



A. General Information

The purpose of the Statewide Agricultural Producer Association Grant Program is to increase income to Tennessee farmers and foresters 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 the amounts up to \$3,000.
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 and forestry development and Tennessee's agriculture and forestry community.

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

Program Timeline

To participate in the Statewide Agricultural Producer Association Grant Program, all project proposals and estimated costs must be submitted no later than December 1, 2019. All Eligibility Requirements must be met and all TAEP Agreement & Payment Authorization forms must be received by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture no later than May 15, 2020.

B. Eligibility Requirements

Grant funds are available to statewide 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 budget limitations.
2. Clearly identified and quantifiable performance measures should be a part of the proposal.
3. Associations must be legally organized (501C3, city or county government, university, etc.) and capable of receiving and managing state grant funds.
4. Activities must meet all federal, state, and local building, food safety, and regulatory requirements.

C. Eligible Activities

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

1. Eligible Activities

- a. Identifying and utilizing new marketing opportunities for agriculture and forestry related products
- b. Increasing sales of agriculture and forestry related products grown in Tennessee
- c. Education, demonstration, and training
- d. Expert speakers, training materials, and related educational items
- e. Statewide producer meeting expenses
- f. Other, as pre-approved by TDA

2. Ineligible Activities

- a. Administrative and overhead costs
- b. Paying off 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

D. Project Proposal Process

1. Submit project proposal, estimated cost, and any additional relevant information to:

Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Attn: Rachel Sullivan
PO Box 40627
Nashville, TN 37204

2. The project proposal must be submitted by the December 1, 2019 deadline. The project proposal will be evaluated by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The association will be notified in writing of approval or disapproval for grant assistance. Included with the approval notification will be the TAEP Agreement & Payment Authorization form for the association to complete and submit. Only projects pre-approved by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture will be eligible for grant assistance. Approved projects must be completed and all paperwork submitted by the May 15, 2020 deadline.

E. Project Evaluation Criteria

1. 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 and forestry related economic activities.
3. Association must demonstrate ability and financial capacity to conduct activity.
4. Only complete project proposals will be evaluated.
5. As part of the evaluation process, a meeting with the association and/or a visit to the association'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 from the association
5. Waive or modify irregularities in requests
6. Require all associations to work with TDA to complete all aspects of the project proposal and reporting requirements

G. Approval Process

1. Written approval will be issued by TDA for each approved project. Funding is not considered approved until the association receives approval notification. The association may be required to submit various information including IRS Form W-9 and ACH (Automated Clearing House for direct deposit) 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. Association will complete and submit to TDA a Project Summary at the completion of the project.
2. Project Summary to include:
 - a. Brief description of activity or a collateral materials
 - b. Receipts or proof of payment of actual expenses
3. Association will complete and submit to TDA the TAEP Agreement & Payment Authorization form.

I. Payments

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

J. Contact Information

Please direct any questions concerning the Statewide Agricultural Producer Association Grant Program to:

Rachel L. Sullivan
Tennessee Department of Agriculture
PO Box 40627
Nashville, TN 37204

Rachel.L.Sullivan@tn.gov
615-837-5336

