

# Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program

## Request for Proposals (RFP) Technical Requirements

The Request for proposals has five parts as listed below. This document provides the technical requirements of the RFP. A .pdf of the actual application and a copy of the budget template may be viewed on the [program page](#) of the NYFVI website.

### Overview

The Beginning Farmer competitive grant program is funded by the State of New York and administered by the New York Farm Viability Institute. This Request for Proposals (RFP) utilizes generous appropriations from the New York State Governor and legislature in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 fiscal years.

The previous round of funding awarded 19 out of 297 applications. It is anticipated that this round will receive an equally high number of applications from a wide range of beginning farmers competing for twice as much funding. All applicants are encouraged to read this RFP closely to consider how best to use this opportunity to create a competitive proposal that will advance their plan to grow their business and become a financially sustainable, independent, agricultural enterprise. Applicants are encouraged to read the [Beginning Farmer Round 1 Recap](#) document to learn about common characteristics of competitive applications.

The Request for Proposal Package includes 5 parts:

- 1) The 2026 Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant [Program Page](#) of the NYFVI website. This contains an overview of the grant program, related program links and resources, as well as a list of Frequently Asked Questions.
- 2) Technical Requirements: This document outlines all program requirements and key dates. It should be read in its entirety prior to starting an application. This includes two Appendices that provide guidance to applicants whose proposed project will take place on leased land, as well as guidance for construction projects and land purchases
- 3) Eligibility Quiz: This quiz will be conducted online and is required of all applicants before they will be able to start an application. More information is included in the Eligibility section below.
- 4) Application: This is the online form that will be completed and submitted by all applicants.
- 5) Questions and Answers: Answers to all questions that are submitted by applicants will be published on an ongoing basis.

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## Informational Webinars

Webinars will be held on the following dates:

- [Friday, March 20 \(12:00pm-1:00pm\)](#)
- [Thursday, March 26 \(5:00pm-6:00pm\)](#)
- [Tuesday, April 7 \(5:30pm-6:30pm\)](#)

Register using the above links.

## Submission Deadline

All applications will be submitted using the online platform. **All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm on Sunday June 14, 2026. NYFVI staff will not be available for any technical support after 5:00 pm on Friday June 12th.**

## Questions and Answers

Questions must be submitted via email to [bfrants@nyfvi.org](mailto:bfrants@nyfvi.org). Answers will be posted weekly on the NYFVI website [www.nyfvi.org](http://www.nyfvi.org). Questions will be accepted until June 8, 2026.

## Key Dates

Activity	Date Completed
RFP open	Monday, March 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Webinar 1	Friday, March 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Webinar 2	Thursday, March 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Webinar 3	Tuesday, April 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
RFP closes	Sunday, June 14 <sup>th</sup> 2026
Projects Selected	Late September 2026 (anticipated)
All projects contracted	Track 1 projects will contract approximately 90 days after selection. Track 2 projects will contract approximately 160 days following selection
Track 1 projects completed	18 months from contract execution
Track 2 projects completed	24 months from contract execution

## Grant Size, Match and Duration

There are two funding opportunities; the proposal deadline, use of funds, and process for both opportunities are the same. The smaller Track 1 projects are anticipated to be simpler and, therefore, able to be completed in a shorter timeframe. Both tracks will utilize the same application.

	Minimum grant award	Maximum grant award	Total Funds Available	Project Duration
Track 1	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$850,000	18 months from contract
Track 2	\$50,001	\$200,000	\$850,000	24 months from contract

## Required Financial Match

Both tracks require the applicant to provide and document the use of a 5% financial match. The match is not included in the minimum and maximum grant awards in the table above. A match may be provided as a monetary or in-kind contribution to the project's cost. The financial value of all types of matches must be documented. It is not permissible to use other NYS grants as a match.

The 5% match should be calculated on grant award being requested. For example, for applicants requesting \$25,000, the recipient's match would be \$1,250, and the budget must document \$26,250 in costs for the project. All projects, regardless of their purpose, have the same match requirement.

## Eligibility

All applicants must successfully complete an online quiz before they will be able to start an application. The creation of an account in the online application platform is required.

