritylandowner.com

Contact Person:

Victor L. Harris, Publisher and Editor

Phone: (919) 215-1632

Email: ccpublishing@earthlink.net

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Fees:

An annual subscription to *Minority Landowner* costs \$14. There is no cost to receive assistance from the NC Farm Turnaround Team.

Description of Company:

Minority Landowner Magazine has a national audience of minority, small and limited resource farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. The magazine provides information to help improve productivity on managed land operations to increase opportunities to become profitable, thereby strengthening landownership retention. The magazine also holds an annual conference and has created the NC Farm Turnaround Team, designed to strengthen and save family farm enterprises.

Program Services:

Educational Resources

- **Minority Landowner Magazine:** See the description above under description of company.
- **Annual Conference:** *Minority Landowner Magazine's* Annual Conference is held in late February. *Minority Landowner's* 7th Anniversary Conference will be held on February 20-22, 2013 at the Marriot Greensboro Airport in Greensboro, NC. For 2013 conference registration, call (919) 215-1632, email ccpublishing@earthlink.net or visit www.minoritylandowner.com.



NC Coalition of Farms and Rural Families

www.ncfarmcoalition.org

Contact Person:

Mrs. Geneva Pickett, Administrative Manager

Phone: (910) 289-2523

Email: nccfrf@centurylink.net

Geographic Service Area:

Southeastern North Carolina

Description of organization:

NC Coalition of Farms and Rural Families is a private nonprofit organization that promotes self-economic development and a higher standard of living for African American, Native American, and limited-resource farmers and rural families in North Carolina by:

- ✓ Promoting better use of resources;
- ✓ Providing technical and marketing assistance;
- ✓ Fostering knowledge-based growth and development;
- ✓ Strengthening the leadership and capacity of farmers and rural families to create sustainable enterprises; and
- ✓ Promoting civic responsibility.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources

NC Coalition of Farm and Rural Families' site in Rose Hill, NC gives farmers the opportunity to come and experiment by learning from their current projects and educational workshops (such as indoor and outdoor mushroom growing) so that the information can be taken back to one's own farm.

If you are a limited-resource farmer and want to find out more about NCCFRF's services, please call their main office at (910) 289-2523 or email nccfrf@centurylink.net.



Operation Spring Plant, Inc. (OSP)

Contact Person:

Dorathy Barker, Executive Director

Phone: (252) 492-7301

Email: osp35@aol.com; mrsbosp@raleigh.twcbc.com

Geographic Service Area:

Eastern North Carolina

Fees:

There are no fees for their services.

Description of organization:

Operation Spring Plant is a grassroots, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting self-help community economic development programs and initiatives for minority and limited-resource farmers/producers.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources & Networking Opportunities

Newsletters: Operation Spring Plant produces two newsletters, *Youth in Today's Agriculture* and *OSP*.

Operation Spring Plant Conference: OSP's Annual Conference which is held the 2nd Friday and Saturday in January. The conference features informative workshops, exhibitors, locally-sourced food, live entertainment and inspirational keynote speakers.

Quarterly Meetings

Workshops: Workshops on various topics are held or coordinated by OSP. The workshops target various generations. Past workshop topics include: Business planning/entrepreneurial workshops for youth, GAP certification, understanding the lawsuit and the claim form in the Black Farmer Class Action Lawsuit against the USDA (Pigford lawsuit).

Farmer Apprenticeship Program: An apprenticeship program that allows young people in the community to work alongside farm mentors in order to learn how to operate a farm.



Rural Advancement Foundation International USA (RAFI-USA)

www.rafiusa.org

Contact Person(s):

Scott Marlow, Executive Director

Phone: (919) 542- 1396, ext. 210

Email: smarlow@rafiusa.org

Joe Schroeder, Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

Phone: (919) 542-1396, ext. 208

Email: joe@rafiusa.org

Geographic Service Area:

International with a focus on the Southeastern US

Fees:

There is no fee for services.

Description of organization:

RAFI works to develop and improve markets, communities and policies that help support family farms.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources

RAFI has several farmer-oriented publications on their website at:

www.rafiusa.org/pubs/puboverview.html

Publication topics include:

- ✓ GM Contracts
- ✓ Disaster Programs
- ✓ Organic Agriculture
- ✓ Development of New Farm Enterprises
- ✓ Peanut Contracts
- ✓ Agricultural Credit
- ✓ Poultry Contracts



Rural Empowerment Association for Community Help (REACH)

Sowing Seeds

www.REACHempowerment.shutterfly.com

Contact Person:

Dothula Brown, Executive Director of REACH

Phone: (910) 296-1186

Email: Dothula@aol.com

Geographic Service Area:

Duplin County

Fees:

There is no fee for their services.

Description of program:

Rural Empowerment Association for Community Help (REACH) aims to build a stronger and more cohesive and empowered community in Duplin County.

Sowing Seeds is a project that works to promote the contributions of agriculture and the legacy of black farmers as significant cornerstones in the foundation of Duplin County.

Services Offered:

Educational Resources

- **Sowing Seeds Project:** Sowing Seeds is an apprentice program for young farmers. Youth in this program work with farmer mentors who provide exposure to and experience in all aspects of production.



Southeastern African-American Farmers Organic Network

www.saaфон.org

Contact Person:

Cynthia Hayes, Project Coordinator

Phone: (912) 495-0591

Email: chayes@saaфон.org

Geographic Service Area:

Currently SAAFON farmers are located in six states and the US Virgin Islands: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and St. Croix, Virgin Islands.

Fees:

Farmer participation in the Network is free.

Description of organization:

The Southeastern African-American Farmers Organic Network (SAAFON), a project of the SoGreen Network, Inc., is a network of farmers using sustainable growing methods. Small and limited-resource farmers that are either certified organic or growing organically participate. SAAFON accepts 10 new farmer members per year. SAAFON has been recognized as the only African-American farmers' organization/network of its type in the United States.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance & Educational Opportunities

SAAFON's 3 ½ day annual organic training session helps farmers understand the principles of organic growing and develop a farm plan. Participants walk through the USDA organic certification application. SAAFON supports and advocates for the members of the Network to attend regional and national conferences and workshops to provide the technical assistance necessary for them to stay in compliance with organic certification.

Networking Opportunities

SAAFON ensures farmers in the network have access to available programs and services provided by universities, extension and research centers, agricultural organizations, and regional mentoring programs.

The goal of the organization is to develop a farmers' collaborative and network for the purpose of marketing their organically grown products locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

- **To Become a Member of SAAFON:** There is a selection process. Interested farmers should contact SAAFON. Farmer applications are taken



through a phone interview. The applications are then screened by the staff and the SAAFON's Advisory Board. This selection process is strenuous. Farmers who are selected must have made a sincere decision to become an organic grower.

Cooperatives are welcomed and encouraged.

Qualifications Necessary to Be Considered:

- ✓ Agrees to attend 3-½ day organic training session held in Savannah, Georgia
- ✓ Farm is located in one of our six states (Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina, North Carolina) and the US Virgin Islands
- ✓ A commitment of three (3) years to the program
- ✓ Agrees to attend at least two (2) training sessions per year
- ✓ Agrees to participate in SAAFON's Mentoring Program
- ✓ Has the desire to adhere to strict organic growing principals



Southeastern NC Food Systems Program/ Feast Down East

www.feastdowneast.org

Contact Person(s):

Dr. Leslie Hossfeld, Executive Director

Phone: (910) 962-7849

Email: hossfeldl@uncw.edu

Jane Steigerwald, Director

Email: steigerwaldj@uncw.edu

Geographic Service Area:

This program serves Southeastern, NC, including Bladen, Brunswick, Carteret, Columbus, Duplin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Robeson, and Sampson Counties.

Fees:

There are no fees to participate in their services.

Description of organization:

Southeastern NC Food Systems Program/Feast Down East works to connect farmers to places and sources for them to sell their food. This program helps small and limited-resource farmers gain access to markets such as restaurants, grocers, schools and hospitals in an effort to help people gain access to and eat more local food.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources

Feast Down East Annual Regional Conference: The conference is held every year in February. For 2013, the conference will be held on February 8th at the Warwick Center on the campus of University of North Carolina at Wilmington. All conference workshops have information geared for small farmers and focus on topics such as marketing, branding, building farm capacity, transitioning to sustainable farming practices, crop and business planning, financial and equipment funding opportunities. Also, check their online calendar to find out about other workshops.

To learn more about SENCFS Program, join their listserv, participate in the farm to chef program, or participate in their food distribution and processing center, please email Leslie Hossfeld at hossfeldl@uncw.edu or call (910) 962-7849.



Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG)

www.ssawg.org

Contact Information:

Email: info@sawg.org

Geographic Service Area:

SSAWG works across 13 Southern States.

Description of organization:

Southern SAWG takes a regional approach to creating a sustainable agricultural system by:

- 1) Aiding and supporting organizations and individuals who are working toward a sustainable farm and food system in their own states and communities and
- 2) Performing functions and holding events that work best on a regional level.

Programs and Services Offered:

Educational Resources & Networking Opportunity

- **Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms Conference:**
The SSAWG Conference, held annually in January, brings together over 1,200 people to learn about:
 - ✓ sustainable farming techniques
 - ✓ marketing strategies
 - ✓ community food systems
 - ✓ federal farm policies and programs that promote sustainable agriculture

This event also provides producers, researchers, information providers, concerned consumers and community organizers the opportunity to build networks, strengthen alliances, and celebrate the achievements of Southern sustainable farmers.

For more information, go to the conference page on www.ssawg.org.



GRANTS & LOANS



This section covers grants, loans and cost-share programs available to producers.

This section also includes the application forms for several grants and cost-shares programs.

Please remember that program requirements and applications vary from year to year.

ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project)

www.asapconnections.org

Contact Person:

Maggie Cramer, Communications Manager

Phone: (828) 236-1282, ext. 113

Email: maggie@asapconnections.org

Geographic Service Area:

Western NC and the Southern Appalachian Mountains

Fees:

Fees associated with farm tours and conferences

Description of organization:

ASAP's mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

They work to accomplish their mission by providing marketing assistance and training to area farmers; connecting area chefs and foodservice buyers at schools and hospitals with the farmers who best suit their needs; running a Farm to School Program called Growing Minds; and leading a multi-faceted Local Food Campaign and Appalachian Grown branding and certification program. Connect through their community website at fromhere.org.

Programs and Services Offered:

Marketing Assistance and Financial Assistance

- **Appalachian Grown Cost-Share:** If you're an Appalachian Grown certified farmer in North Carolina, you can apply for matching funds from ASAP for your promotions and marketing materials. Funds can go toward advertisements in print, on the radio, or in other media; graphic design, product labeling, signs, and more. Funds are provided through the NC Tobacco Trust Fund and Golden LEAF Foundation. For more information and to apply, visit www.asapconnections.org/agmaterials.html or email costshare@asapconnections.org

The Appalachian Grown Cost Share Application is on the following pages.

To learn even more about ASAP's offerings and work in the region, visit asapconnections.org, or call 828-236-1282.





Appalachian Grown™ Cost Share

Matching funds available for local food promotion Farmers and Farm Groups

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), through support from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and Golden LEAF Foundation, has funds available for farmers and farmer groups to be used in the promotion of locally grown food and food

products.

Eligibility and Requirements:

1. Applicants must be Appalachian Grown certified and based in one of the NC counties listed below.
2. Funds must be used to promote Appalachian Grown certified food or food products. Funds may not be used for other farm products.
3. All funded promotions must include the Appalachian Grown logo.
4. The promotion must reach the public and support farmers within one or more of these Appalachian Grown counties in North Carolina: Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, McDowell, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, Yancey, and the Qualla Boundary.
5. Please apply first, wait for approval, then launch projects and spend funds. Projects started before you apply are not eligible.

Examples of Projects Funded:

- Packaging and labels
- Graphic design of promotions using the Appalachian Grown logo
- Rack cards, flyers, business cards (not for items to be re-sold, such as t-shirts, bags, hats, etc.)
- Website design; websites must include the Appalachian Grown logo, content supplied by ASAP, and a link to www.asapconnections.org (there is \$250 match limit for all website design)
- Farm or market signage
- Other expenses related to promotion of locally grown foods using the Appalachian Grown logo

Fund Availability:

- Funds are available for farmers and farmer groups such as producer marketing and sales associations.
- The maximum ASAP cost share for each calendar year is \$1,500 for an individual farm and \$5,000 for a farmer group, dependent upon total number of farms in group. For example: two farms in group—max cost share of \$3,000; 3 farms in group—\$4,500; 4 or more—\$5,000.
- This cost share is a match; funds spent on each line item by the farmer or farmer group must equal or exceed the requested amount. Depending on the total cost of the project, funds requested can be up to 50% of total cost.

Process Guidelines:

1. The cost share application must be submitted to the ASAP office and approved by staff before funds are available. ASAP may request additional information about your application.
2. There is no application deadline. ASAP will contact applicants within two weeks after receiving your application. Invoices must be submitted within three months of application approval. Unspent funds at this deadline are no longer available; re-application is required, and ASAP does not guarantee approval a second time; exceptions to this may involve multi-month ad contracts with monthly billing that extends past the deadline.
3. Funds will be paid directly to the vendor or reimbursed to the farmer or group, within 30 days of receipt. An invoice from your vendor for our approved portion, indicating the split should be sent to ASAP. When a split invoice is not possible, please contact us to discuss special arrangements. Please alert all vendors that ASAP requires up to 30 days from receipt to pay bills. If this is a problem, use another vendor or do not apply.
4. The cost share recipient must provide ASAP with a printed sample, copy, photo or digital image of all promotions and materials created using cost share funds.

Contact us with questions at costshare@asapconnections.org or (828) 236-1282, ext. 112

Appalachian Grown™ Cost Share Application for Farmers and Farm Groups, page 1

ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project) can provide funding for Appalachian Grown certified North Carolina farmers and farmer groups to create promotional materials using the Appalachian Grown logo. We are pleased to be able to continue this program, although there will be a more competitive process in approving projects for funds. Preference may be given to those who have not received cost share funds in the past. Packaging and labeling projects may be given priority.

Farm/farm group name: _____ Farmers in my group: _____

***Please verify that your farms are in compliance with the AG Certification standards.

Applicant name: _____

Title or position: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Town: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Year started farming: _____ Acres in production: _____

- I agree to reply to a follow-up survey that I may receive from ASAP later on, and to provide pictures of completed projects. I understand that if I do not reply, it may disqualify me from future funding opportunities. I understand that funded projects must include the Appalachian Grown logo, and that funds can be withheld when the logo is not used.
- My farm or group is Appalachian Grown certified. *Appalachian Grown certification is a requirement to receive funds. If your farm or farmer group is not currently Appalachian Grown certified, please attach a signed certification form found at www.asapconnections.org/ProducerCertification.pdf.*
- I have been a tobacco farmer. I grew tobacco from _____ (year) to _____ (year).
- I am a farmer group. My group has _____ (number) members/participants. _____ (number) are current or former tobacco growers.

List items and costs for which you are requesting matching funds. Use an additional page if necessary. Please provide the best estimate you can at this time. We understand that an estimate may change. You may submit additional cost share applications, up to the allowed amount, to cover future projects. For most farmers and farmer groups, funds requested can be up to 50% of the total cost.

Item	Vendor	Total Cost	Requested
Total			
Funds requested			

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This is a project of Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project and receives support from the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and the Golden Leaf Foundation.



Appalachian Grown™ Cost Share Application for Farmers and Farm Groups, page 2

Appalachian Grown™ Cost Share Questionnaire for Farmers and Farm Groups

Please complete and return with your application.

