

Michigan's Emerging Farmers – Strategies and Tools to Enhance Success Matching Funds Program Application



Through a USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Grant the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS), Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS) and MSU Student Organic Farm will provide a limited number of \$2,000 stipends to beginning farmers in Michigan. Each \$2,000 stipend requires applicant matching savings of at least \$1,000 intended for farm-related costs. The stipends are designed to help people in their first years of farming to develop and stabilize their farming business, increasing its long-term viability.

To participate in this program:

1. Operate a farm business as defined by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for at least one and no more than ten years. A farm business is defined as 1) the engagement in food production (or related activities like composting and transplants) for livelihood and 2) a place from which annual sales of \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold.
2. Complete and submit this pre-application information no later than **March 14, 2016**.
3. Participate in at least 3 beginning farmer workshops to be offered by the MSU Student Organic Farm and/or Genesee Area Women in Agriculture Network during 2016. At least one workshop should be a business planning workshop.
* A list of workshops is provided at the end of this application.
4. Develop a three-year farm business plan to be reviewed with suggestions for improvement by project staff members with farm business expertise. Business plan development will be aided through participation in a business planning workshop.
5. Establish a dedicated savings account and save at least \$1,000 as a match for the \$2,000 stipend.
6. Complete these requirements and provide the following documentation to Shakara Tyler by **September 26, 2016**:
 - a. Business plan

- b. List of workshops attended
- c. Savings account documentation

The funds provided by this grant are intended to support farmers of color and women farmers. Their applications will receive priority.

For questions and comments, please email Shakara Tyler at tylersh1@msu.edu.

Please note: all information requested on this application form will be kept confidential within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development project staff members.

Personal Information

Name: _____

Best Phone Number: (____) _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Address:

Street: _____ Apt #: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip Code: _____

County of Residency: _____

Farm Name: _____

Farm Address: (if different from above)

Street: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip Code: _____

What sex do you identify as? : Female ____ Male ____

What race and/or ethnicity do you identify as? _____

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____

Are you a citizen of the United States or a legal resident of the U.S.? Yes ____ No ____

Farm Operation

What is the legal structure of your farm business?

- Sole proprietorship
- Partnership
- Limited Liability Corporation
- Other, please describe:

What crops/livestock do you grow/raise?

Describe your agreement for the land (i.e. cash lease, crop share, lease own, searching for land to lease, or to buy)

How long have you been farming this land? _____

How many acres do you own in total? _____ Lease? _____

How many acres of land do you own are currently in agricultural production? _____

How many acres of land do you lease are currently in agricultural production? _____

What is the length of your current agreement for use of this land? _____

Date Lease Expires: _____

Do you have a written lease or agreement? Yes _____ No _____

How long is your growing season? _____

What is your Gross Farm Revenue?

Last Year: _____

Current Year: _____

NOTE Gross income is your total earnings before any deductions have been taken out. Net income is the amount of money left over after all expenses have been paid.

On a separate sheet of paper, please respond to the following questions with no more than 1 page for each question:

Please describe your farming experience. Be sure to include your farm’s mission and goals, how long you have been farming, what you grow/raise, how do you market, key financial aspects, your successes, strengths and opportunities; your challenges, weaknesses and threats.

Please explain why you are interested in participating in the Michigan's Emerging Farmers 2:1 Matching Program and how you plan to use the \$3,000. Please be specific.

Do you have any special situations or needs that project staff should know about?

Applicant Certification

My signature below certifies that all information provided on this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. All owners of the farm business should sign below.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____
Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____
Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____



This material is based upon the work that is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under award number 2015-70017-2286.

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Workshops that Meet Matching Funds Application Requirements:

MICHIGAN FARMER FIELD SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Please see the Farmer Field School webpage for updates on dates, location and pricing:
<http://www.msuorganicfarm.org/farmer-field-school.html>

**Farm Financial Fitness: Business Planning and Managing for Profit – Day 1 -
Saturday, February 20th**

**Farm Financial Fitness: Business Planning and Managing for Profit – Day 2 -
Saturday, March 13th**

Do It Yourself Infrastructure, Equipment and Maintenance – April

**Planting and Planning: Direct Seeded and Transplanted Crop Establishment and
Scheduling – July**

Summer Fruiting Crops in High Tunnels (Tomatoes and more) – July/August

**Strengthen Your Business with Effective Communications & Marketing –
Aug/September**

**Finding Your Sweetspot: Considerations for Scaling Up (or maybe Down) –
Oct./Nov**

Labor: Effective Strategies and Management – November

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE NETWORK OF GENESEE COUNTY

The Women in Agriculture Network workshops are open to participants in the WIA network only. For more information on how to get involved please contact Lacey Ingraio at lacey@miffs.org.

For updates on dates, locations and times of workshops, please visit:
<http://www.miffs.org/events/letsfarmmichigan>.

Business Planning: Visioning and Goal Setting-- February 25th

Business Planning: Financial Fitness-- March 3rd

Business Planning: Organization and Management-- March 10th

Soil Management-- April

Livestock-- July

Scaling up- November

Marketing- December