



Brighter Future Fund's Farmer & Rancher Emergency Resilience Grants

2025 APPLICATION

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Applicants must:

- Be an active farmer or rancher in the United States, directly impacted by recent disruptive events including but not limited to: government funding delays or termination, loss of markets, natural disasters, avian flu, and more. AFT will prioritize funding to small and mid-sized farms (as defined by the USDA classification based on annual gross cash farm income) who have previously faced challenges accessing traditional funding opportunities.
 - Demonstrate financial need due to hardships caused by disruptive events in recent months and explain how grant support will enhance business resilience.
 - Be committed to implementing soil health practices and environmentally beneficial agricultural techniques.
1. Program eligibility is determined on applicants meeting all of the following:
- Be a "farmer" or "rancher" defined as an individual, group, or organization intentionally and actively cultivating annual or perennial crops or animals for harvest in one of the 50 US states or 5 US territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands).
 - Provide proof of income at a value greater than \$1,000 in 2024 (or similar if the farm engages in barter, exchange, or community supply). This program does not intend to fund applicants who grow or raise products primarily for home, personal, or family use.
 - Terrestrial, soils-based agricultural production including agroforestry and silvopasture. Aquaculture, equine and forestry operations are ineligible.
 - Eligible farms or ranches must be for-profit operations. Nonprofits are encouraged to take advantage of alternate resources designed specifically for nonprofits.

Does the applicant meet the above definition and requirements?

Yes

No

2. Applicants must demonstrate financial need due to impact of recent disruptive events including but not limited to the loss or delay of government funds, loss of markets, and/or natural disasters, and explain how this grant support will enhance operational resilience.

Can the applicant demonstrate that they have been directly affected by any of the following in recent months: hardships brought on by loss or delay in government funding, natural disasters, avian flu, or loss of markets?

Examples include but are not limited to:

- documentation received by a farmer from a government agency stating their contract for financial assistance has been terminated
- documentation of market loss
- documentation of business-related hardship brought on by natural disasters

Yes

No

3. We are unable to award grants to American Farmland Trust staff, board members, or substantial contributors to AFT, or their family members. “Family member” is defined as any sibling, spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, or great-grandchild. “Substantial contributor” is defined as having given a contribution to American Farmland Trust of \$5,000 or more.

Is the applicant any of the following:

- American Farmland Trust staff member
- American Farmland Trust board member
- A substantial contributor to American Farmland Trust
- A family member of an American Farmland Trust staff member, board member, or substantial contributor?

Yes

No

4. Is the applicant a **2025** awardee of any of American Farmland Trust’s grant programs? (For example, Regenerate Virginia Healthy Soils, Regenerate Virginia Farm Vitality, or New England Regenerative Livestock Farming grants)?

Yes

No

5. Has the applicant carefully reviewed the Grant Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions?

Yes

No

APPLICATION FORM

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. In which language is the applicant completing this application:
 - a. English
 - b. Spanish
2. Farm Name
3. Is the applicant an individual or farm business entity?
 - i. Individual or Entity
4. Farm Business Entity Name (if entity applicant):
 - a. Farm Business Representative Last Name
 - b. Farm Business Representative First Name
5. Applicant Last Name (if individual applicant)
6. Applicant First Name (if individual applicant):
7. What state is your farm located in?
8. Personal Address:
 - a. Line 1
 - b. Line 2
 - c. City
 - d. State
 - e. Zip Code
9. Farm Address (if different than personal address):
 - a. Line 1
 - b. Line 2
 - c. City
 - d. State
 - e. Zip Code
10. If your farm does not have a USPS address, please include its Section, Township or Range. Needed?
11. Phone Number:
12. Farm Website or Social Media (if applicable):

APPLICANT INFORMATION

11. Did you spend a majority (50% or more) of your work time in farming or ranching in 2024?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

12. Do you own or lease your farm/ranch land? Check any that apply.
- Own
 - Lease
 - Do not own, but operate family land
 - Other (please explain)
13. If you lease, please describe your lease arrangement.
14. Size of farm (total acres of land including cropland, pasture, woodland, and all other land):
15. If the proposed project will impact acreage of a different amount, please enter the acreage impacted here: (optional)
16. What primary farm products did this farm operation produce, raise, or grow in the 2023 and/or 2024 growing seasons? (*choose one)
- Dairy
 - Vegetables
 - Fruits, nuts or berries
 - Field crops
 - Greenhouse or nursery crops
 - Cattle, hogs or other livestock
 - Other_____
17. What secondary farm products did this farm operation produce, raise, or grow in the 2023 and/or 2024 growing seasons? (Check all that apply).
- Dairy
 - Vegetables
 - Fruits, nuts or berries
 - Field crops
 - Greenhouse or nursery crops
 - Cattle, hogs or other livestock
 - Other_____
18. Do any of the following pertain to your farm?
- S-Corp
 - LLC
 - Unincorporated
 - Non-Profit (501 c3)
 - None of the Above
19. Select your farm or ranch business' 2024 annual gross cash farm income:
- Less than \$1,000
 - \$1,000 - \$350,000
 - \$350,000 - \$999,999
 - \$1,000,000 or more