Farm/farm group name:

Describe your marketing/promotion strategy and how the matching funds you are requesting will help your farm.

Briefly describe your farm or farmer group and what you grow, how you sell it, and who is involved.

What goals do you have for your farm or farmer group in the next year?

Are you listed in ASAP's *Local Food Guide*? yes no no, but I would like to be

Are you in ASAP's *Mixing Bowl: Farm to Business Trade Directory*? yes no no, but I would like to be

Comments:

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)

FACT's Fund-a-Farmer Project

www.foodanimalconcerns.org

www.fundafarmer.org

Contact Person:

Lisa Isenhart, Humane Farming Program Manager

Phone: (773) 525-4952

Email: grants@foodanimalconcerns.org

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of organization:

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) promotes humane and healthy farms through science-based advocacy, consumer education, and support for humane farmers.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Grants

FACT's Fund-A-Farmer Project

We will award grants of up to \$1,500 to help farmers:

- ✓ Transition to pasture-based systems, or
- ✓ Improve the marketing of their humane products, or
- ✓ More generally enrich the conditions in which the farm animals are raised

Examples of these projects include:

- ✓ revamping existing animal housing to encourage outdoor access,
- ✓ improving pasture quality in terms of animal nutrition and health of land, and
- ✓ providing opportunities for animals to exhibit natural behaviors.

Farms must raise at least one of the following species: pigs, broiler chickens, laying hens, dairy cows, beef cattle.

Grants will be made only to farmers for a project on a working, independent family farm.

Visit www.humanefarmfunds.org for application guidelines and to print the application.

Please contact Lisa Isenhart, FACT's Humane Farming Program Manager, at grants@foodanimalconcerns.org or at (773) 525-4952 with any questions you may have about the application.

A new application will be available October 2012.



Farm Credits of North Carolina

AgCarolina Financial, www.agcarolina.com

Cape Fear Farm Credit, www.capefearfarmcredit.com

Carolina Farm Credit, www.carolinafarmcredit.com

Contact Information:

Linda Strickland, Senior Vice President – Marketing, AgCarolina Financial

Phone: (919) 250-9500, ext. 214, Email: LStrickland@AgCarolina.com

Maggie Hamm, Marketing Manager, Carolina Farm Credit, Phone: 1-800-521-9952

Skipper Jones, Marketing Manager, Cape Fear Farm Credit, Phone: 1-800-368-5819

Geographic Service Area:

Carolina Farm Credit serves the western half of NC. Cape Fear Farm Credit serves Southeastern NC. AgCarolina Financial serves the Triangle and Northeastern NC.

Fees:

For the Ag Biz Planner Program, a grant of \$500 is awarded to each chosen participant to cover the cost of tuition. There is a \$100 deposit fee upon acceptance to the program, but if the program is completed in nine months the deposit fee is returned.

Description of organization:

Farm Credits of NC branches provide reliable loans and other services to those in agriculture.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Loan Programs

Marketing and Processing Loans: Supporting marketing and processing activities related to the production of agricultural products.

Agricultural-related business loans: Loans for those who furnish farm related services which are directly related to the production of agricultural services. Examples of services include: crop spraying, fertilizer spreading, custom harvesting, grain drying/storage, livestock breeding, veterinary services, hauling for farmers, and record keeping.

Personalized loans based on your needs: Loans available for financing real estate, farm improvements, purchasing or leasing machinery, equipment, cars and trucks, refinancing debts, paying operating expenses, livestock and equine purchases, fences, barns and other buildings.

Young, Beginning, Small, Minority Farmer Loans



Mountain BizWorks

Food, Agriculture and Rural Enterprises of the Carolinas (FARE of the Carolinas)

www.mountainbizworks.org

Contact Person:

Jo Ann Miksa-Blackwell, Director

Phone: (828) 919-1000

Email: joann@mountainbizworks.org

Geographic Service Area:

Western NC

Fees:

8-week business training has a fee. Call JoAnn Miksa-Blackwell at (828) 919-1000 to find out more information about this.

Description of organization and program:

Mountain BizWorks is a nonprofit community development financial institution serving Western North Carolina. Through lending, consulting and training, Mountain BizWorks helps start and grow small businesses. They provide the tools and resources that businesses need for long-term success, helping them grow from pre-launch ideas to sustainable enterprises that create jobs – jobs that sustain families and support asset building.

Through FARE of the Carolinas, Mountain BizWorks provides a combination of loans, training and technical assistance to help start and grow agricultural ventures, including farms, food producers and distributors, value-added product producers, agri-businesses, and other rural enterprises.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Loans

They offer term loans and lines of credit of up to \$150,000. Loan capital may be used for land acquisition, business expansion, equipment purchase, seasonal crop and production loans, and working capital. We can be flexible with repayment terms, structuring loans to match the realities of the crop and food production cycles.



Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation and Development

www.mountainvalleysrcd.org

Contact Person(s):

Russell Blevins, Director

Phone: (828) 649-3313, ext. 5

Email: russell.blevins@mountainvalleysrcd.org

Jessica Hocz, Program Manager

Email: Jessica.hocz@mountainvalleysrcd.org

Geographic Service Area:

Western NC

Fees:

There is no fee to attend their energy workshops.

Description of organization:

Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation and Development (RCD) is a nonprofit, rural economic development organization that works in Western North Carolina to provide local people with opportunities to develop and carry out activities that will achieve economic benefits while conserving natural resources.

Services and Programs Offered:

Educational Resources

Mountain Valleys RCD conducts workshops that focus on renewable energy topics such as solar, wind, geothermal energy and the economic aspects of these energy systems. If you want to find out more information about upcoming workshops, call Jessica Hocz at (828) 649-3313 x5 or if you live in Western NC, call your cooperative extension agent.

Financial Assistance - Cost-Share Grants

Renewable Energy Grant: This grant provides 40% cost-share funds to farmers in Western North Carolina's 22 counties to be used for installing and using renewable energy systems such as solar, wind, geothermal energy, and more on their farms.

The Renewable Energy Grant application follows.

Conservation Innovation Grant: This grant will provide 50% cost-share funds up to \$10,000 for dairy farmers in Western NC to install solar water heating systems on their farms since dairy farms require large amounts of hot water during the pasteurization and equipment cleaning process.



Benefits of the solar water heating systems are:

- ✓ Reduces expenses for producers
- ✓ Improves air quality, by reducing the use of gas or electric hot water heaters
- ✓ Limits greenhouse gas emissions

The Conservation Innovation Grant application follows.

If you want additional information about these grants or have questions, contact Russell Blevins at (828) 649-3313, ext. 5 or email Russell.Blevins@mountainvalleysrkd.org



Renewable Energy for Farms Grant Application

Date Submitted: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

County: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

What type of power are you interested in generating?

Wind Solar Hydro

Would your project be located at the address above? _____

If not, please provide the project location address:

Did you actively farm tobacco on your land? _____

Are you currently engaged in farming activities? _____

If yes, please describe: _____

Do you derive 50% or more of your income from farming? _____

Does your farm have a conservation plan? _____

Application deadline: December 31, 2012

Please fax or send to: 828-649-3124
Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation & Development
4388 Highway 25-70, Suite 3
Marshall, NC 28753



‘Solar Hot Water for Dairy Farms’ Grant Opportunity

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has awarded a Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) to Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation & Development to support the installations of solar hot water systems on dairy farms.

The grant will provide 50% cost-share funds up to \$10,000. Dairy farms require large amounts of hot water during the pasteurization and/or equipment cleaning process. The purpose of the ‘Solar Hot Water for Dairy Farms’ project is to demonstrate and evaluate the feasibility of solar water heating systems on dairy farms in order to encourage its adoption in North Carolina.

Solar water heating dates back to the 1950’s and has been widely used in most countries for many years. Water is heated using solar panels that are fastened to a roof. Water heated by the solar energy is stored in a hot water storage tank. The amount of heat delivered by a solar water heating system depends on local weather patterns. In times of low heat gain a back up gas or electric booster is used to heat the water. Solar water heating systems are designed to be very low maintenance and survive freezing weather.

NRCS administers CIGs as a part of the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). CIGs benefit agricultural producers and consumers by providing more options and possibilities for environmental enhancement. Farmers selected for these demonstrations have to meet eligibility requirements for EQIP.





4388 US Highway 25-70, Suite 3
Marshall, NC 28753
828-649-3313, ext 5
828-649-3124 fax

Solar Hot Water for Dairy Farms Grant Application

Date Submitted: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

County: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Would your project be located at the address above? _____

If not, please provide the project location address:

Please describe current farming activities: _____

Please send to:

Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation & Development
4388 Highway 25-70, Suite 3
Marshall, NC 28753

Or fax to: 828-649-3124



Natural Capital Investment Fund, a program of The Conservation Fund

www.ncifund.org

Contact Person(s):

Rick Larson, North Carolina Program Director (for Eastern NC)

Phone: (919) 951- 0113, Email: rlarson@conservationfund.org

Anna Tefft, Director of Lending/ NC Senior Business Lender (for Western NC)

Phone: (336) 734-6902, Email: atefft@conservationfund.org

Geographic Service Area:

North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and the Appalachian portions of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee

Description of organization and program:

NCIF is a business loan fund that provides debt and equity financing to small green businesses up to \$250,000. NCIF is a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that seeks to create employment and business expansion in economically distressed communities.

NCIF targets businesses that use natural resources sustainably. NCIF sectors include: sustainable agriculture; sustainable forestry and forest products; eco and heritage tourism; recycling; renewable energy and energy efficiency; water conservation; and natural medicines and products. NCIF also provides targeted technical assistance to build the non-financial capacity of their clients.

Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Loans and Investments

Investment criteria and loan applications can be downloaded from

http://www.ncifund.org/getting_started.

NCIF recommends that after reviewing the investment criteria, you contact an NCIF lender (see contacts) prior to filling out the loan application.

Technical Assistance

NCIF is an active partner in its clients' businesses. NCIF offers current and prospective customers targeted business and technical assistance. The assistance is provided by its staff, outside experts, or by local resource partners.

NCIF has helped clients with: marketing; specialty food and forest product manufacturing; accounting systems; internet marketing; legal issues; preparing *pro forma* financial statements; and writing business plans.



GRANTS & LOANS

North Carolina Agricultural Finance Authority, a part of the
National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs

www.stateagfinance.com/northcarolina.html

Contact Person:

Frank Bordeaux, Executive Director

Phone: (919) 790-3949

Email: frank.bordeaux@ncagr.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of organization:

A loan program in the State of North Carolina focused on supporting farmers, ranchers and the agricultural industry.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Loans

Series I Farm Real Estate Loan: Targets farmers having difficulty qualifying for conventional loans

Beginning Farmer Loan Program: For young farmers beginning land ownership

“Ag Start” Beginning Farmer loan Program: For beginning farmers

Agricultural Development Bonds: Intended for agribusinesses. To be used towards the processing and manufacturing of agricultural items.

Facilities Disaster Loans: For farmers who have experienced damage to their farm buildings and structures due to natural disasters.

Agribusiness Loans: Agribusinesses that are providing value added processing support for other facets of agriculture.



NC Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification Cost Share Assistance

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

www.ncagr.gov/markets/NCgradesvc/

Contact Person:

Shirley Nicholson, Program Assistant

Phone: 919-707 -3136

Email: Shirley.Nicholson@ncagr.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of Program:

The Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification Cost Share Assistance program will help fruit and vegetable growers with financial support in obtaining a third party audit to verify they are following effective food safety practices.

Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible for assistance, fruit and vegetable growers must meet the following requirements:

- ✓ Submit an application form for approval to participate in this program prior to receiving the Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) audit.
- ✓ Growers must have a third party audit from an approved government agency or company that verifies (GAP/GHP).
- ✓ GAP/GHP audits can be for Farm Review, Field Harvest and Field Packing Activities, Packing House Facility, Storage and Transportation.
- ✓ The GAP/GHP audit must be conducted in 2012.

Program Services:

Financial Assistance-GAP/GHP Cost-Share Program

GAP/GHP application is on the next page.



April 17, 2012

N. C. Good Agricultural Practices Certification Assistance Program

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services has developed the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification Assistance Program. This program will help North Carolina growers with financial support in obtaining a third party audit to verify they are following effective food safety practices.

Food safety has become an important marketing and health issue for the produce industry. Buyers are demanding assurances from growers that their produce is safe. It will become more difficult for growers to market their fruits and vegetables if they don't have a GAP program in place. The goal of this program is to increase the number of N.C. farmers following Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)/ Good Handling Practices (GHP) and using third party audits to verify their food safety program.

This is a cost share program designed to assist fruit and vegetable growers with the cost of a GAP/GHP audit. For farms that are being audited for the first time the NCDA & CS will pay up to \$600 of the cost of having a third party audit to verify a farm's food safety program. A farm that has been audited in previous years will receive a total of \$300 for certification costs. The total amount a farm can receive will be \$600 per year for first time audits or \$300 per year for subsequent audits. Funds will be paid to the auditor conducting the GAP/GHP audit to reduce the cost to the farmer by up to \$600 or \$300. Participating farmers will be responsible for paying the auditor for any balance due above the reimbursement threshold. Funding for this program comes from an USDA grant to the NCDA & CS. Funds are available on a first come first served basis until the funds are depleted.

To be eligible for assistance, North Carolina fruit and vegetable growers must meet the following requirements

- Growers must have a third party audit from an approved government agency or company that verifies Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices.
- GAP/GHP audits can be for Farm Review, Field Harvest and Field Packing Activities, Packing House Facility, Storage and Transportation.
- The GAP/GHP audit must be conducted in 2012.
- Submit an application form for approval to participate in this program to the NCDA&CS prior to receiving the GAP/GHP audit.

For additional information or to request an application for this program, contact Shirley Nicholson, 919-707 -3136 or email Shirley.Nicholson@ncagr.gov.

N. C. Good Agricultural Practices Certification Assistance Program
North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS)
Application Form

This program is a cost share program designed to assist fruit and vegetable growers with the cost of a GAP/GHP audit. The NCDA&CS will pay up to \$600 of the cost of having a third party audit to verify a farm's food safety program for first time users; \$300 for those who have previously participated in the program. Funds will be paid to the auditor conducting the GAP/GHP audit to reduce the cost to the farmer by up to \$600/\$300. Participating farmers will be responsible for paying the auditor for any balance due above \$600/\$300. Funds are available on a first come first served basis until the funds are depleted. Applications must be submitted for approval to participate in this program to the NCDA&CS prior to receiving the GAP/GHP audit. Payments are limited to \$600 per farm or company for audits conducted in 2012.

Date: _____
Name of applicant: _____
Farm Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ County _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
E-mail: _____

Name and address of certifying Agency or company that will perform your GAP/GHP audit:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____

My third party GAP/GHP audit will be conducted for the following areas:
Farm Review _____ Field Harvest and Field Packing _____
Packing House Facility _____ Storage and Transportation _____

Estimated Date third party GAP/GHP audit will be conducted: _____
Crop(s) to be included in the GAP/GHP audit: _____

I am a North Carolina fruit and/or vegetable grower/packer. I plan to have my farm,/packing house audited for GAP/GHP. I understand that the auditor that performs my GAP/GHP audit will be paid up to \$600 of the cost of the audit by NCDA&CS and I am responsible for any balance due above \$600.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Mail or fax to: NCDA&CS - GAP Certification Assistance Program
Shirley Nicholson
1020 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1020
FAX:919-715-0155

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Originally established by Congress in 1935 as the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), NRCS has expanded to become a conservation leader for all natural resources, ensuring private lands are conserved, restored, and more resilient to environmental challenges, like climate change.