Eligibility criteria:

- The applicant and proposed agricultural business must be based in New York State.
- The applicant must have experience, knowledge or skills relating to, or transferrable to, the production of horticultural or agricultural crops or livestock.
- The applicant's cumulative work history must reflect no more than 10 years of operational\* experience with an agricultural business at the time of application.
- The applicant must materially or substantially participate in operating a farm, including urban farms, in New York State.
- The applicant must be building a for-profit, agricultural business.
- The applicant must have a significant ownership interest in the business that will benefit from the grant.
- If the applicants' farm business earned less than \$1,000 in revenue in the past calendar year, they must submit a copy of their business plan in the application prior to the application deadline.
- Neither the applicant nor their business can have any outstanding State or Federal tax liens.

\*USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Definition: A "farm operator" is a person who runs the farm, making day-to-day management decisions. An operator could be an owner, hired manager, cash tenant, share tenant, and/or a partner.

### Eligibility Disqualifiers

No more than one application will be accepted from a single business. If more than one owner is eligible, they will need to determine whose experience is better suited to the application and scoring criteria.

If the applicant has been funded in previous rounds of the Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program, the combination of previous program funding and new funding request may not exceed \$250,000.

## Purpose of Grants

The use of these grant funds is deliberately broad to allow a wide range of applicants to determine what will create the strongest financial benefit for their business or the business they plan to start. Applicants should be ready to explain why each item they are requesting is a good investment in their business and how it aligns with their proposed project goals. All applicants must be able to provide a reasonable estimate of the operational outcomes and the potential short- and long-term economic benefits that the use of these funds will create.

## Use of Funds

Grants may be awarded for purposes including, but not limited to:

- the start-up, improvement, or expansion of a farm operation
- worker or apprenticeship training for applicant and/or their team
- marketing activities
- the purchase of agricultural land and the physical commercial structures thereon
- the purchase of machinery, equipment, or livestock
- the construction or improvement of physical structures, including semi-permanent structures
- other business needs as justified by the applicant's proposal

All projects must be based completely in New York State. Grantees are responsible for complying with all local, state and federal laws applicable to work performed under this RFP and subsequent contract agreement.

Grants may be awarded for projects on land leased by the recipient.

If the applicant is considering a funding request for a land purchase, or any infrastructure improvements, including building or renovation, it is important to review the information provided in the following documents and plan to follow all guidelines.

- *Appendix A: Considerations for infrastructure, building, and renovation projects.*
- *Appendix B: Considerations for agricultural land purchases*

It is anticipated that the most competitive proposals will be narrowly focused on achieving a single purpose. Applicants are discouraged from developing proposals that integrate multiple items (such as land purchase/building renovation/equipment) into a single proposal.

A project's budget is an important part of the proposal. A clear, well-defined budget will build confidence in the applicant's ability to successfully implement the project as described in the Work Plan portion of their application. If a project is selected for funding, the full application and its budget will become part of the contract and will dictate the amount of funding requested, the required match, and the expenditures that are allowed for reimbursement. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research the cost of their project prior to submitting a proposal.** All costs listed in the budget must be associated with the project. Make sure the application's Project Description and budget align.

Further instructions on completing the budget portion of the application and the required level of detail are found in the application and within the budget spreadsheet.

### *Use of Funds Restrictions*

All costs must be clearly specified in the budget and directly associated with the purpose of the grant project.

**Interest payments on loans and machinery expenses are the only costs that are fully prohibited.**

Some types of costs have additional restrictions:

- Cars, vans, trucks, UTV's, ATV's, golf carts, boats, boat engines or other vehicles that can be used off the farm are NOT eligible for this grant.
- Trailers are only allowed if their primary purpose is to haul or store agricultural products or equipment.
- Land transactions between immediate family members are prohibited, and land transactions among extended family must be disclosed. Immediate family members include any member of the household, as well as the applicant's parents, stepparents, siblings, and any business in which they have an ownership interest. Extended family includes aunts, uncles, cousins and any business in which they have an ownership interest. (See Appendix B for more information on land transactions & purchases)
- All building and construction work must be implemented by licensed contractors. (See Appendix A for more requirements)
- Any wages supported by the project must be paid in accordance with State and Federal laws
- To the fullest extent possible, goods and services purchased with these funds should be procured within NYS.
- No funds specified in this proposal shall be used as a match, or to support any work with any other State-Funded grant programs.

