

CHOOSE IOWA DAIRY INNOVATION GRANT GUIDELINES

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants must:

- Business must be located in Iowa;
- Business must be permitted by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship or in the process of obtaining a permit;
 - Project must be permitted activity;
- The business must employ less than fifty individuals;
- The business must not have been subject to any regulatory enforcement action related to federal, state, or local environmental, worker safety, food processing, or food safety laws, rules, or regulations within the last five years;
- The business must not currently be in bankruptcy.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects must address at least one goal or more to:

- Create new jobs;
- Create or expand opportunities for local small-scale milk producers to market pasteurized milk and milk products under private labels;
- Provide greater flexibility or convenience for local small-scale farmers to have milk processed;
- Reduce labor associated with the on-farm production and storage of milk.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- On-farm processing equipment or infrastructure such as:
 - Pasteurization equipment
 - Processing vats
 - Packaging and labeling equipment
- Labor reducing equipment or technology such as:
 - Milking robots
 - Health monitoring technology or activity systems
 - Automatic feed systems
 - Cleaning assistance tools

Ineligible expenses:

- Expenses incurred prior to the awarding of a grant;
- Start-up costs including but not limited to inventory, license fees, or working capital;
- Advertising, public relations, or entertainment costs;
- Employee benefits and wages;
- Paying off existing debt, related collection costs, or legal costs;
- Paying off existing fines, penalties, or settlements from failure to comply with any applicable law or regulations.

GRANT AMOUNT AND TERMS

Grant funding can be for a maximum of \$100,000.

- Applicants must provide a minimum one-to-one financial match from private sources such as cash or financing for total project costs. In-kind contributions are not accepted.
- Additional points will be awarded to applicants that provide more than the required match amount.

EXAMPLES

- Farmer A is purchasing a \$120,000 rotary cup filling machine to fill his yogurt packages. Farmer A is requesting \$50,000 in grant funding for his project. Farmer A must have \$50,000 of his own funding with either personal cash or financing to receive the \$50,000 for grant funding.
- Farmer B is purchasing a health monitoring system for \$65,000. Farmer B is requesting \$32,500 for her project. Farmer B must have at least \$32,500 in funding with personal cash or financing to receive the \$32,500 for grant funding.
- Farmer C is purchasing two milking robots for a total of \$380,000 to increase his efficiency on the farm. Farmer C can only apply for a maximum grant funding of \$100,000. Farmer C must provide the remaining \$280,000 from his own funding with cash or financing to receive \$100,000 in grant funding.

All grants will be paid out on a reimbursement basis. Preference will be given to small and medium sized businesses.

Consult your legal or financial advisor regarding financial or tax considerations for any funds received.

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APPLICATION MATERIALS

Applicants must apply for the Dairy Innovation Grant through the online application portal found at www.Chooselowa.com. Applicants should submit supporting document or letters of support with their applications.

SCORING CRITERIA

Projects will be scored on a 100-point scale with a variety of factors.

- A scoring committee will be established by the department to evaluate applications with a score of 0-100. Projects receiving a score below 60 will not be considered.
- Labor reducing equipment and on-farm processing projects will be scored separately. The department will use the following criteria to evaluate each application:

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM SCORE
Project addresses the goals of the program to create new jobs, expand opportunities and provide greater flexibility or convenience for local small-scale farmers, and reduce labor associated with the on-farm production and storage of milk	25 points
The sufficiency of the project's budget and financing structure	20 points
The sufficiency of the project's proposed work plan and timeline including a detailed description of the steps the applicant will take to complete the project as well as estimated dates	20 points
The ability of the applicant to demonstrate sound business management, financial aptitude, and stability	15 points
The extent to which measurable objectives can be determined that demonstrates the proposed project's benefit to the agriculture community	10 points
The completeness of the application information and sufficiency of detail used to describe the project in the application	10 points
TOTAL	100 POINTS

GRANT AWARD TIMELINE

Grant program announced/applications window opens	January 17, 2024
Grant application deadline	February 9, 2024 at noon
Committee scores applications	Feb/March 2024
Awardees announced	April 2024
Funds dispersed to awardees	By reimbursement

QUESTIONS?

Questions or comments can be directed to ChooselowaGrant@IowaAgriculture.gov.