Seventy percent of the land in the United States is privately owned, making stewardship by private landowners absolutely critical to the health of our Nation's environment. NRCS works with landowners through conservation planning and assistance designed to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals that result in productive lands and healthy ecosystems.

Accessing USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs:

1) Contact your local NRCS Office

Find a local NRCS Office here:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?service=action/1/ServiceCenterSummary/2/NavBar.StateMapLink> or call the State Conservationist Office at (919) 873-2100.

Let NRCS know you are a farmer or producer and that you want to start the process of working with USDA – NRCS.

2) Get a Conservation Plan

Getting a conservation plan through NRCS is a key step. The Conservation Plan can answer the following questions and many more:

- What do you as a landowner want to do?
- What improvements can be made on your property?
- How can you save money on energy consumption and fuel use?

The Conservation Plan serves as a road map, showing exactly how NRCS can help you and what programs they have that will be of benefit to you.

3) Applying for NRCS programs

After the Conservation Plan is completed, a District Conservationist can help determine what NRCS programs you may be eligible for.

It is recommended that you begin by accessing NRCS in the above manner, instead of asking about applying to specific programs in NRCS. After completing the Conservation Plan, you may learn that you are qualified for programs that you never considered and that you do not qualify for others you wanted to pursue, so approaching NRCS in the order above is best.



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp

www.nc.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSP/index.html

Contact Person(s):

Greg Walker, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Phone: (919) 873-2104, Email: greg.walker@nc.usda.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of Program:

The Conservation Stewardship Program helps producers carry out activities that conserve or improve the quality of natural resources on their land, such as soil, water, air and wildlife.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance, Financial Assistance - Payments

CSP offers participants two possible types of payments:

- ✓ Annual payment for installing and adopting additional activities, and improving, maintaining, and managing existing activities
- ✓ Supplemental payment for the adoption of resource-conserving crop rotations

Max Award: \$40,000 annually and \$200,000 for the five-year contract life (Indian tribes and Alaska Native corporations do not have a limit)

The program shares the costs of implementing existing or new conservation activities in a comprehensive manner. The sale of “locally grown and marketed farm products” is considered a conservation enhancement* under this program.

*“Enhancement” means a type of conservation activity used to treat natural resources and greatly improve conservation performance.

The program has 97 individual enhancements, including:

- ✓ The sale of locally grown and marketed farm products;
- ✓ Transitioning to organic production and certification;
- ✓ Conducting on-farm energy audits;
- ✓ Establishing pollinator habitat.

To find out more information about the Conservation Stewardship Program, contact Greg Walker, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs at (919) 873-2104.



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Contact Person:

Greg Walker, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Phone: (919) 873-2104

Email: greg.walker@nc.usda.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of Program:

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program assists farmers and ranchers in planning and implementing conservation practices that improve the natural resources (e.g. soil, water, wildlife) on their agricultural land and forestland. A practice supported through EQIP is the installation of seasonal high tunnels (also known as hoop houses), which are unheated greenhouses that can extend a producer's growing season while conserving resources.

In addition, EQIP can help producers transition to organic production or help those growers already certified maintain their certification. USDA has allocated \$50 million specifically for certified organic producers or those in the process of transitioning to organic production systems.

Owners and operators of agricultural lands can apply for the EQIP program. In addition, a purpose of EQIP is to help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal and local environmental regulations.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance, Financial Assistance - Cost Share

Cost Share Rate: Varies from 50 to 75% of the average installation costs. Up to 90% for limited resource and beginning farmers

Max Award: \$300,000 during any six-year period; \$80,000 during any six-year period through the EQIP Organic Initiative

The following are initiatives of the EQIP program:

Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative: NRCS helps producers plan and implement high tunnels, steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include:

- Better plant and soil quality,
- Fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment,



- Better air quality due to fewer vehicles being needed to transport crops.

More than 4,000 high tunnels have been planned and implemented nationwide through this initiative over the past two years.

For more information about the Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/technical/nra/rca/?&cid=stelp_rdb1046250

Organic Initiative: NRCS helps certified organic growers and producers working to achieve organic certification implement conservation practices for organic production. New for fiscal year 2012, applicants will be evaluated continuously during the ranking periods. Applications meeting or exceeding a threshold score may be approved for an EQIP contract before the end of the ranking period. Applications rating below the threshold score will be deferred to the next period. A new threshold score will be established at the beginning of each ranking period. This new scoring process allows organic producers to implement conservation practices in a more timely manner.

On-Farm Energy Initiative: NRCS and producers develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS then uses audit data to develop cost-saving energy conservation recommendations.

Air Quality Initiative: NRCS helps producers address air quality concerns on their farms. Assistance includes:

- establishing cover crops,
- planting windbreaks,
- implementing nutrient management practices,
- applying other conservation measures that mitigate and prevent air quality problems.

Conservation practices installed through this initiative reduce airborne particulate matter and greenhouse gases and conserve energy.

To find out more information about the NRCS EQIP Program in NC, visit www.nc.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/EQIP/index.html

Or contact Greg Walker, State Conservationist for Programs, at (919) 873-2104 or greg.walker@nc.usda.gov



Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

www.nc.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/WRP/index.html

Contact Person:

Mike Hinton, Assistant State Conservationist for Easements and Water Resources

Phone: (919) 873-2103

Email: mike.hinton@nc.usda.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of Program:

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program that protects, restores and enhances wetlands, while maximizing wildlife benefits.

Eligibility: To be eligible for WRP, land must be restorable and be suitable for wildlife benefits. Lands eligible for WRP are:

- ✓ wetlands farmed under natural conditions;
- ✓ farmed wetlands;
- ✓ prior converted cropland;
- ✓ farmed wetland pasture;
- ✓ land that has become a wetland as a result of flooding, rangeland, pasture, or production forest land where the hydrology has been significantly degraded and can be restored;
- ✓ riparian areas which link protected wetlands;
- ✓ lands adjacent to protected wetlands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values; and
- ✓ previously restored wetlands that need long-term protection.

Additional requirements for WRP are: land has not changed ownership in the past seven years, and landowner must meet adjusted gross income (AGI) and other criteria. Your local district conservationist can help you determine land and owner eligibility.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance, Financial Assistance - Cost Share

The program offers three enrollment options:

1. Permanent Easement is a conservation easement in perpetuity. USDA pays 100% of the easement value and up to 100% of the restoration costs.
2. 30-Year Easement is an easement that expires after 30 years. USDA pays up to 75% of the easement value and up to 75% of the restoration costs.



3. For both permanent and 30-year easements, USDA pays all costs associated with recording the easement in the local land records office, including recording fees, charges for abstracts, survey and appraisal fees, and title insurance.
4. Restoration Cost-Share Agreement is an agreement to restore or enhance the wetland functions and values without placing an easement on the enrolled acres. USDA pays up to 75% of the restoration costs.

The application process for WRP is continuous throughout the year.



Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI-USA) - Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund, Demonstration Grant Program

www.ncfarmgrants.org

Contact Person:

Joe Schroeder, Grant Manager

Phone: (919) 542-1396, ext. 208

Email: joe@rafiusa.org

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of Program:

The goal of the Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund is to keep farmers in farming and maintain the economic base of North Carolina's rural communities. The Reinvestment Fund helps farmers and rural communities develop new sources of agricultural income through the provision of cost-share grants. The Reinvestment Fund will make two types of demonstration awards: **Grant Awards of up to \$8,000 for individuals or \$10,000 for collaborative farmer projects.**

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Cost-Share Grant

- **Eligibility Requirements for Producers/Individual Applicants:**

- ✓ Must earn at least 50% of personal income from your farm operation.
- ✓ Priority is given to farmers who earned a significant portion of their income from tobacco at the time of the Master Settlement Agreement (1997-1998).
- ✓ Priority is given to projects that demonstrate a way to replace lost tobacco income and to those proposals that explore innovative strategies in production, processing or marketing.
- ✓ Past grantees that have received a grant from RAFI or Tobacco Trust Fund Commission are not eligible.

- **Eligibility Requirements for Community Groups:**

- ✓ Groups of farmers, farm cooperatives, or farmer associations partnering with churches, local businesses, civic organizations, or combinations of these are eligible.
- ✓ Should include some NC farmers that meet eligibility requirements (listed above).



- ✓ Priority is given to groups with members who received a significant portion of their income from tobacco at the time of the Master Settlement Agreement (1997-1998).

- **Project Eligibility:**

- ✓ Generate new farm income
- ✓ Establish new markets for local products and services
- ✓ Develop new uses for greenhouses
- ✓ Add value to existing farm products by processing, packaging or marketing in a new way
- ✓ Make new use of tobacco facilities and equipment
- ✓ Maintain or create quality employment, including self-employment or opportunities for home-based businesses
- ✓ Make optimal use of on-farm and natural resources

Note: Projects should have **some** of these qualities but need not meet every criteria. High priority will be given to projects that are innovative and demonstrate a new direction or opportunity for farmers in North Carolina.

The final deadline to apply for a grant is December 5, 2012. If the application is submitted by the Early Bird deadline of November 14, 2012, program staff will review your application and provide feedback and suggestions on how to improve your application.

The 2013 grant application and guidelines can be found at:
<http://rafiusa.org/programs/tobacco/tobacco.html>

The application for this Grant is also on the following page.

If you would like to discuss your project idea or the application process with a RAFI staff member, call (919) 542-1396, ext. 208.





Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

2013 Demonstration Grant Program

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

****Application Deadline: December 5, 2012****

The Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund (TCRF) aims to assist farmers and rural communities to develop new sources of agricultural income through provision of cost-share grants. TCRF is supported exclusively by a grant from the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission. The program awards grants of up to \$8,000 to individual farmers, or \$10,000 for collaborative farmer projects in North Carolina. ***Please read the eligibility requirements carefully as they have changed from previous years.***

Farmer Eligibility:

1. Farmers must be earning at least 50% of their personal income from their farm operation.
2. Past Grantees who have received a grant from RAFI-USA or the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission are not eligible to apply.
 - *Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate a way to replace lost tobacco income.*
 - *High priority will be given to innovative projects that show a new direction or opportunity for farmers in North Carolina.*

Collaborative Farmer Project Eligibility:

1. An eligible "collaborative farmer project" may be a group of farmers, farm coops, farmer associations, churches, local business, civic organizations or combinations of these.
2. The proposed collaborative farmer project must include at least three (3) *eligible* North Carolina farmers, as defined above.
3. Eligible farmers must be active in the leadership of the proposed project.

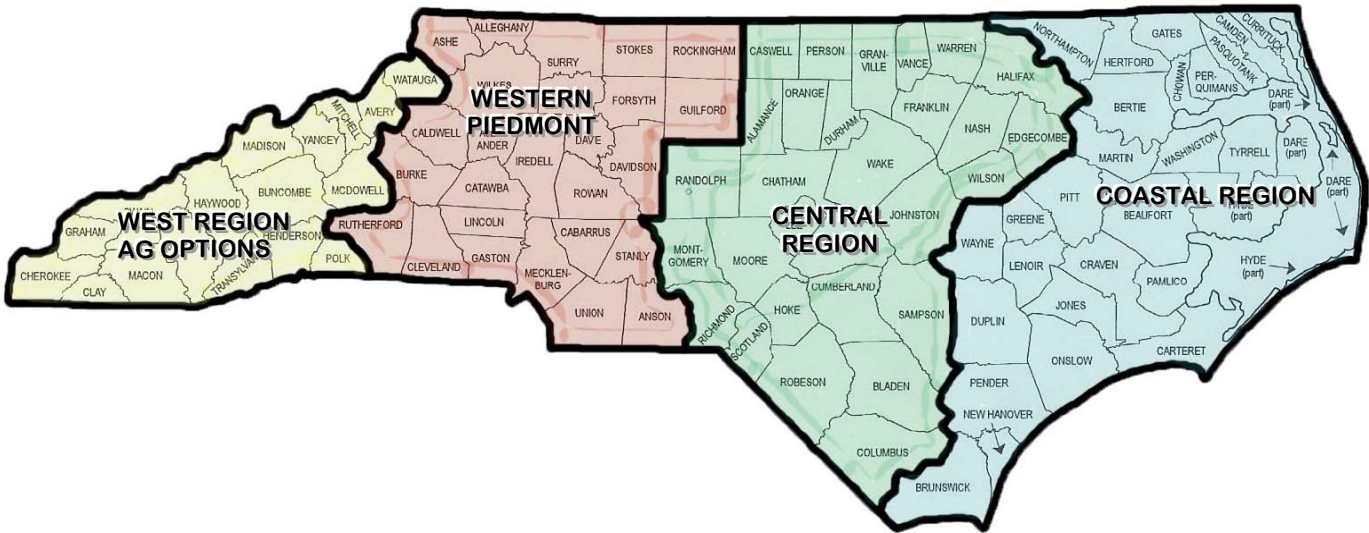
The TCRF programs aims to support innovative, replicable farm-based enterprises. We are interested in funding projects that:

- have a likelihood of generating new farm income;
- establish new markets for local products and services;
- develop new uses for existing greenhouses, tobacco facilities and equipment;
- add value to existing farm products by processing, packaging or marketing in a special or innovative way;
- maintain or create quality employment opportunities, including self-employment or opportunities for home-based businesses; or
- make optimal use of on-farm and natural resources.

To see a description of projects funded by the TCRF programs in previous years visit: www.ncfarmgrants.org.

REGIONS SERVED

RAFI-USA administers the grant program for farmers and collaborative farmer groups located in the Western Piedmont, Central Region and Coastal Region as defined by the map below. A grant program for farmers located in the West Region of the state is administered by [WNC Ag Options](http://wncagoptions.org).



Who to Contact:

West Region

Jennifer Ferre, WNC Ag Options
Tel: (828) 333-4277
<http://wncagoptions.org/home>

Western Piedmont, Central Region & Coastal Region

Joe Schroeder, RAFI-USA
Tel: (919) 542-1396, Ext. 208
Email: joe@rafiusa.org
<http://www.ncfarmgrants.org>

The Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund is supported exclusively by a grant from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission.



PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

APPLICATION: Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund Demonstration grants are awarded on a competitive basis. You must submit an application in order to be considered for a grant. Application materials are available online at www.ncfarmgrants.org or by contacting RAFI-USA at 919-542-1396 ext. 208. *You may download a copy of the application and complete the application on your computer using Microsoft Word, or you may print out a hard copy and fill-out by hand.*

DEADLINE: All Applications are due in the RAFI-USA office on December 5, 2012 by 5:00 p.m.

Important: Emailed and/or faxed will NOT be accepted. Please send **hardcopies** only. Proposals arriving after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

EARLYBIRD REVIEW: Applicants may request an advance review of their proposals for feedback by emailing in the proposal AS SOON AS POSSIBLE but no later than by November 14, 2012. RAFI-USA staff will contact applicants who have submitted by the Early bird deadline with suggestions for improving their applications. Applicants are encouraged to apply early.

AWARD DECISIONS

The Reinvestment Fund Review Board reviews the applications and makes recommendations of projects to be funded. The Reinvestment Fund Review Board members include farmers with backgrounds in tobacco and/or income diversification,

university researchers, marketing specialists, lending experts, and church and community leaders. *Farmers who serve on the board are not eligible for grants.*

An evaluation worksheet is included with the application, which allows you to see the criteria the reviewers will use to evaluate your proposal. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by February 27, 2013.

PAYMENTS AND REPORTS: Contracts will be sent to the new grantees after the award announcement. A first payment of 75% of the grant award will be made after the contracts are signed. A second payment of 20% will be made date (TBA), assuming adequate progress is made toward project goals. The final payment of 5% of the award amount will be made date (TBA) after all project activities have been completed. Grant winners are required to submit an Interim Project Report and a Final Report.

