



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
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Value-Added Producer Grant Application Deadline Approaching

Lincoln, Neb., February 26, 2008—Applications for approximately \$18.4 million in grants to develop value-added agriculture business ventures and alternative sources of renewable energy are due March 31, 2008. This is a competitive application process.

The USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program is open to eligible independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer and rancher cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures. Value-added products are those agricultural products, which gain value through processing, production, segregation or other means, or produce renewable energy on a farm or ranch.

The maximum allowable grant amount is \$100,000 for a planning grant and \$300,000 for working capital. Matching funds are required for eligibility. Grant funds may be used to fund one of the following two: (1) planning activities needed to establish a viable value-added marketing opportunity for an agricultural product (e.g. conduct a feasibility study, develop a business or marketing plan); or (2) acquire working capital to operate a value-added business venture that will allow producers to better compete in domestic and international markets.

Applications must be postmarked no later than March 31, 2008. Detailed information about application and program requirements is included in the January 28, 2008 publication of the Federal Register.

For further VAPG program information, an application package or assistance with your grant application contact Teresa Brohimer, Lincoln, (402) 423-9683. Additional program information can be found at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm>. An application template can be found at: <http://fpc.unl.edu/Business/grant.shtml>.

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