### Review Process and Scoring Criteria

The review process has two components, technical review and external evaluation.

*NYFVI Technical Review:* NYFVI staff will conduct a technical review of all applications to ensure that all requirements are met. Technical review criteria include the following:

- Is the application complete and able to be evaluated based on the information provided?
- Is the applicant eligible for the program?
- Does the budget fall within the program structure, and are all costs eligible?
- Are all significant budgeted costs referenced in the project description?

NYFVI reserves the right to contact an applicant to clarify any information prior to project selection or to reject the application prior to further review.

*External Evaluation:* An application review committee will be comprised of individuals from across the State who are part of the ag ecosystem that supports farmers. Their expertise will include business management and agriculture. Reviewers will independently read and evaluate the proposals. If a proposal requires specific expertise that is not available among the reviewers, that expertise will be sought. After merit scoring is completed, the committee will meet in two virtual sessions to discuss the proposals and their scores, and develop a final ranked list for each grant track. Consideration may be given to ensuring Statewide use of the funds and providing support across the wide range of NY agriculture. No proposal that falls below the average score will be eligible for funding.

## Scoring Criteria

The scoring criteria and the application are closely aligned. Reviewers will be asked to assess three areas: Farmer Readiness, Business Readiness, and Business Impact.

Category	Question	Available Points
<b>Farmer Readiness</b> 30 points total	Does the applicant's <b>agricultural experience</b> or transferable skills demonstrate that they are prepared to build or grow their enterprise with this project?	16
	Has the applicant's informal or formal <b>education</b> , prepared them to build or grow their enterprise with this project?	8
	Has the applicant's experience or education prepared them to successfully manage the farm's financials for the long term?	6
<b>Business Readiness</b> 35 points total	Does the business have appropriate financial management routines in place?	3
	Does the business have a clear plan for growth?	5
	Is the labor force for the business an asset for its future growth?	3
	Is the scale of the business aligned with the proposed plan?	9
	Does the SMART goal demonstrate that the business understands the numbers associated with its operation?	10
	Does the business demonstrate a strong understanding of its market?	5
<b>Business Impact</b> 35 points total	Relative to the size of the request, does the potential impact, either short or long term, warrant this investment?	20
	Is the use of these funds focused on a significant bottleneck or opportunity for the business?	15

Specific sections of the application correspond with the scoring criteria.

- Farmer Readiness will be evaluated based on the content provided in the Experience and Education section of the proposal.
- Business Readiness will be evaluated based on the information provided in the Business Practices, the Production Capacity, Sales & Marketing, SWOT analysis, Project Description, Workplan, and Project Budget sections.
- Business Impact will be evaluated based on the content provided in the SMART goal section and Project Budget

## What to Know Before Applying

Receiving a grant is a contractual agreement. As applicants think about developing a proposal, ensure that it can be executed within the following parameters:

- This grant is a reimbursement-based award. No costs will be reimbursed until a project has achieved key milestones or is successfully completed and all required documentation has been submitted and

approved.

- Grant recipients must be able to self-finance or secure financing to implement their project.
- The proposal is part of the contract, and all expenses for reimbursement must be clearly aligned with and specified in the application. See also the Project Budget section of the application for the rules applying to reimbursement.
- No expenses that pre-date the execution date of the contract can be reimbursed. A contract is executed when both parties have signed the document and it has been returned to NYFVI.
- If the project is completed under budget, the grant and its match will be decreased proportionally; the match will always be 5% of the total of documented costs submitted for reimbursement.
- If the project exceeds the proposed budget, the grant award will not increase.
- All projects must be able to be executed within the established timeframes.
- Grants may be taxable income and awardees should consult their tax professional. A W-9 must be submitted and a 1099 will be issued for all reimbursement payments.
- A credit history may be obtained as part of the application process.
- In certain instances, grants may be subject to repayment. See Potential Grant Recapture Scenarios below.
- NYFVI reserves the right to offer a lower dollar amount to any applicant.

## Contracting Requirements

As a project is awarded, each grantee will be required to participate in an individual virtual meeting. At that meeting, the contracting process, reporting, and reimbursement requirements will be reviewed and deadlines in the contract will be confirmed.

NYFVI reserves the right to request further information prior to a project receiving a contract. Additionally, any business that requires NYS permits or licenses to operate must have them in place, or clearly demonstrate how the grant will allow the necessary permits or licenses to be secured.

Some projects, based on size, type, or location, may need to meet additional criteria prior to contract including:

- All projects over \$50,000 must demonstrate their ability to self-finance or secure funding to implement the project. Selected projects will have up to 120 days for this step to be achieved.
- Competitive bids for any expenditure over \$25,000 will be required.
- Formal costs proposals for any expenditure over \$50,000 will be required.
- All building and construction projects must demonstrate appropriate insurance coverage prior to contract execution.
- All projects over \$100,000 must be able to complete the NYS Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire prior to contract. It can be found [here](#).
- Any projects that will be implemented on leased land must document the support of the landowner, prior to contract and have a lease that extends a minimum of five years beyond the contract termination date.
- All projects that include a land purchase must have a current purchase agreement with the seller and appraisal by a licensed professional.
- Any project that will require 24 months to complete may request a reimbursement for costs incurred after tangible milestones, identified in the workplan, have been met. This must be requested during the contract discussion.
- Any project that will seek financing to implement their project may request to assign their grant payment to a third-party lender.

Contracts will be executed on an ongoing basis. Every effort will be made to move quickly once a grantee submits the required documents. NYFVI is required to ensure that awards are made only to responsible applicants. To assist with making this determination NYFVI may request additional individual and business financial information from successful applicants for both grant tracks. NYFVI will discuss any concerns with the applicant prior to making a final determination. Financial information will not be shared beyond NYFVI and its financial consultant and is not part of

the merit score calculation.

## Reporting Requirements

All reporting and reimbursement requests will be managed electronically through the NYFVI online platform where the application was submitted. The reporting requirements will vary by grant award size and are detailed below.

### *Progress Reports*

Progress reports will be structured as a form with a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended question sections. If a project fails to achieve a target date in the workplan, a virtual meeting will be scheduled. Each report will ask the grantee to confirm the final completion date.

### *Final Reports*

All final reports will require a narrative summary of and photos of the completed project.

A final report and the reimbursement request can be submitted prior to the final deadline if the purpose of the grant funds has been achieved.

Building projects must provide a certificate of occupancy with the final report.

NYFVI staff may visit and photograph projects throughout the process.

## Reimbursement Requirements and Payment Schedule

Reimbursement requests must accompany the final report and include itemized documentation for all costs to be reimbursed **as well as the financial match**. Proof of payment, invoices or receipts must include the company name and location and a date and show a zero balance for all purchases. If the invoice does not show a zero balance, a cancelled check or other proof of payment must be provided. Unless otherwise specified in the contract, a single payment will be made following the submission and approval of the final report and reimbursement request.

A final report and reimbursement request may be submitted prior to the final deadline if the purpose of the grant funds has been achieved.

	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Reporting Requirements/Reimbursements</b>
Track 1	Up to 18 months from execution of contract	Two reports: midpoint and a final report. One reimbursement request after project completion.
Track 2	Up to 24 months from execution of contract	Four reports: 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, and a final report. One reimbursement after project completion, unless other arrangements are requested before the project is contracted.

## Potential Grant Recapture Scenarios

Grant recapture refers to circumstances in which a grantee could be required to reimburse NYFVI for the funds they have received. NYFVI may require repayment of any assistance received under this program in the following events:

- If an application, including any information provided therewith or thereafter, contains any material misrepresentations or is incomplete.
- If the assistance was awarded or disbursed in error and the applicant is not entitled to assistance under these guidelines.
- If the applicant received a payment and did not complete the project as approved.
- If supporting documentation is not true and complete; and,
- If the applicant leaves the state, sells any assets paid for with funds from this program, or otherwise ceases farming within five years of final disbursement of funds. The recapture amount is based on the time that has lapsed between when the grant funds were disbursed and when any of the above circumstances occurred. The recapture amount shall be calculated at:
  - 100% of the disbursed amount if the recapture circumstance occurred in the calendar year that the disbursement was made, or in the first full calendar year after the disbursement was made;
  - 80% of the disbursed amount if the recapture circumstance occurred in the second full calendar year after the disbursement was made;
  - 60% of the disbursed amount if the recapture circumstance occurred in the third full calendar year after the disbursement was made;
  - 40% of the disbursed amount if the recapture circumstance occurred in the fourth full calendar year after the disbursement was made;
  - 20% of the disbursed amount if the recapture circumstance occurred in the fifth full calendar year after the disbursement was made.