IMPORTANT DATES!

Early Bird Deadline	November 14, 2012
Application Deadline	December 5, 2012
Award Notification	February 27, 2013

COST-SHARE MUST BE LISTED: Cost-share is the farmer or community contribution to the project. Cost-share can be either direct in terms of actual cash expenditures or in-kind in terms of labor, equipment, etc. Cost-share must be shown in the budget.

Grant funds can be used to offset costs for:

- specialized equipment;
- retrofitting and adaptation of existing equipment;
- supply needs;
- sampling, analysis, scouting;
- outreach expenses;
- to investigate the feasibility of a new project;
- new marketing, handling or processing operations.
- Labor for contractors and employees

Grant funds **CANNOT** be used for:

- purchase of livestock;
- new, general-use farm equipment.

Personal funds to buy items that will be used in the new enterprise count as cost-share. Also, you may be able to count certain in-kind contributions, such as the value of the time and labor that you and your cooperators put into the project and fair market value for equipment used in the project. **No set cost-share amount is required.**

OUTREACH: Farmers and communities who are awarded grants are required to conduct outreach to educate others about their projects. This can be done by hosting farm tours or field days, having articles written about the project, or making presentations at a farm or community meeting. RAFI staff will help grant recipients with outreach upon request but it is the recipients responsibility to plan and schedule outreach events.

COOPERATORS: Cooperators are not required but increase the likelihood of success of your project. Cooperators may include other farmers, marketing, and production specialists, extension agents, crop consultants, non-profit organizations, business and other agricultural advisors. The best cooperators bring needed expertise to the project and have a clear role in helping the project succeed.

Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA
274 Pittsboro Elementary School Road-PO Box 640-Pittsboro, NC 27312·
919-542-1396 www.rafiusa.org

COVER SHEET
2013 TCRF Grant Application (Individual Farmer)



****Please read the instructions and eligibility guidelines prior to completing this application. ****

APPLICATIONS MUST BE IN THE RAFI-USA OFFICE BY 5:00 PM ON DEC. 5, 2012

Project Title: _____

Applicant: (First & Last Name): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Fax: _____ **Website:** _____

Daytime message phone or cell phone: _____

1. Percentage of personal income generated from your farm operation: _____ %
2. What percent of your income came from tobacco at the time of the Master Settlement Agreement (Crop year 1997-1998)? _____ %
3. Do you or your farming operation carry liability insurance? ___ YES ___ NO
4. Will this project create an opportunity for a new generation of farmers in your family to be employed on the farm? ___ YES ___ NO
5. Have you received a past grant from RAFI-USA or the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission? ___ YES ___ NO
6. Are you a former Quota Holder? ___ YES ___ NO
7. Are you a former Tobacco Grower? ___ YES ___ NO
8. Where is your farm located? County: _____

How much money are you requesting from RAFI-USA (up to \$8,000)? \$ _____

1. Briefly describe your project.
2. What is new or innovative about your project? How is your project different than what others in your community are already doing? Are you aware of other farmers who are doing something similar? If so, where are they located and what are they doing?
3. Describe in detail your plan for completing your project. Tell us what specific tasks need to be completed and give dates by which you will complete those tasks.
4. How will the new project fit into your existing farming operation? Will labor requirements for the new project conflict with your existing workload? How will you handle the additional workload? Will the project require you to hire additional labor? If so, how many hours and at what wage rate?
5. What research have you done to determine if this project will work? Why do you believe that this project can be successful?
6. How have you determined that there is a market demand for the products? Briefly describe your marketing strategy.
7. If your project is successful, what might other farmers learn from your experience? Is this an enterprise that could be duplicated by others without causing too much competition?
8. A requirement of receiving a grant from RAFI-USA is to conduct outreach to other growers about the results of your project. How will you let other farmers know about your experience with your project?
9. Tell us about yourself. What is your farm and off-farm experience? What skills do you have that will be useful to the successful completion of your project?
10. In what areas do you believe you will need assistance in order to successfully complete your project? Who have you identified to assist you in those areas? Are those individuals aware of your project and have they agreed to help you?
11. What is your goal for the project? If you are successful, how will the project contribute to keeping you or others sustainably employed on the farm?
12. How much income do you expect to generate from the project annually? What other sources of income will you have during the course of this project?
- 12b. Are you leveraging funds from other sources aside from yourself? If yes, please note the sources.

BUDGET FORM

Use the following pages to estimate your budget. Please list all of your expected expenses in the appropriate categories and calculate a total on the last page. Your budget should clearly show how grant funds will be used on your project. Grant awards can be up to \$8,000.

Items that you list under the **Grant Contribution** heading are those for which you will use grant funds provided by the Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund.

Items that you list under the **Cost-share** heading are your contribution to the project. Cost-share contribution can be either direct in terms of actual cash expenditures or in-kind in terms of the value of your labor, equipment, land, etc. that you will use for the project. *No set amount of cost-share is required.*

1. Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services

Grant Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
<i>Example: Well Driller</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>\$\$\$\$\$</i>
Total grant contribution for Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services:			

2. Personnel Salaries **Note: Only labor directly related to the grant activities completed by contractors and employees over and above normal farm operations is eligible for funding.*

Grant Contribution

Employee	# of Hours	Hourly Wage	Total
Total grant contribution for Personnel Salaries:			

Cost-share Contribution

Employee	# of Hours	Hourly Wage	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Personnel Salaries:			

3. Use of Farm Equipment (for equipment rental)

Grant Contribution

Equipment Item	Acres in Project	Charge per Acre/Hour	Total
<i>Example: Auger</i>	<i>?? Acres</i>	<i>Rental rates</i>	<i>\$\$\$\$\$</i>
Total grant contribution for Use of Farm Equipment:			

Cost-share Contribution

Equipment Item	Acres in Project	Charge per Acre	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Use of Farm Equipment:			

4. Supplies, Materials and Equipment (We do not fund general use equipment)

Grant Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
Total grant contribution for Supplies and Materials:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Supplies and Materials:			

5. Travel

Grant Contribution

From/To	Miles per Trip	Cost per Mile	Total
Total grant contribution for Travel:			

Cost-share Contribution

From/To	Miles per Trip	Cost per Mile	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Travel:			

6. Marketing

Grant Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
Total grant contribution for Communication:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Communication:			

7. Outreach and Education Events (For example: Cost related to hosting a farm tour)

Grant Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
Total grant contribution for Outreach:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Outreach:			

BUDGET SUMMARY FORM

Please use this worksheet to summarize the information from the previous pages.

Grant Contribution by line item:

Line Item	Grant Contribution	Cost-share Contribution
1. Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services		
2. Personnel Salaries for contractors and employees		
3. Use of Farm Equipment		
4. Supplies and Materials		
5. Travel		
6. Marketing		
7. Outreach and Education		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION		

Please, transfer the total amount of grant contribution to the Amount Requested line on the cover sheet of the application packet. If applicable, please list other sources of funding for the project:

SIGNATURES

Thank you for your effort in completing the application form. Please, sign the proposal.

Signature

Date

**Please complete and return to the RAFI-USA office by 5pm on December 5, 2012.
Faxed and/or emailed applications will not be accepted.**

**Mail to: (No fax or email)
Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund
RAFI-USA
P.O. Box 640
274 Elementary School Road
Pittsboro, NC 27312**

This project is supported by:



This is a copy of the evaluation worksheet the review committee will be using to score the grant applications. **APPLICATION EVALUATION WORKSHEET (Used by the Review Committee)**

Point Scale:

1-2 is a low score that reflects a low percentage or low quality or small outcome.

3-4 is a moderate score that reflects 50% or average quality or moderate outcome.

6-7 reflects a high percentage or excellent quality, big outcome or return.

-
-
1. Does the project benefit farmers who earned a significant percentage of income from tobacco at the time of the Master Settlement Agreement (1998)? (7 points) _____
 2. Will this project create an opportunity for the next generation to be employed on the farm? _____
 3. If successful, will the project contribute a significant amount of income to farmer participants? (7 points) _____
 4. If successful, will the project help to maintain existing farm employment or create new farm employment opportunities? (7 points) _____
 5. Has the applicant adequately researched the production and processing requirements of the product? (6 points) _____
 6. Has the applicant evaluated the market potential for the product? Does the applicant have a sufficient market? (6 points) _____
 7. Does the applicant have the appropriate skills to carry out the project? Has the applicant identified cooperators to supplement gaps in the applicant's skills and abilities? (6 points) _____
 8. Is it clear who will lead and carry out project activities? (6 points) _____
 9. Is the budget realistic? (6 points) _____
 10. Is the project innovative? Does the project represent a new direction or opportunity for farmers? (7 points) _____
 11. If successful, will the experiences of the project be useful to other groups of farmers in developing new income sources? Can the project be expanded to include additional farm families (7 points) _____
 12. Has the applicant developed an appropriate outreach plan for the project? (7 points) _____
 13. Will cost-share support from RAFI enable the project to become financially self-supporting within a reasonable amount of time? (6 points) _____

TOTAL: _____



Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

2013 Demonstration Grant Program

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

****Application Deadline: December 5, 2012****

The Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund (TCRF) aims to assist farmers and rural communities to develop new sources of agricultural income through provision of cost-share grants. TCRF is supported exclusively by a grant from the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission. The program awards grants of up to \$8,000 to individual farmers, or \$10,000 for collaborative farmer projects in North Carolina. ***Please read the eligibility requirements carefully as they have changed from previous years.***

Farmer Eligibility:

1. Farmers must be earning at least 50% of their personal income from their farm operation.
2. Past Grantees who have received a grant from RAFI-USA or the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission are not eligible to apply.
 - *Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate a way to replace lost tobacco income.*
 - *High priority will be given to innovative projects that show a new direction or opportunity for farmers in North Carolina.*

Collaborative Farmer Project Eligibility:

1. An eligible "collaborative farmer project" may be a group of farmers, farm coops, farmer associations, churches, local business, civic organizations or combinations of these.
2. The proposed collaborative farmer project must include at least three (3) *eligible* North Carolina farmers, as defined above.
3. Eligible farmers must be active in the leadership of the proposed project.

The TCRF programs aims to support innovative, replicable farm-based enterprises. We are interested in funding projects that:

- have a likelihood of generating new farm income;
- establish new markets for local products and services;
- develop new uses for existing greenhouses, tobacco facilities and equipment;
- add value to existing farm products by processing, packaging or marketing in a special or innovative way;
- maintain or create quality employment opportunities, including self-employment or opportunities for home-based businesses; or
- make optimal use of on-farm and natural resources.

To see a description of projects funded by the TCRF programs in previous years visit: www.ncfarmgrants.org.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

APPLICATION: Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund Demonstration grants are awarded on a competitive basis. You must submit an application in order to be considered for a grant. Application materials are available online at www.ncfarmgrants.org or by contacting RAFI-USA at 919-542-1396 ext. 208. *You may download a copy of the application and complete the application on your computer using Microsoft Word, or you may print out a hard copy and fill-out by hand.*

DEADLINE: Applications are due in the RAFI-USA office on **December 5, 2012 by 5:00 p.m.**

Please send **hardcopies** only. No fax or email submissions will be accepted. Proposals arriving after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

EARLYBIRD REVIEW: Applicants may request an advance review of their proposals for feedback by emailing in the proposal AS SOON AS POSSIBLE but no later than by November 14, 2012. RAFI staff will contact applicants who have submitted by the Early bird deadline with suggestions for improving their applications.

AWARD DECISIONS

The Reinvestment Fund Review Board reviews the applications and makes recommendations of projects to be funded. The Reinvestment Fund Review Board members include farmers with backgrounds in tobacco and/or income diversification,

university researchers, marketing specialists, lending experts, and church and community leaders. *Farmers who serve on the board are not eligible for grants.*

An evaluation worksheet is included with the application, which allows you to see the criteria the reviewers will use to evaluate your proposal. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by February 27, 2013.

PAYMENTS AND REPORTS: Contracts will be sent to the new grantees after the award announcement. A first payment of 75% of the grant award will be made after the contracts are signed. A second payment of 20% will be made date (TBA), assuming adequate progress is made toward project goals. The final payment of 5% of the award amount will be made date (TBA) after all project activities have been completed. Grant winners are required to submit an Interim Project Report and a Final Report.

PROJECT DURATION: All project activities should be complete by (TBD).

IMPORTANT DATES!

Early Bird Deadline	November 14, 2012
Application Deadline	December 5, 2012
Award Notification	February 27, 2013

COST-SHARE MUST BE LISTED: Cost-share is the farmer or community contribution to the project. Cost-share can be either direct in terms of actual cash expenditures or in-kind in terms of labor, equipment, etc. Cost-share must be shown in the budget.

Grant funds can be used to offset costs for:

- specialized equipment;
- retrofitting and adaptation of existing equipment;
- supply needs;
- sampling, analysis, scouting;
- outreach expenses;
- to investigate the feasibility of a new project;
- new marketing, handling or processing operations.
- Labor for contractors and employees

Grant funds **CANNOT** be used for:

- purchase of livestock;
- new, general-use farm equipment.

Personal funds to buy items that will be used in the new enterprise count as cost-share. Also, you may be able to count certain in-kind contributions, such as the value of the time and labor that you and your cooperators put into the project and fair market value for equipment used in the project. **No set cost-share amount is required.**

OUTREACH: Farmers and communities who are awarded grants are required to conduct outreach to educate others about their projects. This can be done by hosting farm tours or field days, having articles written about the project, or making presentations at a farm or community meeting. RAFI staff will help grant recipients with outreach upon request but it is the recipients responsibility to plan and schedule outreach events.

COOPERATORS: Cooperators are not required but increase the likelihood of success of your project. Cooperators may include other farmers, marketing, and production specialists, extension agents, crop consultants, non-profit organizations, business and other agricultural advisors. The best cooperators bring needed expertise to the project and have a clear role in helping the project succeed.

Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA
274 Pittsboro Elementary School Road·PO Box 640·Pittsboro, NC 27312·
919-542-1396 www.rafiusa.org

COVER SHEET

2013 Collaborative Farmer Project Application



****Please read the instructions and eligibility guidelines prior to completing this application. ****

APPLICATIONS MUST BE IN THE RAFI-USA OFFICE BY 5:00 PM ON DEC. 5, 2012

PROJECT TITLE: _____

Project Coordinator: _____

Organization: _____ **County:** _____

Phone: _____ **Mailing Address:** _____

Fax: _____ **PO Box:** _____

Email: _____ **Website:** _____

Daytime message phone or cell phone: _____

1. ***Do at least 3 members of your group earn 50% or more of their personal income from farming? YES NO**
2. ****Have you or has your group received a grant from RAFI or the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission in the past? YES NO**
3. **Do you or do members of your group carry liability insurance? YES NO**
4. **Will this project create an opportunity for a new generation of farmers in your community to be employed on a farm? YES NO**
5. **Location of farms in your group (county / counties):** _____

How much money are you requesting from RAFI-USA (up to \$10,000)? \$ _____

Important Reminder: At least 3 members of your group must earn 50% or more of their personal income from farming to be eligible to apply. If you or your group has received a grant from RAFI or the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission in the past, you are not eligible to apply.

