



Micro Grant Reimbursement Program

Purpose: Encourage the implementation of activities that can enhance the economic viability of farm and forest businesses in the NYC Watershed.

Eligibility: Any NYC Watershed 'farm operation' as defined by Agriculture & Markets (AGM) CHAPTER 69, ARTICLE 25-AA, SECTION 301, Subdivision 11 meaning the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise, including a "commercial horse boarding operation" as defined in subdivision thirteen of this section, a "timber operation" as defined in subdivision fourteen of this section, "compost, mulch or other biomass crops" as defined in subdivision seventeen of this section and "commercial equine operation" as defined in subdivision eighteen of this section. Such farm operation may consist of one or more parcels of owned or rented land, which parcels may be contiguous or noncontiguous to each other. Preference will be given to WAC participants.

Application Deadlines: Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, with applicant selection occurring within three months. Businesses approved for grant funding must provide proof of completion of proposed projects and all invoices for projects to WAC to be eligible for grant funding reimbursement.

Application Requirements:

- A. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Applicants will be notified of the approved/denied status within three months of submitting their application.
- B. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated against scoring criteria included in these instructions. A minimum score of 70 must be met. Applicants will be notified of the approved/denied status within six months.
- C. Grant applications will be awarded based on availability of program funding and merit of the proposal based upon evaluation criteria included in this application. If the applicant does not meet eligibility per Agriculture & Markets (AGM) CHAPTER 69, ARTICLE 25-AA, SECTION 301, Subdivision 11. 'farm operation' they will not be considered.
- D. These are reimbursable grants. Closeout packages must provide necessary documentation per each category before reimbursement is issued. All closeout packages, materials, bills and/or invoices provided as proof of completion must be submitted to WAC by the date provided in approval letter to receive reimbursement.
- E. Payment will not be issued to participants who are not in good standing with WAC.
- F. To receive the grant award, applicants must submit W9, receipts, invoices and other proper documentation following requirements described for each grant category.
- G. Applicants may apply for up to \$5,000 in grant funding per fiscal year. There is a five-year grant

cap award of \$25,000 per applicant. Applications that exceed that amount will be reviewed by the Economic Viability Committee in special circumstances.

- H. Approved applications are subject to cancellation after six months. Staff may grant extension upon request pending approval by the Economic Viability Program Manager.

Categories:

A. Training Reimbursement: To encourage continuing education intended to enhance the economic viability profitability and sustainability of eligible applicant's businesses by providing grant funding to help applicants offset the cost of online courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and college courses.

- i. Only training opportunities that occur after the approval date will be eligible for funding.
- ii. An overview of the training including: web links, an agenda or syllabus, and other supporting documents must be included with the application prior to approval.
- iii. Demonstration of projected impact the training will have on diversification, continuing education, profitability and/or sustainability of your business.
- iv. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Training Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package includes proof of training attendance, an invoice identifying total cost of the training, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants Application. The payment will be based on the training invoice.
- v. To be eligible for funding the training must occur within six months of the approval date.

B. Event/Mileage Reimbursement: To directly support economic profitability by off-setting the cost of attending new events, fairs, farmers' markets and/or transporting products to new markets or venues through mileage reimbursement and/or vendor fees reimbursement. Funding will be considered for applicants that demonstrate new events are assisting in the expansion of their market reach. This is a one-time offset reimbursement not intended to be used for continual attendance.

- i. WAC will reimburse applicants at the current federal mileage reimbursement rate. Google map directions should be submitted round trip.
- ii. WAC will reimburse applicants for the cost of attending an event/fair/new market located in New York State.
- iii. Applicants must submit an application prior to travel that identifies the eligible market, event, or new venue desired to attend, the date and the distance. All mileage will be calculated using the applicant's business address.
- iv. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit an Event/Mileage Reimbursement Form provided by the Watershed Agricultural Council when accepted and receipts from event confirming attendance. The Closeout Package includes the travel starting point (the business location), destination, pictures, financial impact, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants Application.

C. Marketing Reimbursement: To encourage branding, advertising and communications related to the marketing of products and services provided by eligible applicants.

- i. Eligible Marketing activities are: farm signs, product labels or packaging, logo development,

webpage development, advertisement design and placement.

- ii. Applicants must submit a project timeline and overview for completion based off cost quotes.
- iii. All estimates of cost must be provided by qualified web links, businesses, or professionals. The cost quotes provided must reflect the amount being applied for. We ask that the applicant clearly identify why they have chosen the quote/consultant.
- iv. Only marketing activities that occur after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. If approved, applicants will not be eligible to reapply for the same marketing services.
- vi. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Marketing Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package includes .pdf, .eps and/or .jpg design files for logos, digital copies of advertisements, final web link, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants Application.