In the event of any fraudulent misrepresentations by the applicant, in addition to the recapture of assistance, NYFVI may pursue other legal remedies and refer the matter to the appropriate governmental authorities for investigation and prosecution.

## Other Considerations

NYFVI reserves the right to:

- Modify proposal submission requirements as deemed necessary with appropriate written notice to all potential applicants.
- Reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP.
- Withdraw the RFP at any time, at FVI's sole discretion.
- Make an award under the requested amount in whole or part.
- Disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP.
- Seek clarifications and revisions of proposals.
- Prior to the deadline for proposals, amend the RFP specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available and with appropriate written notice to all potential applicants by posting amendments on the organization's website.
- Prior to the deadline for proposals, direct applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFP amendments.
- Change any of the scheduled dates.
- Eliminate any mandatory, non-material specifications with which all applicants cannot comply.
- Waive any requirements that are not material.

- Require clarification at any time during the grant process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an applicant's proposal and/or to determine an applicant's compliance with the requirements of the RFP.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification to the applicant.
- Negotiate with successful applicants any matter within the scope of the RFP in the best interests of the program.
- Make all final decisions with respect to the amount of funding and the timing of payments to be provided to an applicant.

## HOW TO APPLY

The Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program is being conducted entirely online. The first step is to create a user profile in the [online system](#). Next, all applicants will need to complete the eligibility quiz before being able to start an application.

If you would like to see the full application before starting, a .PDF of the online application is available on the [program page](#) on the NYFVI website.

If you need the information in other languages, Google Translate is integrated into the online platform to allow applicants to review the form in the language of their choice.

### Application Content

The application will collect information about the applicant, the business, and the potential impact of the grant funds on the business. The goal of the application is to provide a consistent format to allow proposals to be evaluated in a uniform and objective manner.

The online application includes the following sections:

- Basic Information
- Farmer Readiness: Information specific to the beginning farmer who is applying for the grant
- Business Readiness: Information specific to Business Practices, Business Profile, Sales & Marketing and SWOT analysis for the current or potential business
- Project Purpose, Description, SMART goal specific to the use of funds
- Workplan outlining the steps necessary to complete the project
- Project Team, if applicable
- Project Budget (located within a separate spreadsheet) and Justification. Detailed costs must be provided and all costs listed in the budget must be associated with the project and clearly align with the project description. Please note: All building and construction work must be implemented by licensed contractors. (See Appendix A for more requirements)
- Financial information (Not visible to external reviewers or part of merit score)
- Attestations
- Demographics (Optional. Not visible to external reviewers, or part of merit score)

**Note:** If the applicants' farm business earned less than \$1,000 in revenue in the past calendar year, they must submit a copy of their business plan in the application prior to the application deadline. This is not scored, but is required to help reviewers get a better understanding of the applicant's agricultural business and future plans.

This business plan must include at least the following information:

1. **Business Description:** A brief overview of the business with short and long-term goals, the type of business entity
2. **SMART Goal:** a SMART goal specific to your business (not just your grant project)

3. **History:** Any details about the land or assets the business already has or plans to obtain
4. **Management Structure:** Who is responsible for what, and what are their skills
5. **Operations/Production Plan:** What the business produces and how the business plans to achieve its goal
6. **Market Analysis:** Who the target customers are, who is the competition, and how they plan to promote and sell their products – including pricing
7. **Three-Year Projected Profit & Loss Statement** showing the impact of this grant-funded project. This should illustrate how the business will become profitable over time, meaning revenue from sales becomes greater than the costs of farming.

## Resources

Developing a competitive grant proposal may feel like an overwhelming task. NYFVI has identified organizations that may be able to support an applicant's efforts. The following documents are available at the [program page](#) on NYFVI's website and will be updated if additional resources are identified.

- Organizations that may be available to help develop applications and business plans
- Educational resources to learn more about Agricultural Business Plans, Sales & Marketing, SMART goals and SWOT analysis.
- Potential lenders for implementation loans.