1. Briefly describe your project.
2. What is new or innovative about your project? How is your project different than what others in your community are already doing? Are you aware of other farmers who are doing something similar? If so, where are they located and what are they doing?
3. Describe in detail your plan for completing your project. Tell us what specific tasks need to be completed and give dates by which you will complete those tasks.
4. How will the new project fit into the farmers' existing farming operations? Will labor requirements for the new project conflict with existing workloads? How will the farmers in your group handle the additional workload? Will the project require hiring of additional labor? If so, how many hours and at what wage rate?
5. What research have you done to determine if this project will work? Why do you believe that this project can be successful?
6. How have you determined that there is a market demand for the products? Briefly describe your marketing strategy.
7. If your project is successful, what might other farmers learn from your experience? Is this an enterprise that could be duplicated by others without causing too much competition?
8. A requirement of receiving a grant from RAFI-USA is to conduct outreach to other growers about the results of your project. How will you let other farmers know about your experience with your project?
9. Tell us about your group. Who are the group members? What skills do group members have that will be useful to the successful completion of the project? Who will be responsible for managing and carrying out project activities?
10. In what areas do you believe you will need assistance in order to successfully complete your project? Who have you identified to assist you in those areas? Are those individuals aware of your project and have they agreed to help you?
11. What is your goal for the project? If you are successful, how will the project contribute to keeping you or others sustainably employed on the farm?
12. How much income do you expect to generate from the project annually? Please describe your plans for continuing the project beyond the duration of grant funding. Where will you get the money to continue to support project activities?
- 12b. Are you leveraging funds from other sources aside from yourself? If yes, please note the sources.

BUDGET FORM

Use the following pages to estimate your budget. Please list all of your expected expenses in the appropriate categories and calculate a total on the last page. Your budget should clearly show how grant funds will be used on your project. Grant awards can be up to \$10,000.

Items that you list under the **Grant Contribution** heading are those for which you will use grant funds provided by the Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund.

Items that you list under the **Cost-share** heading are your contribution to the project. Cost-share contribution can be either direct in terms of actual cash expenditures or in-kind in terms of the value of your labor, equipment, land, etc. that you will use for the project. *No set amount of cost-share is required.*

1. Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services

Grant Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
<i>Example: Well Driller</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>\$\$\$\$\$</i>
Total grant contribution for Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services:			

2. Personnel Salaries **Note: Only labor directly related to the grant activities completed by contractors and employees over and above normal farm operations is eligible for funding.*

Grant Contribution

Employee	# of Hours	Hourly Wage	Total
<i>Example: Jane Doe</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>\$10/hr</i>	<i>\$600</i>
Total grant contribution for Personnel Salaries:			

Cost-share Contribution

Employee	# of Hours	Hourly Wage	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Personnel Salaries:			

3. Use of Farm Equipment (for equipment rental)

Grant Contribution

Equipment Item	Acres in Project	Charge per Acre/Hour	Total
<i>Example: Auger</i>	<i>?? Acres</i>	<i>Rental rates</i>	<i>\$\$\$\$\$</i>
Total grant contribution for Use of Farm Equipment:			

Cost-share Contribution

Equipment Item	Acres in Project	Charge per Acre	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Use of Farm Equipment:			

4. Supplies, Materials and Equipment (We do not fund general use equipment)

Grant Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
<i>Example: Lumber</i>	<i>20 2x4's</i>	<i>\$2.50</i>	<i>\$50</i>
Total grant contribution for Supplies and Materials:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Supplies and Materials:			

5. Travel

Grant Contribution

From/To	Miles per Trip	Cost per Mile	Total
<i>Example: home to Raleigh for marketing workshop</i>	<i>290</i>	<i>\$0.5</i>	<i>\$145</i>
Total grant contribution for Travel:			

Cost-share Travel Contribution

From/To	Miles per Trip	Cost per Mile	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Travel:			

6. Marketing

Grant Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
<i>Example: Website Set-up</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$500</i>	<i>\$500</i>
Total grant contribution for Marketing:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Communication:			

7. Outreach and Education Events (For example: Cost related to hosting a farm tour)

Grant Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
<i>Example: Flyers for field- day</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>\$.10</i>	<i>\$10</i>
Total grant contribution for Outreach:			

Cost-share Contribution

Item	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Total
Total cost-share contribution for Outreach:			

BUDGET SUMMARY FORM

Please use this worksheet to summarize the information from the previous pages.

Grant Contribution by line item:

Line Item	Grant Contribution	Cost-share Contribution
1. Analysis, Consultants, Subcontractors, and Other Off-farm Services		
2. Personnel Salaries for contractors and employees		
3. Use of Farm Equipment		
4. Supplies and Materials		
5. Travel		
6. Marketing		
7. Outreach and Education		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION		

Please, transfer the total amount of grant contribution to the Amount Requested line on the cover sheet of the application packet.

If applicable, please list other sources of funding for the project:

SIGNATURES

Thank you for your effort in completing the application form. Please, sign and date the proposal.

Signature, Project Coordinator	Date
--------------------------------	------

Signatures of other project organizers:

Signature	Date
-----------	------

Signature	Date
-----------	------

Signature	Date
-----------	------

Signature	Date
-----------	------

Please complete and return to the RAFI-USA office by 5pm, December 5, 2012.

**Mail to: (No fax or email)
Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund
RAFI-USA
P.O. Box 640
274 Elementary School Road
Pittsboro, NC 27312**

This is a copy of the evaluation worksheet the review committee will be using to score the grant applications. **APPLICATION EVALUATION WORKSHEET (Used by the Review Committee)**

Point Scale:

1-2 is a low score that reflects a low percentage or low quality or small outcome.

3-4 is a moderate score that reflects 50% or average quality or moderate outcome.

6-7 reflects a high percentage or excellent quality, big outcome or return.

1. Does the project benefit farmers who earned a significant percentage of income from tobacco at the time of the Master Settlement Agreement (1998)? (7 points) _____
2. Will this project create an opportunity for the next generation to be employed on the farm? (7 points) _____
3. If successful, will the project contribute a significant amount of income to farmer participants? (7 points) _____
4. If successful, will the project help to maintain existing farm employment or create new farm employment opportunities? (7 points) _____
5. Has the applicant adequately researched the production and processing requirements of the product? (6 points) _____
6. Has the applicant evaluated the market potential for the product? Does the applicant have a sufficient market? (6 points) _____
7. Does the applicant have the appropriate skills to carry out the project? Has the applicant identified cooperators to supplement gaps in the applicant's skills and abilities? (6 points) _____
8. Is it clear who will lead and carry out project activities? (6 points) _____
9. Is the budget realistic? (6 points) _____
10. Is the project innovative? Does the project represent a new direction or opportunity for farmers? (7 points) _____
11. If successful, will the experiences of the project be useful to other groups of farmers in developing new income sources? Can the project be expanded to include additional farm families (7 points) _____
12. Has the applicant developed an appropriate outreach plan for the project? (7 points) _____
13. Will cost-share support from RAFI enable the project to become financially self-supporting within a reasonable amount of time? (6 points) _____

TOTAL:

ShadeFund, a program of The Conservation Fund and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities

www.shadefund.org

Contact Person(s):

Rick Larson, Director

Phone: (919) 951- 0113

Email: rlarson@conservationfund.org

Enrique Perez, Web Community Manager

Phone: (919) 951-0118

Email: eperez@conservationfund.org

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of program:

ShadeFund is a nonprofit lender to farms and small green businesses that are good stewards of farmland and forestland. Entrepreneurs use ShadeFund loans to expand, purchase equipment, or move in a new direction. ShadeFund loan amounts are \$2,500 to \$50,000; interest rates vary (currently 4 to 9%) depending on available collateral and credit worthiness. To qualify, you must be an existing small business working in small-scale farming, forestry and forest products, eco-tourism, natural food and medicines, small-scale biomass, or energy efficiency.

Two main questions drive ShadeFund's lending decisions:

- 1) Does the business use natural resources sustainably?
- 2) Can the business make good use of a small loan and repay it?

Once a loan is approved, ShadeFund helps the borrower create a profile page on the ShadeFund website, which helps market its products, services and commitment to using natural resources wisely.

Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Loans

- **Loans:** To read the eligibility requirements for a ShadeFund loan and to apply, you can go to www.shadefund.org/entrepreneurs/become-an-entrepreneur.htm.
- **Gap Financing for Cost-Share Recipients:** ShadeFund offers gap financing to help farmers take advantage of cost-share programs. Gap financing provides the upfront money you need for a project. It is repaid when your cost-share or permanent financing is available. ShadeFund gap financing is structured as a low-interest loan.



To apply:

1. Register as an Entrepreneur on the ShadeFund website (www.shadefund.org) and fill out the ShadeFund application, or call Rick Larson at (919) 951-0113 for an application.
2. Submit the ShadeFund application and provide documentation of your cost-share.
3. Submit your last three years of tax returns (with all schedules).

Once the above information has been submitted, ShadeFund will decide on your loan application within 30 days. If approved, ShadeFund can disburse the funds as soon as all loan documents are completed. The entire process can take as little as 30-45 days.

To learn more, visit www.shadefund.org/entrepreneurs/gap-financing.



Slow Money NC

www.slowmoneync.org

Contact Person:

Carol Peppe Hewitt, Project Founder

Phone: (919) 656-8889

Email: info@slowmoneync.org

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of organization:

Slow Money NC brings people together to support the local food economy from the ground up by using sustainable practices to offer healthy, delicious, nutritious, local food to our communities.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Loans

If you have a local farm or other local food enterprise with a viable need for capital to get started or expand, Slow Money NC may be able to help.

They invite you to fill out their online Entrepreneur Information Form at www.slowmoneync.org/borrower-info-form/. Your information is forwarded to potential lenders, and interested lenders are matched directly with individual borrowers.

These are meant to be affordable loans, and the interest rate will be negotiated between the lender and borrower, typically between 2 – 4%. There are **no fees** for making or receiving Slow Money loans. Usually loans will be made for 1- to 5-year terms, and kept to a maximum of \$10,000 per loan. Larger loans have been made, including one loan for \$398,000, which was shared among sixteen lenders.

To discuss your loan idea, contact Carol Peppe Hewitt at Slow Money NC. If you have any questions about Slow Money, please contact them at info@slowmoneync.org



Producer Grant Program

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (Southern SARE)

www.southernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants/Producer-Grants

Contact Person:

John Mayne, Ph.D., Assistant Director Southern SARE Program

Phone: (828) 626-2680

Email: jmayne@uga.edu

Geographic Service Area:

SARE is Nationwide. Southern SARE covers the following states: NC, SC, VA, FL, GA, MS, LA, OK, TX, AL, WV, AR, TN, and KY.

Description of grant:

The purpose of this grant program is for farmers/ranchers to conduct projects to solve challenges and problems they face and develop information on what works and does not work so that other farmers and ranchers facing those same problems can benefit from the results of the funded project.

Southern-SARE Producer Grants are not designed to pay a farmer to farm. They are designed to take some of the financial risk away from trying a solution. Projects must be developed, coordinated and conducted by farmers and/or ranchers or a producer organization. Producer organizations should be comprised primarily of farmers/ranchers and must have majority farmer representation on their governing board.

- **Eligibility:** Any producer or producer organization in the Southern region is eligible to apply for a Producer Grant.

On the farm research and marketing projects that promote sustainable agriculture are eligible projects. Projects should be innovative, generate results that are useful beyond one year, and produce information that many farmers can use.

Calls for proposals occur in September. The deadline for a 2013 grant application to be submitted is November 15, 2012. The application is on the following page.



**Southern Region
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program**

**PRODUCER GRANT PROGRAM
2013 Call for Proposals**

Proposal submission deadline, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time, November 15, 2012

**Proposals MUST be submitted on the SSARE On-Line Proposal Submission System
Information on how to apply for a SSARE Producer Grant on the following pages**

The Southern Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program recognizes the value and importance of on the farm, producer experience in developing solutions to agricultural production problems. In order to capture this producer experience, the Southern Region SARE Producer Grant program is requesting grant proposals from producers or producer organizations interested in conducting research or marketing projects related to sustainable agriculture.

The purpose of this grant program is for farmers/ranchers to conduct projects to solve problems they face and develop information on what works and doesn't work so that other farmers and ranchers facing those same problems can benefit from the results of the funded project.

SSARE Producer Grants are not designed to pay a farmer to farm. They are designed to take some of the financial risk away from trying a solution. Most trials to test ideas and solutions to farming/ranching challenges don't require seeding 50 acres for example. Make sure that your proposal is designed to test an idea that, should it be successful, you'll later try yourself on a larger scale.

Projects must be developed, coordinated and conducted by farmers and/or ranchers or a producer organization. Producer organizations should be comprised primarily of farmers/ranchers and must have majority farmer representation on their governing board. Producers or producer organizations must complete a proposal describing their project and explaining how it will help other producers understand and adopt **sustainable agriculture** practices.

Projects may be funded up to **TWO** years for a **project maximum** of \$10,000 for an individual producer or \$15,000 for a producer organization.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Sustainable agriculture is an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long-term:

- enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends;
- make the most efficient use of nonrenewable and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls;
- sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
- enhance the quality of life for farmers/ranchers and society as a whole.

Any farmer or rancher or farmer/rancher organization in the Southern Region is eligible to apply for a Producer Grant. The Southern Region includes: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. University of Georgia employees are not eligible to apply for Southern SARE Producer Grants.

IMPORTANT!

All of the Instructions, Guidelines, Program Goals and Review Criteria for a Producer Grant Proposal can be found in this Call for Proposals. But Producer Grant proposals must be submitted on our on-line web site. Please read On:

Proposals **MUST** be submitted **ONLY** on the **SSARE Producer Grant On-Line Proposal Submission Web Site**. This web site is really no more difficult than typing your proposal on a word processor which we required in the past. The only difference is that you now need internet access and an email address to submit a proposal.

The Web Site address for On-Line Proposal Submissions of Producer Grant proposals is <http://www.ciids.org/sare/pg/> The web address can also be found on pages 4, 9 and 10 of this call for proposals. But read this call for proposals completely before going there.

Use the on-line proposal system to develop and submit your proposal. Do all of your editing and modifying before you finalize your proposal. **Once your proposal is finalized, it can not be modified. Also, once the November 15, 2012 deadline passes, the on-line system will close and no more proposals—even those in progress that haven't been finalized—can be submitted.**

If you do not have a computer with access to the internet and an email address that would enable you to use the SSARE On-Line Proposal Submission site, please have your cooperator (who can be from Extension, NGO personnel, another farmer/rancher, or anyone you choose) submit your proposal on-line. **But the project must still be yours.**

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. **Projects should fall within the proposal focus areas listed on page 3** of this call for proposals and generate results that other farmers can adopt. Examples of several funded SARE Producer Grant projects can be found on page 4 of this packet.
2. **A farmer or rancher or farmer/rancher organization may submit only ONE proposal** to the SSARE Producer Grant program in any grant year. If you have several good ideas, pick the best one and develop it into a great Producer Grant proposal.
3. **Successful projects must include project cooperators.** They can be other farmers, researchers, extension agents, governmental or non-governmental organizations or others who cooperate in project planning, data collection and outreach of results.
4. All projects must have an **outreach plan** for providing other producers, researchers and extension personnel with an opportunity to learn from project results. The outreach plan is as important as the project itself; **sustainable agriculture** will only be promoted if other growers learn what you are doing. Outreach may be accomplished through workshops, field days, fact sheets, brochures or other outreach activities.
5. Projects may be funded up to **TWO** years for a **maximum** of \$10,000 for an individual producer or \$15,000 for a producer organization.

USE OF FUNDS

Producer Grant funds may be used for the following purposes:

1. Costs of sampling and sample analysis,
2. Materials and supplies needed for the project.
3. Outreach expenses such as holding a field day,
4. Travel (55.5 cents/mile) needed for the project,
5. Hired labor for things that you can't do yourself,
6. Your labor, for project activities above and beyond your normal farming duties,
7. **Refreshments at field days, e.g. coffee, cold drinks, fruit, pie, cookies, etc.**

Producer Grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes:

1. Buying equipment.
2. Starting or expanding a farm or farming operation,
3. Permanent improvements to a farm or ranch, e.g. planting an orchard, buying a herd, bee hives, bees or buying animals.
4. Installing permanent fencing, permanent greenhouses, high tunnels, water containment tanks, irrigation pipe, pumps, building a pond or constructing a building,
5. Lunches or other full meals at field days or large gatherings,
6. Testing of commercial products.

