



**Statewide Agricultural Producer Association Grant Program
Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program
Application Guidelines
Fiscal Year 2024**

A. General Information

The purpose of the Statewide Agricultural Producer Association Grant Program is to increase income to Tennessee farmers by providing assistance for eligible activities conducted by statewide agricultural producer associations in Tennessee.

1. Grants are available to qualified statewide agricultural producer associations in amounts up to \$4000.
2. Total funding is limited.
3. Grant requests are competitive.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture is providing this opportunity through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP). TAEP is a result of the State of Tennessee's commitment to supporting farm development and Tennessee's agricultural community.

Appropriate acknowledgement of this grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture must be displayed prominently on programs, signage, or materials. Logo to be supplied upon request.

Program Timeline

To participate in the Producer Association Grant Program, all Eligibility Requirements must be met, and all Agreement & Payment Requests must be received by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture no later than May 15, 2024.

B. Eligibility Requirements

Grant funds are available to agricultural producer associations who meet the eligibility requirements below. A qualified association must:

1. Be statewide. Local and regional associations are not eligible to apply due to limited program budget.
2. Clearly identify quantifiable performance measures as a part of the proposal.
3. Be legally organized (501C3, city or county government, university, etc.) and capable of receiving and managing state grant funds.
4. Ensure that activities meet all federal, state, and local building, food safety, and regulatory requirements.

C. Activities

Emphasis is placed on activities that directly impact the greatest number of producers and increase agricultural economic opportunity. Projects must be innovative and not substitute for existing programs.

1. Eligible Activities
 - a. Identifying and utilizing new marketing opportunities for agricultural products
 - b. Increasing sales of agricultural products grown in Tennessee
 - c. Providing education, demonstration, and training
 - d. Providing expert speakers, training materials, and related educational items

- e. Paying for statewide producer meeting expenses
- f. Other, as pre-approved by TDA

2. Ineligible Activities

- a. Administrative and overhead costs
- b. Payments on existing debt
- c. Facilities
- d. Purchase of property
- e. Travel related expenses related to the day-to-day operation of the organization
- f. Salaries, wages, and fringe benefits of existing employees
- g. Office equipment
- h. Expenses incurred prior to October 1, 2023.

D. Application Process

- 1. The proposal must be submitted by February 28, 2024.
- 2. The proposal will be evaluated by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The applicant will be notified in writing of approval or disapproval for grant assistance. Only projects pre-approved by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture will be eligible for grant assistance. Approved projects must be completed, and receipts submitted with the Agreement & Payment Request by the deadline of May 15, 2024.

E. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- 1. The project will be judged based on the overall soundness of the proposed activity's goals, objectives, project management, and work plan.
- 2. Priority is placed on activities that directly impact the greatest number of producers and increase agricultural economic activity.
- 3. Ability and financial capacity to conduct activity must be demonstrated.
- 4. As part of the evaluation process, a meeting with the applicant and/or a visit to the applicant's enterprise may be required.

F. TDA reserves the right to:

- 1. Consider each funding request on a case-by-case basis.
- 2. Reject any or all requests.
- 3. Provide partial funding.
- 4. Provide funding contingent on receiving additional information as requested.
- 5. Waive or modify irregularities in requests.
- 6. Require all applicants to work with TDA to complete all aspects of the application and reporting requirements.

G. Contract Process

- 1. Notification of approval and an Agreement & Payment Request form will be issued by TDA for each approved proposal. Funding is not considered approved until the applicant receives the notification, accompanied by the form. The Grantee may be required to submit various information including IRS Form W-9 and the state ACH (Automated Clearing House for direct deposit) form, if needed.
- 2. Any changes to the authorization must be submitted in writing and approved in advance by TDA.
- 3. TDA staff will monitor and evaluate each funded activity.

H. Reporting Requirements

1. Participants will complete and submit to TDA a Project Summary at the completion of the grant activity.
2. The Project Summary must include:
 - a. Brief description of activity or collateral materials
 - b. Receipts or proof of payment of actual expenses

I. Payments

Following TDA review of materials submitted, and if no additional information is required, the Department of Agriculture will process payment to the applicant.

J. Contact Information

Questions concerning the Producer Association Grant Program should be directed to:

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