



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Rural Development Taking Applications For Value-Added Producer Grants Program

Farmers and Business Owners Encouraged To Apply

Topeka, - USDA Rural Development State Director Patty Clark urged farmers and business owners to apply for \$18 million in grants from the Agency's Value-Added Producer Grants Program, to help them add value to the commodities they produce. State Director Clark suggests that producers file their applications promptly so they can potentially take advantage of this important program.

USDA plans to award planning grants of up to \$100,000 and working capital grants of up to \$300,000 to successful applicants. Applicants are encouraged to propose projects that use existing agricultural products in non-traditional ways or merge agricultural products with technology in creative ways. Businesses of all sizes may apply, but priority will be given to operators of small to medium-sized farms operating as a family farm - those with average annual gross sales of less than \$700,000.

Applicants must provide matching funds equal to the amount of the grant requested. Ten percent of the funding being made available is reserved for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. An additional 10 percent is reserved for projects involving local and regional supply networks that link independent producers with businesses, and cooperatives that market value-added products.

The national application period for USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grants closes on November 30, 2009. For more information on how to apply, producers should visit www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm or see page 45165 of the Sept.1 Federal Register.

Paper applications must be submitted to the following local area USDA Rural Development office:

Western Kansas: Attn: Brandon Prough – 2715 Canterbury Drive, Hays, KS 67601 – Phone 785-628-3081

Northeast Kansas: Attn: Larry Holz – 3705 Miller Parkway, Suite A, Manhattan, KS 66503 – Phone 785-776-7582

Southeast Kansas: Attn: Katie Casper – 202 W. Miller Road, Iola, KS 66749 – Phone 620-365-2901

South Central Kansas: Attn: Douglas Clary – 1405 South Spencer Road, Newton, KS 67144 – Phone 316-283-0370

Electronic applications must be submitted through <http://www.grants.gov/> .

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development fosters growth in homeownership, finances business development and supports the creation of critical community and technology infrastructure. For additional information regarding USDA Rural Development and its programs, log onto the Agency's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks or call the USDA Rural Development state office at 785-271-2700.

USDA Rural Development – Committed to the Future of Rural Communities.

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