PRODUCER GRANT PROPOSAL FOCUS AREAS

The following focus areas all fit under the overall SARE program goals. The focus areas have been chosen by the Producer Grant Review Committee as areas needing investigation. These focus areas elaborate topics for applicants who are in need of information on research areas of interest to the SARE Producer Grant program.

- 1) **BENEFICIAL INSECT HABITAT** – Developing cover crop or other plant mixes and locations that provide habitat (refuges) that keep populations of native beneficial insects living on the farm ready to attack crop pests as they occur.
- 2) **ALTERNATIVE CROPS/ANIMALS** – Developing alternative crops, animals or products that help a producer's operation become more economically sustainable. These projects must be at least as environmentally sustainable as the existing crops, animals and products they supplement or replace.
- 3) **ORGANIC AGRICULTURE** – Projects that address the production, distribution, marketing and consumption of organic farm products. This includes farmers adding value to organic products. Research into farming systems and practices that make use of on-farm biological cycles for soil, plant and pest management.
- 4) **SUSTAINABLE MARKETING PROJECTS** – Developing markets for existing or alternative crops, animals or products.

- 5) **SUSTAINABLE GRAZING SYSTEMS** – Use of native grass species and or plant/animal management systems to make grazing systems more sustainable.
- 6) **SOIL ORGANIC MATTER BUILDING/PROTECTION/MANAGEMENT** – Projects that increase the sustainability of farming systems by developing soil organic matter and soil biota.
- 7) **INCREASING SUSTAINABILITY OF EXISTING FARMING PRACTICES** – Any practice or system that increases the sustainability of an existing farming practice. The results should be able to be used by other farmers.
- 8) **APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY** – Projects where the applicant develops and builds a device or piece of machinery that promotes sustainable agriculture and can't be purchased off the shelf. The device or machinery must have application for other farmers/ranchers, be able to be duplicated by them and enable them to operate more sustainably.
- 9) **AGROFORESTRY/WATER QUALITY** – The use of trees in farm systems to promote sustainability; this includes water quality and quantity. Silvopastoral systems are of particular interest.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PROPOSAL

On the following 2 pages you can see all the questions you will be asked on the on-line submission web site at <http://www.ciids.org/sare/pg/> Once you have read through this call for proposals, click on that site, follow the directions and begin your proposal.

Title Page:

Project Title

Producer (Farmer or Rancher)

Information requested consists of Farmer or Rancher name (list only one person), full address, telephone, email and fax. Tell us about your farm/ranch operation or producer organization.

SSARE has a continuing commitment to monitor the operation of its review and award processes to identify and address any inequities based on gender or race. To gather information needed for this important task, the applicant should submit the requested information with each proposal. Submission of the requested information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. This information will not be part of the review process, will be confidential and will not appear on any copy of the submitted proposal including the applicant's copy.

Gender: Male, Female

Race: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White/Caucasian, Other

Are you of Hispanic/Latino background? Yes, No

Project Duration

Number of years of project duration. Two year maximum.

Producer (Farmer or Rancher) Organization

If the proposal is from Producer Organization, please provide the organization name, organizational representative (list only one person), full address, telephone, email and fax. Tell us about your farm/ranch operation or producer organization.

Body of Proposal

Statement of Problem

What is the problem and how does it relate to, or affect, the sustainability of agriculture in the South? No more than 500 words (fewer is OK).

Statement of Proposed Solution

What is your answer to the problem? No more than 500 words (fewer is OK).

Approach and Methods

How will you show or demonstrate that your answer or solution works? What will you measure? No more than 500 words (fewer is OK).

Timetable

When will you do the parts of your project? Give us a timetable and the steps you will take to complete your project. No more than 250 words (fewer is OK).

Outreach Plan

Where and how will you tell others (producers, extension and/or researchers) about your results? What is your outreach plan? Outreach plans may include workshops, field days, fact sheets, articles, presentations at agriculture meetings and more. No more than 250 words (fewer is OK).

Cooperators

Please list any major cooperators and who they work for—or if they are a farmer—who have agreed to participate in your project. Briefly explain the role, in the project, of each cooperator. No more than 250 words per cooperator (fewer is OK). **Do not list more than six cooperators**

Budget

Make sure you understand what a SARE Producer Grant will and will not pay for (see page 3). If you request items that a Producer Grant can't fund, your proposal can't be funded. Make sure that your budget is at least as detailed as the sample budget provided. For example, if you request funds for labor, you must show the number of hours and the amount to be paid per hour, who is being paid and what they will be doing. Make sure that you value farmer labor (yours or hired) for what it is worth. If you need more room than you have on the category line on the budget form, there is room below the budget—under Budget Justification—for that information.

Budgetary Justification

Explain any budgetary information that you can't fit onto a budget category line on the budget page. See, sample budget page for budgetary justification detail required.

HOW YOUR PROPOSAL WILL BE REVIEWED

All funding by the Southern SARE Producer Grant program is awarded competitively and more proposals are submitted than can receive funding. Proposals received by the due date are first looked at by the Producer Grant Committee of the SSARE Administrative Council (AC) to make sure each proposal is from a farmer/rancher or farmer/rancher organization and also to make sure that all items requested in the proposal budget are allowable. If the proposal is not from a farmer/rancher or farmer/rancher organization and/or there are items in the budget that SARE doesn't fund (see page 3 for a list of the things that a Producer Grant can't fund) the proposal CAN NOT be funded and will not be sent to the technical reviewers who comprise the next step in the proposal review process.

A Technical Review Committee, made up of farmers, agriculture extension professionals and agriculture researchers reviews those proposals which have been approved to move forward in the review process. The results of the review by the Technical Review Committee are then sent back to the Producer Grant Committee which selects the proposals to be recommended to the AC for funding. Selected proposals are then discussed, voted on and some or all selected proposals will be approved for funding by the full Administrative Council.

A copy of the worksheet that the reviewers use can be found at the end of this document.

Final project awards are made by the Southern SARE Administrative Council in late February. By March you will be contacted regarding the status of your proposal, and a summary of the review comments for your proposal will be provided to you. If awarded a Producer Grant, you will be asked to sign a contract prior to receiving any funds. If you sign the contract, you agree to conduct the activities outlined in your proposal. Any changes in budget or activities **must** receive prior approval from the SARE Assistant Director.

GRANT FUNDS ARE PAID BY REIMBURSEMENT OF ALLOWABLE PROJECT EXPENSES

Once the contract is signed, you will be **paid by reimbursement of allowable project expenses that you spend**. The final 25 percent of the award will be reimbursed when the required **Project Report** has been turned in. Awardees must keep receipts of their expenditures for 3 years after project completion.

EXAMPLES OF FUNDED SARE PRODUCER GRANT PROJECTS

A pecan grower in Texas used a SARE Producer Grant to reduce pesticide spraying for stinkbugs. Two rows of black-eyed peas, to serve as a trap crop, were planted every 20 to 25 tree rows. The stinkbugs preferred the peas to the pecans, and the peas also attracted predatory insects that fed on the pests. With the help of the project cooperators, spraying was reduced but kernel damage was still controlled. For every dollar spent on peas, nine dollars of damage was prevented.

An Oklahoma cut flower grower used a SARE Producer Grant to extend the growing season by conducting trials of different flower species and greenhouse temperatures. While SARE can't pay for greenhouses, the Producer Grant allowed the grower to determine which species could be used in minimally heated conditions. This saved fuel and allowed the sale of cut flowers earlier in the spring and later into the fall.

A Georgia cotton farmer received a SARE Producer Grant which was used to set aside strips of native vegetation to provide habitat for beneficial insects in the cotton field. Each time pests showed up, the predator-beneficials were waiting for them. Even though a little land was lost from production to establish the vegetation strips, net income on the experimental field was the same as on other acreage due to the money saved by not spraying.

The owner of an ornamental plant nursery in Florida used a SARE Producer Grant to try a substitute for the professional potting mix of peat, pine bark and sand normally used. The use of peat in potting soil is expensive and depletes a natural resource. For this project, the grower used composted municipal yard waste as a potting medium. It worked as well as the professional mix, didn't use up a non-renewable resource and was 30 percent less expensive.

This is the information the 2013 Producer Grant on-line BUDGET PAGE will ask for:
 (Explain any budget expenses that don't fit on a Budget Category line)

BUDGET CATEGORY	FUNDS REQUESTED
PERSONNEL (LABOR)	
Personnel (labor): SUB-TOTAL	
OPERATING AND SUPPLIES	
Operating and Supplies: SUB-TOTAL	
TRAVEL	
Travel: SUB-TOTAL	
OUTREACH	
Outreach: SUB-TOTAL	
MISCELLANEOUS	
Miscellaneous: SUB-TOTAL	
PROJECT TOTAL	

PRODUCER GRANT PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

Please make sure that you follow the directions!

Your proposal will be less competitive, or may not be able to be funded at all, if it doesn't follow the guidelines. Look at the evaluation worksheet at the end of this package; the reviewers will use the worksheet questions to review your proposal. Ask yourself how well your proposal fits those questions.

After you have completed your proposal, go over it and make sure that you have followed the directions and have provided all the information requested before you finalize it. And make sure that you **DO** finalize it.

- 1) PLEASE make sure that your budget is at least as detailed as the enclosed sample budget.
- 2) If non-allowed items are requested, your proposal can't be funded. Make sure you understand what a SARE Producer Grant will and will not pay for. See page 3 for a list of non-allowed items.
- 3) Don't request funding to purchase equipment.
- 4) SSARE Producer Grants are not designed to pay a farmer to farm. They are designed to take some of the financial risk away from trying a solution. Most trials to test ideas and solutions to farming/ranching challenges don't require seeding 50 acres for example. Make sure that your proposal is designed to test an idea that, should it be successful, you'll later try yourself on a larger scale.
- 5) The due date for proposals is clearly listed. If you don't finalize your proposal by the deadline (Eastern Time) it can't be accepted later.
- 6) Don't wait until the last minute to submit your proposal! You should open an account on the SSARE On-Line Proposal Submission system early to familiarize yourself with it. If you wait until the last minute and have trouble learning the system, there may not be time to finish. Plan ahead!

If you have questions about your Producer Grant proposal, please don't hesitate to contact:

John Mayne, Ph.D.
Assistant Director
Southern SARE Program
(828) 626-2680
jmayne@uga.edu

The SSARE Producer Grant On-Line Proposal Submission web site is:

<http://www.ciids.org/sare/pg/>

2013 PRODUCER GRANTS SCHEDULE

September, 2012
November 15, 2012
March 2013

Call for Proposals Released
Producer Grant Proposals Due
Producer Grant Awards Announced

Additional Information about Sustainable Agriculture

A source of sustainable agriculture information is the Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC), partially funded by SARE. AFSIC specializes in locating, collecting, and providing information about alternative systems, new, industrial and alternative crops. Information specialists can answer questions, provide access to materials, provide references to experts or organizations, identify researchers and projects in the USDA, and furnish free bibliographies and reference briefs. Contact AFSIC at (301) 504-6559 or afsic@nal.usda.gov

**COPIES OF THE SSARE PRODUCER GRANT CALL FOR PROPOSALS
CAN BE OBTAINED ON THE WEB AT:**

<http://www.southernsare.org>

For Information, please contact:

Phone: (770) 412-4787

jsealey@uga.edu

**Southern SARE Program
Stuckey Bldg., Room 203
1109 Experiment Street
Griffin, GA 30223-1797**

The SSARE Producer Grant On-Line Proposal Submission web site is:

<http://www.ciids.org/sare/pg/>

**PROPOSALS SUBMITTED ANY WAY OTHER THAN ON THE
SOUTHERN SARE ON-LINE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION SYSTEM
WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

2013 Producer Grant Proposal SAMPLE BUDGET PAGE

(Explain any budget expenses that don't fit on a Budget Category line)

BUDGET CATEGORY	FUNDS REQUESTED
PERSONNEL (LABOR)	
Lynn Sandefer (farmer) plant trials and sample collection, 50 hrs @ \$20 hr	\$1,000.00
Kim Sandefer (farmer) sample collection and record keeping, 40hrs@\$20 hr	\$ 800.00
Terry Smith (insect scout, 120 hrs. @ \$7.00/hr)	\$ 840.00
Chris Peterson (insect specialist-identify and catalogue 25 hrs@ \$50.00/hr)	\$1,250.00
Personnel (labor): SUB-TOTAL	\$3,890.00
OPERATING AND SUPPLIES	
hay mulch (100 bales@45lbs/bale@\$2.00/bale)	\$ 200.00
chemical fertilizer (6 gal. @\$50/gal)	\$ 300.00
organic fertilizer (7gal.\$@75/gal)	\$ 525.00
clover seed (20 lbs. @\$5/lb.)	\$ 100.00
peanuts (1 acre)	\$ 120.00
cotton (1 acre)	\$ 50.00
insect traps (100 traps@\$3.50/trap)	\$ 350.00
Operating and Supplies: SUB-TOTAL	\$1,645.00
TRAVEL	
5 trips to farms of cooperating farmers for planting meetings (1000 miles @ 200 miles/trip @ \$0.51/mile)	\$ 550.00
Travel: SUB-TOTAL	\$ 550.00
OUTREACH	
photocopy fliers (1000 fliers@ \$0.10/copy)	\$ 100.00
portolet for field day (1 day@\$150/day)	\$ 150.00
Signs (10 signs@\$15/sign)	\$ 150.00
Outreach: SUB-TOTAL	\$ 400.00
MISCELLANEOUS	
lab tissue sample analysis (70 samples@ \$10.00/sample)	\$ 700.00
Miscellaneous: SUB-TOTAL	\$ 700.00
PROJECT TOTAL	\$7,185.00

**WRITE A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL
FOLLOW THE RULES!**

- **Develop clear goals.** Whether you are trying to solve an insect pest problem, conduct a marketing project or do something no one's even thought of yet, **simple and clear goals** let the reviewers know **WHAT** your goal is. Then—as they read your application—they can see **HOW** you are going to reach your goal.
- **Plan ahead on how to accomplish your project.** Think about the details before you fill out the proposal. If you are doing a research project and choose to use an experimental design, make sure the design is capable of yielding conclusive results. If you need help on a research design, include a cooperator with experience in on-farm research.
- **Measure your results.** Chances are you are going to measure something. So, whether it is crop yield, milk protein content, bigger tomatoes, increased market share for a cooperative, etc. make sure that what you are measuring will give you the information you need to tell if you have accomplished your objectives. If you take samples—for example, plants, or insects—make sure that your samples are representative of the whole field or plot.
- **Timing is everything.** Let the reviewers know **WHEN** you will be doing the things you plan to do. A **detailed** timetable lets them know that you have given this work some thought and that you have a clear idea of the time it will take.
- **Choose cooperators to complement your skills.** When you enlist the cooperation of people who have expertise in areas that you don't—research, marketing, outreach, whatever—they'll help you make your project better and increase your chances of receiving funding. **Pick your cooperators carefully, and make sure each one has the skills you need.**
- **Develop a clear outreach plan** to share what you learn from your project. Outreach activities can include field days, workshops, publications or any method to get results of your project to people who can use those results to practice sustainable agriculture.
- **Develop a realistic budget.** Please carefully itemize your expenses on the budget worksheet. Look at the sample budget.
- **Value farmer labor.** When developing your budget, use realistic hourly amounts for all farmer labor that reflects the value of that labor.
- **On-line system hint.** When writing your proposal in the on-line system, many people find it easier to write their text in a word processor like MSWord and then cutting and pasting the paragraphs into the on-line system. But you can also type directly into the on-line system.