20. Briefly tell us about your current farming status and land tenure situation (ex: full-time, part-time, hobby/personal use, leasing land, managing a farm, etc.): (150-word max)
21. Please briefly describe your farming background and experiences beyond the information shared above. If you are not currently farming, please explain: (150-word max)
22. Please tell us anything else about you, your story, or your background that you think is important for us to understand you and your farm better: (150-word max)
23. Do you qualify as a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher as defined by USDA ([USDA Limited Resource Farmer Qualification tool](#))
- Yes
 - No
24. Have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard?
- Yes, on active duty now
 - Yes, on active duty in the past, but not now
 - Never served in the military
25. Are you a Beginning Farmer? ([USDA Beginning Farmer Definition](#))
- No – Farming/Ranching 10 Years or more
 - Yes – Farming/Ranching 6-10 Years
 - Yes – Farming/Ranching 1-5 years
 - Yes – Farming/Ranching less than 1 Year

PROPOSED USE OF FUNDS:

Applicants must demonstrate financial need due to impact of recent disruptive events, including but not limited to natural disasters and/or the loss or delay of government funding, and explain how this grant support will enhance their operational resilience.

26. Why are you seeking funding through this program? (Select any that apply)
- Recent loss or delay of government funds
 - Loss of markets
 - Impact from natural disaster such as Hurricane Helene, Los Angeles Wildfires, recent flooding, etc.
 - Avian flu
 - Other ____ (required: please describe)
27. To demonstrate your need for these funds, please describe how your farm or ranch operation has been impacted by recent disruptive events. (300 words max)
28. Required: Please upload documentation to demonstrate financial distress or loss due to recent disruptive events. You may upload documents or images here. For example, you may upload a copy of a letter or other correspondence from a federal agency stating your contract has been

terminated or delayed. Other examples include documentation of loss of markets, or documentation of business-related hardship brought on by natural disasters.

Please note that AFT will not share or otherwise use any information you provide for purposes other than verifying eligibility for this funding opportunity.

29. Funds are intended to help farmers and ranchers enhance financial resilience, support business technical assistance, invest in business building, and/or foster soil health and environmentally beneficial agricultural practices. Please share how you specifically intend to use the funds. You must include the following: (250 words max)
- Specific details about the equipment, infrastructure, or services that will be acquired
 - A description of the ways that the equipment, infrastructure, or services you are seeking will enhance your farm's operational resilience.

PROJECT COST & TIMELINE

30. Grant Amount Requested (\$10,000 maximum): _____
31. Please provide an estimated budget outline for your project or purchase:
32. If you would like to provide a supporting document for your estimated budget, please upload it here (for example, a copy of an estimate from a consultant or service provider, and/or a detailed budget with justification, or screenshot of a vendor's website with pricing): (Optional; you may upload up to 3 attachments)
33. If other funds are required, what is the source of other funds?
34. All work supported by the grant must be completed by July 1, 2026. When do you expect that the project will be completed? (Month / Year): _____

FINAL QUESTIONS

35. I confirm I have reviewed the grant guidelines and agree to the terms of the grant. I understand that all award updates & communication will be done via email, failure to reply may result in loss of award. Emails may come from the following staff/email addresses:
- Brighter Future Fund: brighterfuture@farmland.org
 - noreply@mail.smapply.net
- a. I understand.
36. All grant applicants will be signed-up for email updates and action opportunities from AFT and will receive a complimentary one-year American Farmland Trust membership.

- ☒ Yes, I wish to receive updates and a complimentary membership from AFT.
☐ No, I do not wish to receive updates and a complimentary membership from AFT.

37. How did you hear about this grant? (text response)

38. Would you like to be considered for an additional \$250 Real Farmer Care grant? Real Farmer Care's founding mission is to support farmers' self-care needs - generally defined as the practice of taking an active role in protecting and improving one's own well-being and happiness, particularly during times of stress. This can look like a dinner with friends and a family fun day outing, a deep tissue massage for overworked muscles, a gym or yoga membership to build strength and cultivate relaxation, monthly online therapy sessions to process challenging life stressors, or even a new pair of boot insoles to support tired feet. For more information on Real Farmer Care please visit www.realfarmercare.com.

If Yes, please answer the following questions:

- What does self-care and well-being mean to you in the context of farming and ranching?
- How might you use the \$250 award to contribute to your self-care and well-being as a farmer or rancher?
- Describe the most important self-care need(s) as a farmer or rancher that would contribute the most to your well-being.

APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The following questions are optional but help us collect data about the reach of our grant programs. This information is not used to determine grant eligibility and will not be considered in the application evaluation and award selection process.

Select your age group:

- Under 25
- 26-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or over
- Prefer not to answer

Select your sex/gender identity:

- Man
- Woman
- Transgender
- Nonbinary
- Prefer to self-describe: ____

- Prefer not to answer

Which racial and ethnic category best describes you? Select any that apply.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White or European
- Other: _____
- Prefer not to answer

How do you describe your sexual orientation or sexual identity?

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Heterosexual
- Prefer to self-describe: _____
- Prefer not to answer