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## APPENDIX A: Considerations for Infrastructure, Building and Renovation Projects and Projects on Leased Land

Adherence to all NYS regulations and processes is required of all funded projects. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their business and proposed project will comply with all State and local laws and regulations. The goal of this document is to help applicants begin to identify the regulations that may apply to their projects. Overall, applicants should consider the following:

### Business licenses or permits

Many business activities require permits or licenses to operate. If the proposed project is for an activity that is new to your business, make sure to research if any licenses or permits are required for the activity. These permits could range from 20-C processing licenses to aquaculture permits, farm dealer permits, warehouse storage permits and more. If the business is not operating under a federal license, there may be permits from State agencies that should be in place.

Review the lists on the following pages to learn more:

**AGM** <https://agriculture.ny.gov/business/licensing-registration>

**DEC** <https://dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses>

### Project specific permits

Applicants should learn if there are any permits, zoning codes or other regulations that should be considered when planning a project.

- Work with your local municipality or county to make sure that the proposed project is aligned with land use regulation and zoning codes.

- Work with the Soil and Water Conservation District to understand any environmental regulation that may govern your activity and determine if any environmental permits will be required for your project. More information can be found here: [https://dec.ny.gov/regulatoryulations and Enforcement - NYSDEC](https://dec.ny.gov/regulatoryulations%20and%20Enforcement%20-%20NYSDEC)
- Ensure your building project complies with all NYS Department of State Building Standards and Codes. Contractors are likely to be familiar with these requirements.

**Projects which include ground disturbing activities, construction of new buildings, or modification of buildings over 50 years old will be subject to further review by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). NYFVI reserves the right to request such additional information as is necessary to allow OPRHP to make a determination regarding the potential impacts of the project on historical sites or artifacts and possible alternatives which avoid or mitigate adverse impacts. Projects may also be subject to a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR).**

#### **Projects on Leased Land**

Proposals may be submitted for infrastructure, building and renovation projects on leased land. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the landowner is in full agreement with any proposed improvements and that the intended use of the land any building complies with all State and local code requirements. Projects that will be implemented on leased land, must provide documentation for the landowners support and have a lease in place at the start of the grant period that will not expire until 5 years after the project's completion.

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### **APPENDIX B: Guidelines for Agricultural Land Purchases**

Purchasing agricultural land is a significant undertaking and can be a lengthy process. Because of the competitive nature of this program, and its time constraints, this program is likely to work best for applicants who have identified a landowner that is able to accommodate the program's schedule.

Please carefully review the points below and ensure that the applicant's proposal can provide detailed information about the parcel to be purchased and meet all guidelines.

- The specific parcel of land that will be purchased and its proposed purchase price must be identified in the budget description of the proposal.
- A formal appraisal, by a licensed individual, will be required to document fair market value. No project may receive funds in excess of the appraised price. If this number is higher than the proposal's requested budget, it is unlikely that the grant size will be able to be increased. If the appraisal is lower than the price in the proposal budget, the grant will be decreased.
- The value of any personal residential structures that would be part of the purchase must be deducted from the sales price when determining the proposed grant size.
- A minimum of 80% of the acreage must be appropriate for the purpose of the agricultural enterprise described in the application. If the proposed parcel does not meet this threshold, then the proposal will not be considered.
- All documented costs associated with closing are eligible for inclusion in the budget.
- A site map must be submitted with the proposal. Maps from Google Earth, the county tax assessor or other mapping systems may be used.
- The intended use of the land must comply with all State and local code requirements.
- The land must be well suited to the agricultural purpose proposed by the applicant. Applicants should research the parcel and consideration should be given to the following:
- Access to water/ability to irrigate

- Soil types and soil quality, reference maps and recent testing.
- History of parcel. How has the land been used over time? Is there any prior use that demonstrates it is well suited or might make it unsuitable for agricultural purposes?
- Is it in a flood zone?
- Crop and input history, particularly if the applicant is planning to build a certified organic business.
- Size of the land base. Is it sufficient to run or expand a commercially viable operation?
- Land transactions between immediate family members are prohibited, and land transactions among extended family must be disclosed. Immediate family members include any member of the household, as well as the applicant's parents, step parents, siblings and any business in which they have an ownership interest. Extended family includes in-laws, aunts, uncles, cousins and any business in which they have an ownership interest.

These projects must also comply with the grant size limits and match requirements provided in the full RFP.