If you have any questions about completing your proposal, you can call me at **(828) 626-2680**. Just remember, the earlier you call the more I'll be able to help you. Good luck!

John Mayne, Ph.D.
Assistant Director
Southern SARE Program
(828) 626-2680
jmayne@uga.edu

**2013 SOUTHERN REGION SARE
PRODUCER GRANT PROGRAM REVIEW CRITERIA**

These are the criteria the reviewers will use to review your proposal in the first round of the evaluations. This is provided so you can see the criteria being used to review your proposal.

If the answer to questions 1 OR 2 is NO, the proposal can't be funded.

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1. The proposal is from a producer or a producer organization. | YES | NO |
| 2. All funds requested are for allowable items. | YES | NO |

These are the criteria the technical reviewers will use to review your proposal in the second round of the evaluations. This is provided so you can see the criteria being used to review your proposal.

If the answer to question 3 is NO, the proposal can't be funded.

- | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|
| 3. The proposal addresses a problem in a way that promotes sustainable agriculture. | YES | NO |
| 4. The project addresses an important problem or issue for agriculture in the South. | _____ | |
| 5. The project is well designed and thought out so that useful results can be obtained. | _____ | |
| 6. The project can be completed in the time allotted. | _____ | |
| 7. There is a clear outreach plan that will reach a large number of people who could benefit from the project. | _____ | |
| 8. The budget is realistic for the project. | _____ | |
| 9. It is clear what the money requested will be spent on. | _____ | |

Questions 3 – 9 will also be considered by the Review Committee of the Administrative Council during the third step of the proposal review.

The Support Center

www.thesupportcenter-nc.org

Contact Person:

Ed Timberlake, Small Business Lending Manager

Phone: (919) 803-1437

Email: etimberlake@TheSupportCenter-nc.org

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Description of organization:

The Support Center is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and statewide nonprofit organization. They partner with credit unions and community-based organizations to provide small business loans and mortgage lending services to create economic opportunities for individuals, families, and communities in underserved markets.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Small Business Loans

- Farming/Agricultural Lending Program
 - ✓ Lending available to farmers, especially smaller agricultural operations
 - ✓ Flexible payment schedules available to meet a farmer's seasonal workload
 - ✓ Aims to allow farmers to innovate, diversify, and grow their farms
 - ✓ Maximum loan is \$200,000

To learn more about The Support Center, or to inquire about their Small Business Lending Programs, call (919) 803-1437 or contact SBL@thesupportcenter-nc.org or visit www.thesupportcenter-nc.org



Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

Rural Business - Cooperative Service, USDA

www.rurdev.usda.gov/nc/reg.htm

Contact Person:

David Thigpen, Business Programs Specialist

Phone: (919) 873-2065

Email: david.thigpen@nc.usda.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of Program:

This program is designed to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet the nation's critical energy needs. Funds are used to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy improvements for agricultural producers and rural small businesses.

Eligibility Requirements: Eligible applicants must be an:

- Agricultural producer
- Rural small business

Individual applicants must be citizens of the United States or reside in the country after being legally admitted for permanent residence. The applicant must also have demonstrated financial need.

Program Services:

Financial Assistance - Grants

Types of Projects:

- Renewable Energy – biomass projects- wood burners for greenhouses or tobacco barns, on farm solar or wind. Anaerobic digesters are also eligible.
- Energy Efficiency – Making energy improvements to a building or process that will reduce the amount of energy used (LP gas, electricity, and/or other forms of energy).

Examples include:

- ✓ Lighting improvements
- ✓ Insulating buildings or barns
- ✓ Variable speed drives for dairy farms
- ✓ More efficient heating systems
- ✓ Curing controls for barns
- ✓ Improvements to swing and poultry facilities



- ✓ Energy improvements to greenhouses
- ✓ Irrigation projects (switching from diesel to electric motors)
- ✓ Grain dryer replacements
- ✓ Heating and cooling improvements

To get started:

Contact your local USDA Rural Development office to discuss potential projects and program eligibility. They can guide you through the process and help ensure that you submit all of the necessary information with your grant request.

The attached map lists the contacts by county location across North Carolina. If they are unavailable, **contact David Thigpen at (919) 873-2065 in the Raleigh office to discuss the program.**



Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) Program

Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA

www.rurdev.usda.gov/nc/vapg.htm

Contact Person:

Neal Sherrod, Business Programs Specialist

Phone: (919) 873-2043

Email: neal.sherrod@nc.usda.gov

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide Program

Description of Grant:

The primary objective of the VAPG program is to help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based value-added products. Generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the end goals of this program.

- **Eligibility Requirements:** Grants will be awarded to independent producers, eligible agricultural producer groups, farmer or rancher cooperatives or majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.

Please note that businesses of all sizes may apply, but priority will be given to Operators of Small and Medium-Sized Farms or Ranches that are structured as Family Farms, Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, Mid-Tier Value Chain projects, and Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives.

To apply, submit an application online at www.grants.gov or submit a paper application by sending it to the State Office located at:

USDA Rural Development State Office
4405 Bland Road, Suite 260, Raleigh, NC 27609

For assistance, please contact Neal Sherrod, Business Programs Specialist, at (919) 873-2043 or neal.sherrod@nc.usda.gov



WNC AgOptions Program

www.wncagoptions.org

Contact Person:

Jennifer Ferre, Project Manager

Phone: (828) 333-4277

Email: admin@wncagoptions.org

Geographic Service Area:

Western NC

Description of Program:

To build sustainable farming communities in the mountain region by providing resources directly to farmers who are diversifying or expanding their operations.

Programs and Services Offered:

Financial Assistance - Grants

WNC Agricultural Options

Grants of \$3,000 and \$6,000 awarded to individual farmers demonstrating profitable crop transition. Community grants (a maximum of \$10,000) support group projects that improve Western North Carolina's local agriculture system by addressing processing, packaging, marketing or other distribution needs.

NC Cooperative Extension Agents meet with applicants prior to submitting their proposal to help develop their projects. Once awarded, WNC AgOptions recipients receive technical and marketing assistance throughout the year.

The 2013 grant application is attached. Deadline to apply is November 16, 2012.





WNC Agricultural Options 2013 Application for Individual Farm Businesses

Instructions for Applying

Thank you for your interest in the WNC Agricultural Options Program. *WNC AgOptions builds sustainable farming communities in our mountain region by providing resources directly to farmers who are diversifying or expanding their operations.* Funded projects offer demonstration of alternative farm income to transitioning tobacco growers.

WNC AgOptions is exclusively supported by the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and works in partnership with WNC Communities. For more information on the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, visit: <http://www.tobaccotrustfund.org/>

Members of the WNC AgOptions steering committee include: representatives from the N.C. Cooperative Extension, N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project and other agricultural business leaders.

Who should apply? Applicants are farmers who demonstrate the economic viability of farms in Western North Carolina. Support is provided to farmers who are diversifying or expanding their operations to increase farm income and encourage the sustainability of the farm businesses. WNC AgOptions awards grants to a variety of farm operations, including: fruits & vegetables, livestock, nurseries, agri-tourism, beekeeping and value-added processing. While agriculture is a varied and diverse industry that can be defined in many ways, WNC AgOptions favors applicants who operate a business and manage land for the purpose of producing crops for harvest and sale. Any funding requests should be for items directly related to the growing and harvesting of crops for sale, including livestock. WNC AgOptions also favors agri-tourism operations that are for the purpose of inviting the public on farm to increase sales of farm products.

Employees and their spouses of N.C. Cooperative Extension, NCSU, NCA&T, NCDA&CS, WNC Communities; members of the WNC AgOptions Steering Committee and their spouses; board members of WNC Communities and their spouses are not eligible to receive WNC AgOptions grants.

Priority will be given to applicants who:

- Are diversifying or expanding their operations so that they remain sustainable for this and future generations;
- Currently or previously grew tobacco, particularly during or after 1997;
- Show they follow typical procedures of a legitimate farm business, such as acquiring a NC Department of Revenue E-595EA Tax Exemption number, having a Farm Service Agency farm number; and filing a Schedule F or equivalent Schedule C with the Internal Revenue Service;
- Generate more than one-half of their household income from crops or products produced on farm;
- Have sufficient experience and expertise to accomplish the projects and/or have identified the proper cooperators to supplement gaps in their skills and abilities;
- Actively participate in grower associations or other commodity group meetings;
- Have sufficiently researched the production methods, markets, expenses and timeline for their projects;
- Are proposing projects that demonstrate successful farming practices, methods, and/or markets to the agriculture community;
- Exhibit working relationships with their local Cooperative Extension Agents;
- Have included two quality letters of support from additional cooperators, which can include purchasers, advisors, consultants, agricultural specialists, other granting agencies or loan officers;
- Have NOT received funding from WNC AgOptions from 2004 to 2012. (Recipients who have received three WNC AgOptions grants are not eligible for a fourth).

Farmers who do not meet all of these criteria are still encouraged to apply.

How are applications reviewed? Projects are ranked via a numeric scoring system based on the strength of the answers in the application. Approximately 25 leaders in the agriculture field throughout Western North Carolina participate in the review process, and five reviewers score each application. The WNC AgOptions Steering Committee uses these scores as the primary guide in determining final awardees.

How can the grant be spent? Suitable expenses are those associated with the production and marketing of diversified farm enterprises and agri-tourism endeavors. Examples include, but are not limited to: seeds, fertilizer, plants, amendments, livestock, trainings, advertisements, packaging, fences, signage, facilities, supplies, tools and specialized equipment. Items that *cannot* be funded by the award include: farmer labor, pre-existing farm debt, and expenses that are dated outside of the grant period from December 21, 2012 to November 08, 2013.

Funds must be used as stated in the applicant's proposal. Use of funds inconsistent with the proposal will result in forfeiture of award and repayment of funds.

How much is awarded? The amount of award can be: \$3,000 or \$6,000

The \$6,000 awards are only available for farmers who write a business plan for their project. Plans are due August 1, 2013.

All grant recipients will be required to attend a new recipient orientation and are encouraged to attend at least one WNC AgOptions workshop on local agriculture updates, business planning education, and new marketing opportunity information.

It is the intent to award grants throughout an 18-county/unit area, which encompasses the following: Avery, Buncombe, Clay, Cherokee, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga and Yancey. Each county/unit will host at least one recipient in 2013 if one or more *qualifying* applications (i.e. earning sufficient points to qualify for a grant) are submitted from each county/unit.

When are applications due? Proposals must be postmarked by November 16, 2012. Only one application per farm, please.

Completed applications should be mailed to:
WNC AgOptions Project Manager
Madison County Center
NC Cooperative Extension
258 Carolina Lane
Marshall, NC 28753

Tips for writing a successful proposal:

1. Plan and research your topic and market thoroughly. Review the WNC AgOptions website at www.wncagoptions.org to gather ideas.
2. Arrange an appointment with an N.C. Cooperative Extension Agent by the October 12, 2012 Intent to Apply deadline and receive assistance on developing your project proposal. Those who do not meet the Intent to Apply deadline may not receive all points possible from reviewers.
3. Include two quality letters of support from partners or cooperators who will help you complete your goals. (You are welcome to submit more than two letters, but you will only receive points for two). Your cooperators have the option of sending their Letters of Support directly to the WNC AgOptions Project Manager by the November 16, 2012 deadline (either hard copy or email).
4. Write the proposal as if the reader is not familiar with your particular type of farming operation. Be as concise yet thorough as possible.
5. If you plan to apply for \$6,000, visit the Whole Farm Planning & Management webpage <http://transylvania.ces.ncsu.edu/content/wholefarmplan&source=transylvania> for tips on business planning. For additional resources, visit: <http://www.wncagoptions.org/index.php/all-links/55-business-planning>.

Procedures and Timeline for WNC AgOptions Proposals

- October 12, 2012: Intent to Apply Deadline. All applicants should contact their county Cooperative Extension Agents to set up an appointment to discuss their projects.
- November 16, 2012: Postmark deadline for applications. Mail to WNC AgOptions Project Manager at the Madison County Center. If the application is not complete, the WNC AgOptions Steering Committee will not consider the proposal.
- The week of December 10, 2012: WNC AgOptions representatives may contact finalists for on-site and phone interviews if additional information is required to determine the awardees.
- The week of December 17, 2012: Letters of acceptance or regrets will be mailed to all applicants.
- Week of January 28, 2013: Recipients are required to attend a program orientation/educational workshop. Details will be mailed.
- March 2013: Recipients are encouraged to attend an optional educational workshop.
- August 1, 2013: Business plans, required for \$6,000 recipients, are due.
- November 08, 2013: Receipts for project expenses, final income and expense reports, and surveys are due. All grant funds must be spent by this date.

Requirements of 2013 WNC AgOptions Grant Recipients:

1. Recipients must keep accurate production and financial records on the project and supply a copy of those records at the completion of the project. Copies of receipts for project expenditures will be required.
2. Recipients must be available via mail and/or phone calls throughout the year. E-mail access is very helpful.
3. Recipients must attend the WNC AgOptions orientation and will receive their first allotment of the grant there.
4. A WNC AgOptions representative will visit each of the recipients' farms at least once to discuss progress on the projects.
5. The \$6,000 recipients must submit business plans for their project to the WNC AgOptions Project Manager by August 1, 2013 to receive the next \$2,000 allotment.
6. Recipients must complete final income and expense reports of project results, plus a survey that provides feedback about the program and results of their project, by November 08, 2013 to receive the final \$500 allotment.
7. WNC AgOptions will include the recipients' projects in public relations, outreach, demonstration and education in 2013 or future years.

Still have questions? Contact the WNC AgOptions Project Manager at (828) 649-2411 x305 or (828) 333-4277.



**WNC Agricultural Options
2013 Application for Individual Farm Businesses**

Please type or print legibly all sections of this application.

Project Name: _____

I am applying for (please check one): \$3,000 \$6,000

Section I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Note: The grant funds are considered taxable income, and WNC Communities will file a 1099-Miscellaneous with the IRS in the name of the check recipient at the end of 2013. You will be required to fill out a W-9 form requesting an Employer Identification Number or a Social Security Number if you are awarded the grant.

Applicant Name: _____

Farm Business Name: _____

Address _____

City: _____ **County:** _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Cell Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

1. Do you have a N.C. Department of Revenue E-595EA Tax Exemption number? YES NO

2. If applicable, what is your Farm Service Agency number? _____

3. Do you file a Schedule F or equivalent Schedule C to the IRS? YES NO

If so, which years did you file? _____

4. What percentage of your household net income is generated from farm products produced on your farm? _____ %

5. Briefly describe your participation/ leadership in grower associations, commodity meetings or other agricultural events in the past year. If possible, name the last three activities involving other producers in which you participated, including dates. For example, *Tomato and Vegetable Field Day on August 16th, 2012; ASAP's Business of Farming Conference on Feb. 25, 2012, etc.* (150 words maximum)

6. Farming History

(Feel free to add or delete rows in the table depending on the number of ventures at your farm.)

Dates of Business	Farm Venture: Products and/or Services <i>Include # of acres and/or livestock</i>	Description of Markets or No. of Customers*

**If you have not sold agriculture products thus far, please state the year you expect to do so. Feel free to elaborate in the space provided for question #7 below.*

7. Elaborate on the farming history listed above, along with any other relevant professional and educational experience. How significant of an impact does your farm make to you, your family and your community, including food supply, quality of life and income? Which years, if any, have you farmed full-time? (375 words maximum)

8. Please answer the following questions about your tobacco growing history. If you owned an allotment but did not farm the crop, please do not include those years or acres.