D. Staffing Reimbursement: To enhance profitability, productivity and/or assist with business expansion.

- i. Applicants must submit a business/operation overview identifying how funding for a new staffing position will support expansion, increased viability and/or productivity.
- ii. Applicants must provide specific expansion information including list and description of new market(s) if applicable, and metrics for measuring success.
- iii. Applicants must submit a job description as planned to be advertised to the public clearly identifying the role of the new position, how the new position will assist in operation expansion, increased profitability and/or productivity.
- iv. Applicants must submit a timeline including pay rate (at least minimum wage), length of position(s), hours per week, and how they plan to track those hours (pay stubs and mileage will be requested for the closeout package.) We ask that you provide the process you currently have/or intend to have in place, along with the payroll service that you have/or intend to use to track the position, Only positions hired after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. WAC is not responsible for the work, direction, IRS reporting, or personal conduct of the proposed staff. The applicant accepts full responsibility for the proposed staff, this position (if approved) is not an employee of WAC.
- vi. One-time payment per business. Businesses cannot reapply to fill position if seasonal.
- vii. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Staffing Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package includes pay stubs, mileage if attending markets/events, a signed sheet from the employee and employer that they were paid the correct rate, metrics of increased sales, a completed W9, and a completed EV Micro Grants Application.

E. Greenhouse and/or Raised Bed Expansion Reimbursement: Support activities related to expanding and/or starting fruit and vegetable production to increase producer viability.

- i. Eligible activities: row cover support, winter season extension projects, small tunnel projects and operational expansion-related items.
- ii. Applicants must submit a business/operation overview identifying how funding will support expansion, increased viability and/or productivity of operations.
- iii. Applicants must submit a comprehensive project overview including budget and timeline for completion.

- iv. Only projects/activities that occur after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Greenhouse and/or Raised Bed Expansion Closeout Package. The Closeout Package will need to include all invoices related to the project, proof of payment, estimated economic impact and a completed W9.

F. Water Access Reimbursement: Support agricultural projects and purchases related to water management that aim to help agricultural producers expand and/or initiate fruit and vegetable production.

- i. Eligible activities: wash station support, irrigation needs, well development, and projects that relate to heavy storm events, overall rainfall and periods of drought.
- ii. Applicants must submit a business/operation overview identifying how funding will support expansion, increased viability and/or productivity of operations.
- iii. Applicants must submit a comprehensive project overview including budget and timeline for completion.
- iv. Only projects/activities that occur after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Water Access Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package will need to include all invoices related to the project, proof of payment, estimated economic impact related to the business/operation, and a completed W9.

G. Farm Structure Reimbursement: Support structural needs as related to the development of vegetable and fruit expansion of business operation.

- i. Eligible activities: insect and bird netting, deer fencing, cold storage, tables, bulk bins and crates necessary for transport and pest control.
- ii. Applicants must submit a business/operation overview identifying how funding will support expansion, increased viability and/or productivity.
- iii. Applicants must submit a comprehensive project overview including budget and timeline for completion.
- iv. Only projects/activities that occur after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Farm Structure Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package will need to include all invoices related to the project, proof of payment, estimated economic impact and a completed W9.

Prior to issuing payment WAC will review the Closeout Package to ensure conformity with the approved application and EV guidelines. After this review WAC will submit payment directly to the applicant in accordance with the criteria in each category.

Review of Application and Award of Grant: All applications will be reviewed and approved by the Economic Viability Program Manager based on criteria approved in the Economic Viability Program Handbook.

Contact: (607) 865-7090 or evprogram@nycwatershed.org



Micro Grant Reimbursement Program Application

Before You Begin:

Will the information provided in this application (name, business name, and mailing address) match the information on your W9?

- Yes
- No (If no, please explain below):

Explanation:

General Applicant Information

1. Applicant Name:
2. Business/Farm Name:
3. Physical Address:
4. Phone Number:
5. Email Address:
6. Are you a current WAC or Pure Catskills participant? **Yes** **No**
7. Are you in good standing with WAC? **Yes** **No**

Project Overview

9. Grant Category (Select **ONLY** One):
 - Training
 - Event/Mileage
 - Marketing
 - Staffing
 - Greenhouse/Raised Bed Expansion
 - Water Access
 - Farm Structure
10. Project Title:

11. Brief Summary of the Proposed Project or Activity:

12. Describe your current farm/business operation, including the primary products/services you offer and your market(s):

Purpose and Impact

13. Describe how this project will enhance the profitability, viability, and/or sustainability of your operation. Please be specific:

14. If applicable, describe any new market(s) or customer segments this project will help you reach or serve:

15. What specific outcomes or benefits do you anticipate from this project? (Include measurable goals, e.g. increased revenue, new customers, labor efficiency, etc.)

Project Details and Budget

16. Describe the planned timeline for this project (start and end dates):
17. List all key activities involved in this project and your estimated completion dates:
18. Provide a detailed budget for this project including actual cost quotes. Upload or list vendors and explain why you chose them:
19. Total Amount Requested (max \$5,000):
20. Have you received funding from WAC's Micro Grants before? If yes, list the year(s), amount(s), and purpose(s):

Category-Specific Requirements

- ***If Training:***

- Provide course name, provider, agenda/syllabus, and URL.
- How will this training be used in your operation?

- ***If Event/Mileage:***

- List the event/market/fair name, location, date, and website.
- Describe how this event is new to your business.
- Attach Google Maps screenshot with mileage.

- ***If Staffing:***

- Provide job description, timeline, hours/week, wage, and payroll process.

- Describe how this role will support long-term viability.

- ***If Marketing:***

- Describe existing marketing strategy.

- Provide your consultant choice, examples of proposed materials, and associated quote documentation.

- Attach digital samples if available.

- Include budget, vendor list, and implementation timeline.

- Signature:
- Date:
