



**SMADC Southern Maryland Farmer  
Pandemic Relief Mini-Grant Program**

**Criteria and Guidelines  
Grant Opens July 1<sup>st</sup> and closes July 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Awarded by August 17, 2020**

**Stated Purpose:** The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission's (SMADC) mission is to support farms and the future of agriculture in Southern Maryland. We are committed to expanding and promoting a viable market-driven, sustainable, and profitable agricultural farming community that is well connected to its consumers.

Therefore, SMADC's next round of mini-grants to the farming community will be specifically for Pandemic Financial Relief. This round will focus on established farms that have been financially adversely affected by the onset of COVID-19, and/or those who have financial needs concerning pivoting their business model to effectively serve customers safely and to implement/maintain state-recommended COVID-19 safety protocols.

As the pandemic has affected all aspects of life, and certain businesses severely, we know that some farmers are at risk for being unable to pay bills and maintain an adequate standard of living and care for their farm operations. **As such, for this grant cycle only, the parameters for who may apply and how the grant funds may be used has changed. Matching funds are not required for this mini-grant round.**

**Funding may be used for:**

Services or equipment that help transition to an online or alternative sales strategy such as home delivery, on-farm sales, etc., or for other projects that allow farm business to maintain and/or expand sales during COVID-19 pandemic, including: on-farm upgrades to meet state COVID-19 standards for safety and social distancing, veterinary bills, livestock feed, seeds, fertilizer, and equipment parts for farm machinery repair, purchase of foundation livestock, purchase of plant stock, marketing and promotion of current farm operation, and on-farm upgrades to enhance food safety per compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) produce safety rule.

**Allowable expenses incurred April 1, 2020 and on will be considered.**

**Agricultural Mini-Grant may not be used for:**

- Events
- New farm establishment
- Equipment purchases if applicant has received the new MARBIDCO Pandemic Adjustment Equipment Grant

**Eligibility:**

- Established farm enterprises only (does not include non-profits or community organizations).
- *NEW THIS ROUND* - Must have an official tax document that proves the enterprise is an established farm business; a Schedule F, K1 Form, 1120S, or similar form. The document can be uploaded in the application portal.
- Applicant must be 18 years of age and own or operate an established farm business.
- Applicants residing and farming in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's or St. Mary's counties.
- No more than one application awarded, per applicant during a 12-month period, with a lifetime award limit of \$6,000, whichever comes first.

**Funding:** For this round of grants (July 1 - July 22, 2020), \$27,000 of funding is available. Applicants may receive up to \$2,000 per application. The number of applicants may exceed the amount of funding available, therefore applications will be ranked and awards may be less than the requested amount. See "Evaluation Criteria" at the end of this document.

**Criteria for grant awards:**

- Consistent with definition of the Agricultural Mini-Grant stated purpose.
- Demonstrates loss of revenue due to COVID-19 pandemic and financial need to assist with on-farm upgrades to meet state Covid-19 standards for safety and social distancing, veterinary bills, livestock feed, seeds, fertilizer, and equipment parts for farm machinery repair, the purchase of foundation livestock, purchase of plant stock, marketing and promotion of current farm operation, on-farm upgrades to enhance food safety per compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) produce safety rule.
- Effective new business strategy implemented to adequately conform to new COVID-19 safety standards, such as upgrades for safety and social distancing services or equipment that helps transition to an online or alternative sales strategy such as home delivery, on-farm sales, etc., or for other projects that allow farm business to maintain a safe sales environment during COVID-19 pandemic.
- A letter of reference from your county's Soil Conservation District, Farm Bureau, University of Maryland Extension or Economic Development Office **is strongly encouraged, but not mandatory for this Pandemic Round of the mini-grant.**
- The first 30 COMPLETE applications (with the required uploaded attachments) submitted will be ranked higher and may be used as a determining factor in the review process.

**Application Procedure:**

1. Applications must be submitted online.
2. Applicants may apply **July 1, 2020.**
3. Applicants will be sent an email to confirm the receipt of their grant application.
4. Submissions will be reviewed and evaluated by the SMADC Review Committee.
5. Applicant will be notified if they are awarded the grant, are declined the grant, by August 17, 2020.
6. Grant funds will be disbursed in late August 2020.

**Terms:**

1. Signed agreement between applicant and SMADC
2. Notify SMADC once funds have been expended.
3. Complete survey that SMADC Staff will send once notified that funds have been expended.
4. SMADC will list award recipients on SMADC’s website.

**Evaluation Criteria: The following chart is used by grant reviewers when evaluating grant applications. It is printed here for your information and reference.**

1-5 (5 being the strongest)	Evaluation Criteria for SMADC Mini-Grant Applications
	Demonstrates loss of revenue due to COVID-19 pandemic and financial need to assist with on-farm upgrades to meet state Covid-19 standards for safety and social distancing, veterinary bills, livestock feed, seeds, fertilizer, and equipment parts for farm machinery repair, the purchase of foundation livestock, purchase of plant stock, marketing and promotion of current farm operation, on-farm upgrades to enhance food safety per compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) produce safety rule.
	Has this applicant ever received a Mini-Grant before (5 for first time applicant)?
	Effective new business strategy implemented to adequately conform to new Covid-19 safety standards, such as upgrades for safety and social distancing services or equipment that helps transition to an online or alternative sales strategy like home delivery, on-farm sales, etc., or for other projects that allow farm business to implement and maintain safe sales during COVID-19 pandemic.
	The first 30 COMPLETE applications (with the required uploaded attachments) submitted will be ranked higher and may be used as a determining factor in the review process.
	<b>Total</b>

**Contact:**

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