Are you presently growing tobacco? YES NO

Have you ever grown tobacco? YES NO

If yes, which years (for example, 1968 to 1997)? _____

Approximately how many acres of tobacco did you farm? _____

Did your family grow tobacco on the same land that you are farming now? YES NO

Section II. THE PROJECT AND PROPOSAL

1. Please provide a description of your proposed farm project. How will the project fit into your existing farming operation? How will you handle the additional workload? Include any research into production methods that you will be introducing to your operation. (750 words maximum)

2. What are the anticipated outcomes of your project? (500 words maximum)

3. How do you plan to market or sell your farm business, product and/or experience? If your project is considered “agri-tourism,” please explain how inviting the public on your farm will increase the sale of your farm products. (250 words maximum)

4. How will this project enhance or increase your capability to continue farming, increase farm income and increase sustainability of your farming operation? (250 words maximum)

5. Explain how your project could provide demonstration of exemplary practices to your county’s agriculture community, including transitioning tobacco farmers. Provide context for your project, i.e. how unique is your operation in your county? (250 words maximum)

6. Please provide a timeline for your project. Indicate the project activities you will accomplish.

<i>Month</i>	<i>2013 Project Activities</i>
January	Attend WNC AgOptions orientation.
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	Final grant reports due.

for energy efficiency from Farm Bureau, etc.? (Do not include past WNC AgOptions grants here —previous recipients see next section).

YES NO

If yes, list the grant(s) you received, the amount you were awarded, and the date of the award(s).

2. In the past 5 years, have you received any other grant funding from any other source?

YES NO

If yes, list the grant(s) you received, the amount you were awarded, and the date of the award(s).

Section V. FORMER WNC AGRICULTURAL RECIPIENTS ONLY

Have you, your spouse or farm business partner received a WNC AgOptions grant any year between 2004 to 2012?

YES NO

If yes, which year(s)?

Former WNC AgOptions recipients, please answer the following:

2. Briefly describe your previous project(s). What did you learn from your successes and your challenges? Did you achieve your intended goals? Did your income increase as a result of the project? (400 words maximum)

Former WNC AgOptions recipients, please answer the following:

3. Develop and explain an outreach plan to farmers in your community so that they can learn from your current project and your previous project, if related. Outreach could include field days, articles, one-on-one mentoring, Cooperative Extension workshops, etc. (250 words maximum)

Section V. CERTIFICATION

The applicant **MUST** sign the following statements.

AGREEMENT: The funds granted will be used exclusively for the project as described in this request. The requirements of WNC AgOptions award recipients have been read and agreed to.

CERTIFICATION: The information provided in this application is correct and complete to the best of my ability.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Signed by (Please Print): _____ Date: _____

Note: Applicants being considered for funding may be contacted for more information about their projects. Site visits and/or telephone interviews may be requested. The applicant understands that this application and all attachments submitted are public records.

OTHER



This section covers other types of assistance available to producers.

This section features the following information:

- **Serving farmers with disabilities**
- **Resolving conflicts between individuals and USDA**
- **Giving beginning producers access to incubator farms**
- **Assisting cooperatives**
- **Advocating for farmers**

Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS)

Bringing New Farmers to the Table

www.ncnewfarmers.org

Other Affiliated Organizations:

A collaboration of National Center for Appropriate Technology, Carolina Farm Stewardship Association, The Branan Law Firm, PLLC, and NC Cooperative Extension

Contact Person:

Joanna Lelekacs, State Coordinator, Incubator Farm Project

Phone: (919) 244-5269

Email: Joanna_Lelekacs@ncsu.edu

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

No fee for legal education services. Fees associated with conferences, farm tours, etc.

Description of program:

Bringing New Farmers to the Table aims to increase the number of new or transitioning farmers in NC.

Services Offered:

Access to Land through Incubator Farms

Vacant public land will be used by new farmers. This is a part of an Incubator Farm Project led by the Center for Environmental Systems. The farms are located in various regions in NC.

For more information on the Incubator Farms, contact Joanna Lelekacs at (919) 244-5269 or Joanna_Lelekacs@ncsu.edu.



Federation of Southern Cooperatives/ Land Assistance Fund

www.federationsoutherncoop.com

Contact Person:

Cornelius Blanding, Marketing Director

Phone: (404) 765-0991

Geographic Service Area:

Ten states in the southeast with a concentration in Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Louisiana and Georgia

Fees:

Annual membership fee of \$250.00 for cooperatives and \$25.00 for individuals

Description of Organization:

The Federation has maintained a membership of low income grassroots people, organized into cooperatives and credit unions to make quantitative and qualitative changes in their lives and communities. Currently, the Federation's membership includes over 70 active cooperatives, credit unions, associations and community groups, serving more than 20,000 families.

They work with handicraft producers, farmers, landowners, fishermen, consumers, small businesses, people who need housing and other rural residents interested in organizing cooperatives and land based economic development initiatives as pathways to achieving social and economic justice.

Program Services:

Other: Cooperative development, advocacy, referral services

If a group is interested in forming a cooperative, the Federation has a cooperative development team that will walk you through the process, including how to become a member. Co-ops applying for membership must go through a screening process, such as getting by-laws checked, to make sure they are consistent with the Federation's mission and vision and meet all applicable legal requirements. The Federation also provides education and assistance on land retention strategies, such as estate planning, understanding one's rights and responsibilities as landowners.



North Carolina Agricultural Mediation Program (NCAMP)

www.ncamediation.org

Contact Person(s):

Jayne Zanglein, Executive Director

Phone: (828) 331-0866

Email: jzanglein@email.wcu.edu

Betty Mayo, Assistant Executive Director

Phone: (336) 303-0466

Email: ncampoutreach@bellsouth.net

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fees:

No cost for USDA agency related cases; otherwise fees are handled on a case by case basis.

Description of Organization:

North Carolina Agricultural Mediation Program (NCAMP) is the certified USDA state mediation provider for North Carolina. NCAMP assists in the resolution of disputes between participating USDA agencies and their program participants.

Program Services:

Conflict Resolution

Mediation is an effective way to settle disputes in many different USDA programs, including farm loans, rural development housing loans, crop insurance, foreclosures, agricultural credit issues, and conservation programs.

If you participate in a USDA program in North Carolina and you have received an adverse decision letter that offers mediation as an option or you have a conflict with a supplier, vendor, customer, lender, you can look into requesting mediation.

If you wish to request mediation, contact NCAMP, and they will be happy to explain your options.



NC AgrAbility

www.ncagrability.com

Contact Person:

Michele Proctor, Interim Project Coordinator

Phone: (828) 302-5442

Email: coordinator@ncagrability.com

Geographic Service Area:

Statewide

Fee:

There is no fee for NC AgrAbility services.

Description of organization:

The vision of AgrAbility is to enable a high quality lifestyle for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities. Through education, support and assistance, AgrAbility helps eliminate or minimize obstacles that inhibit success in production agriculture or agriculture-related occupations.

Programs and Services Offered:

Disability related services

- ✓ Conduct on-site assessments to identify barriers to completing tasks both in the agricultural workplace and the home
- ✓ Recommend appropriate assistive technologies (equipment/tools/devices), modified work practices, and/or other possible solutions to reducing disability-related limitations
- ✓ Refer customers to other service providers for potential assistance (e.g., financial, rehabilitative, educational) specific to the customers' needs
- ✓ Connect consumers with others who have successfully accommodated their disabilities
- ✓ AgrAbility provides access to informational materials on a variety of topics related to disability and agriculture
- ✓ Education/training opportunities through workshops, conferences, seminars and on-line programs. Information on these can be obtained on the NC AgrAbility website. For more information about upcoming training opportunities, please email coordinator@ncagrability.com
- ✓ Assistance in **locating** other funding sources to help customers obtain needed assistive technologies and modifications



Rural Advancement Foundation International USA (RAFI-USA)

www.rafiusa.org

Contact Person:

Scott Marlow, Executive Director

Phone: (919) 542-1396, ext. 210

Email: smarlow@rafiusa.org

Joe Schroeder, Tobacco Communities Reinvestment Fund

Phone: (919) 542-1396, ext. 208

Email: joe@rafiusa.org

Geographic Service Area:

International with a focus on the southeastern US. The grant program is solely for North Carolina.

Fees:

There is no fee for this service.

Description of organization:

RAFI works to develop and improve markets, communities and policies that help support family farms.

Programs and Services Offered:

Farm Advocacy

RAFI has two decades of experience fighting to keep family farmers on the land. We provide confidential advice and advocacy to lenders. We do not provide direct financial relief. If you are a farmer in need of assistance, please call RAFI at (919) 542-1396. If you need immediate assistance, please call Farm Aid at (800) FARM-AID.



USDA Minority Farm Register

USDA - Farm Service Agency, Office of Minority and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Assistance (MSDA)

www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=about&subject=landing&topic=sao-oa-cr-ma

Contact Information:

Phone: 1-866-538-2610 (toll-free)

Phone: (202) 720-1584 (local)

Geographic Service Area:

Nationwide

Description of Program:

The Minority Farm Register is a tool to:

- ✓ Promote equal access to USDA farm programs and services for minority farmland owners, farmers, ranchers, tenants, and other individuals with an agricultural interest.
- ✓ Participants may receive information or be personally contacted through USDA outreach efforts.

* Only name, address, signature, and date are required for participation in the Minority Farm Register. *

To join the Minority Farm Register, *complete the following form and mail to:*

Minority Farm Register
USDA Stop Code 0503
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-0503

You may also submit the form electronically if you have a USDA eAuthentication account.



AD-2035
(07-29-04)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency

USDA MINORITY FARM REGISTER

The Register is a tool to promote equal access to USDA farm programs and services for minority farmland owners, farmers, ranchers, tenants, and other individuals with an agricultural interest. Participants may receive information or personal contact through USDA outreach efforts. USDA programs may include farm or ranch ownership and operating loans and loan guarantees, price and income support, conservation, and others.

NOTE: *The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information is section 10707 of Public Law 107-171 (7 U.S.C. 2279). The information will be used to assist in special minority farm outreach and assistance efforts. Furnishing the requested information is voluntary. This information may be provided to other agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, or other State and Federal Law enforcement agencies, to a court magistrate or administrative tribunal, community-based and other non USDA outreach organizations. The provisions of criminal and civil fraud statutes, including 18 USC 286, 287, 371, 641, 651, 1001; 15 USC 714m; and 31 USC 3729, may be applicable to the information provided.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0231. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 7 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO MINORITY FARM REGISTER, USDA STOP CODE 0503, 1400 INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20250-0503.

I certify that I am voluntarily granting permission to be listed on the USDA Minority Farm Register. I fully understand and agree that my name and the other information provided on this form may be released to organizations other than USDA.

*Instructions: Items 1 through 4, 5C, 5D, 7A and 7B are optional. You must complete Items 5A, 5B, 6A and 6B.

1. **Ethnicity:** Are you Hispanic or Latino? YES NO

2. **Race:** Check the race or races that describe you best.

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

White

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Other race (specify): _____ (Do not enter Hispanic or Latino here)

3. **Gender:** Male Female

4. Check one of the following: Mr. Mrs. Ms.

5A. **Name** (Last, First, Middle Initial)

5B. **Address** (Include City/State/Zip Code)

5C. **Telephone Number** (Include Area Code) (For Government Use Only)

5D. E-mail Address:

6A. **Signature of Individual**

6B. **Date** (MM-DD-YYYY)

Farm or Ranch Location (If applicable):

7A. **State**

7B. **County**

Glossary

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): Community members pay a membership fee to the farmers and in return every week they receive a box/ bag/ basket of the farmers' harvest.

Conservation Easement: A conservation easement is a way landowners can help keep land in their family or protect their land from being developed or cleared for houses, apartments or stores. It is a written agreement between a landowner and a land trust or other type of conservation organization. The landowner promises to keep the land in its natural form. The landowner still owns and controls the land—he or she is still responsible for maintaining the land and paying taxes on the land. The land trust monitors the land and makes sure the landowner follows the “rules” of the conservation easement.

Food System: A word to describe all activities involved in producing, processing, transporting, storing, selling and eating food.

Heir Property: Inherited land owned by a group of family members

Kitchen Incubator: Sometimes referred to as a community kitchen, business incubator, or commercial kitchen. These kitchen spaces are licensed facilities that can be rented out by others in the community in order to package and produce food products, clean produce, prepare meals, and other related uses.

Litigation: The action of bringing about a lawsuit

Kitchen Incubators in North Carolina

If you are interested in making value-added products and looking for certified kitchens open to the public for rental space and rental time, then check out these kitchen incubators/commercial kitchens in NC.

Western NC:

- **Blue Ridge Food Ventures** (Asheville)
Phone: (828) 348-0128
www.advantagewest.com/content.cfm/content_id/144/section/food
- **Stecoah Valley Cultural Arts Center** (Robbinsville)
Phone: (828) 479-3364
www.stecoahvalleycenter.com

Central NC:

- **The Cookery** (Durham)
<http://durhamcookery.com/>
- **Piedmont Food and Agricultural Processing Center** (Hillsborough)
Phone: (919) 245-2336
www.orangecountyfarms.org/pfap/
- **Nanette's Table** (Cornelius)
Phone: (610) 357-3878
www.nanetestable.com
- **Rockingham Community Kitchen** (Reidsville)
Phone: (336) 342-7853
www.rockinghamkitchen.org
- **Anson Community Kitchen** (Wadesboro)
Phone: (704) 272-5457

Eastern NC:

- **Town of Burgaw Historic Depot Incubator Kitchen** (Burgaw)
Phone: (910) 259-2151
<http://townofburgaw.com/historic-depot/incubator-kitchen/>
- **Eastern Carolina Food Ventures Incubator Kitchen at James Sprunt Community College** (Warsaw)
Phone: (910) 293-2001
www.jamessprunt.edu/kitchen.html

Other Helpful Websites and Resources

North Carolina Resources

- **Small Business and Technology Development Center**, www.sbtcdc.org
- **eXtension**, www.extension.org
Research-based information provided by experts of the cooperative extension system. The website features information about various topics of interest related to farming.
- **NC Agromedicine Institute**, www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/agromedicine/index.cfm
The North Carolina Agromedicine Institute conducts and promotes research, intervention, outreach and education to improve the health and safety of the agricultural community including farmers, farm workers, foresters, fishers and their families.
- **Mint Market**, www.mintmarket.com
Mint Market is an online farmers market that connects chefs to farmers by allowing farmers to sell their products directly to restaurants. Farmers update their inventories online on Saturday, chefs shop on Sunday, and farmers harvest on Monday and then deliver to restaurants on Tuesday.

National Resources

- **USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food**, www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer
On this site you can find information about federal grant and loan programs written in a more easy to understand format, along with tools and resources such as a farmer's market locator, a food desert locator and other research information.
- **National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service**, <https://attra.ncat.org/>
The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service has educational material available online or by print order that covers various topics such as organic production, livestock, horticultural crops, business and marketing, farm energy, water and pest management and more. Their publications are written by sustainable agriculture specialists, who are experts in their fields, and are meant to help farmers, ranchers and others involved in sustainable agriculture.

If you have questions about sustainable agriculture, submit an online request or call their toll-free hotline at 1-800-346-9140 or the Spanish-language hotline at 1-800-411-3222 for expert advice.

They also have a national listing of internships and apprenticeships available on farms across the country.