

GROWTH THROUGH AGRICULTURE GRANT/LOAN PROGRAM

Project Summary for Fiscal Year 2013

(July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013)

The Growth Through Agriculture (GTA) program is a grant and loan program established by the Montana Legislature to strengthen and diversify Montana's agriculture industry through development of new agricultural products and processes.

The GTA program offers Category I funding in the form of a grant or loan or both and funding is determined by a seven member Agriculture Development Council (Council) during scheduled meetings two to three times a year. The Council is comprised of the Directors of the Montana Department of Commerce and Montana Department of Agriculture and five Montanans appointed by the Governor who are active in agriculture production.

The program also offers Category II Mini Grant funding with applications that are accepted on an open-cycle basis until all available funds are committed to approved projects. Project awards are determined administratively by the Montana Department of Agriculture.

In fiscal year 2013, the Montana Department of Agriculture and the Montana Agricultural Development Council offered a special funding opportunity of Growth Through Agriculture (GTA) funds to help increase the amount of Montana-produced agricultural products used in Montana's schools and institutions.

All three types of funding require the investment of at least a \$1 in matching funds for every \$1 in program grant or loan assistance received.

Category I: Economic Development Projects

Category I projects may potentially be funded in a single application for a total amount of \$150,000 in the form of grant funding up to \$50,000 and loan funding up to \$100,000. Examples of project activities involve equipment purchases, advertising and promotion, and consultant services such as engineering costs and feasibility studies.

S & T Project Meats, Inc.

A loan for \$53,688 to assist with equipment and construction costs associated with the expansion of the meat processing company in Billings, Montana.

Montana Native Nursery dba Shady Groves Farms

A grant for \$10,000 to assist with the purchase of blueberry plants for the establishment of a blueberry farm in Plains, Montana.

The Community Food Co-op, Inc.

A grant for \$50,000 to assist with equipment costs associated with the expansion of the Bozeman co-op's central kitchen facility to expand its ability to purchase and process produce from area growers for year round retail sales.

Big Sandy Meat Shop, LLC

A grant for \$7,700 to assist with the purchase of equipment associated with the expansion of the meat processing facility in Big Sandy, Montana.

M & M Landscaping & Design, Inc.

A grant for \$7,000 to assist with greenhouse and boiler costs associated with a pilot project for the nursery in Kalispell, Montana. The boiler would allow the company to use yard waste produced in its business to generate heat for the greenhouse nursery to grow plants for sale in Montana instead of importing from out of state.

Little Red Hills, LLC

A loan for \$24,182 to assist with the purchase of equipment associated with the start-up of the meat snack company to be produced in Columbia Falls, Montana.

Flathead Lake Cherry Growers', Inc.

A grant for \$5,080 to assist with website upgrades and additions to incorporate QR wholesale and retail coding, billboard costs, and point of purchase materials to promote and sell Flathead cherries.

Thomas Britz dba Britz Ranch

A grant for \$11,820 to assist with the development of a research plot near Whitefish, Montana to determine the economic viability of commercial hops production to meet the increasing demands for Montana-grown ingredients for the growing micro-brewery industry.

Dell Center, LLC

A grant and a loan for a total of \$30,000 to assist with the construction of a meat processing facility in Dell, Montana.

Flathead Valley Community College

A grant for \$18,200 to assist with consultant costs related for the development and implementation of a new multi-functional farm, agriculture entrepreneurship curriculum that will assist farmers and ranchers in developing additional income streams for their businesses in the Flathead Valley and Montana.

Global Agro Commodities LLC

A grant for \$50,000 to assist the company and its parent company, Bespoke Group, LLC that processes and exports pulse crops to India, with engineering costs and equipment purchases needed to renovate the Chester elevator from a wheat facility to a pulse crop facility.

Great Northern Pasta Company, LLC

A grant for \$49,900 to assist with equipment and construction costs associated with the expansion of the organic artisan pasta company in Whitefish, Montana.

Headframe Spirits, Inc.

A grant for \$33,250 to assist with marketing costs and software development costs that would assist the micro-distillery in Butte, Montana with regulatory reporting, inventory and production management.

Kalispell Creamery

A loan for \$35,570 to assist the family owned dairy and creamery of Kalispell, Montana with the purchase of rotary yogurt cup filler equipment in order to expand its product lines to include cottage cheese and yogurt products.

Lake County Community Development Corporation & the Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center

A grant for \$7,500 to assist the Food and Agricultural Development Center in Ronan, Montana with the completion of a market analysis study to determine the feasibility of a Western Montana value-added dairy cooperative.

Lakeland Feed and Supply

A grant for \$30,000.00 to assist the feed manufacturing and supply company of Hamilton, Alberton and Dillon, Montana, with the costs of ISO certification in order to improve its manufacturing processes, increase productivity and increase competitiveness to reach new customers.

On the Rise Bakery

A grant for \$24,000 to assist with the purchase and installation of an oven to assist with the expansion of the artisan bread producer in Bozeman, Montana.

Western Montana Growers Cooperative

A grant for \$7,665, to assist the cooperative which markets and distributes for 38 farms, with the completion of a feasibility study to address its growing warehouse and storage needs.

Category II: Mini Grant Projects

Category II projects may be funded a maximum amount of \$2,500 for any single application. The Mini Grant program was developed to encourage economic and agricultural development through educational, promotional, marketing, travel and other business activities.

Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone Conservancy

A grant for \$750.00 to develop signage and flyers to advertise and promote a new farmers market in Bridger, Montana.

Flathead Lake Cheese LLC

A grant for \$2,120 to assist the cheese producer in Polson, Montana with adding an online sales function to the website, and labeling costs in order to expand sales by internet and increase product visibility and sales in grocery stores.

Powder River Meat Company, LLC

A grant for \$2,500 to assist with the purchase of retail sales equipment and signage associated with the expansion of the Terry, Montana meat processing company.

Big Valley Productions, LLC

A \$500 grant was awarded to Big Valley Productions, LLC for marketing and advertising of "The 2013 Montana Farm and Ranch Show" in Bozeman, MT.

Great Falls Development Authority

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Great Falls Development Authority for exhibitor booth costs during the 2013 Institute of Food Technologist's Annual Meeting and Food Expo in Chicago, Illinois.

Pioneer Meats, Inc.

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Pioneer Meats, Inc. for consultant costs to rebuild the company's website and to include online ordering capabilities for the meat processing facility in Big Timber, Montana.

Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC

A \$1,500 grant was awarded to Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC for consultant costs to complete a food manufacturing facility study.

The MT Distillery, LLC

A \$750 grant was awarded to The MT Distillery, LLC in Missoula, Montana for conference registration fees and lodging costs to attend the American Distillers Institute Conference in Denver, Colorado.

Truzzolino Tamale Shop, Inc.

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to assist the tamale producer in Butte, Montana with trade show booth costs and oven equipment purchases in order to expand and market the business's product line to include pasties.

Western Montana Specialty Foods, Inc.

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Western Montana Specialty Foods, Inc. to assist the zucchini relish producer in Superior, Montana with equipment purchases to expand the business's production.

Montana State University Extension

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Montana State University Extension for educational materials, speaker fees and equipment costs associated with the implementation of the REAL Montana (Resource Education and Agriculture Leadership) educational program.

Quality Foods Distributing, LLC

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Quality Foods Distributing, LLC to assist with warehouse racking and shelving costs to enable the Bozeman-based distributor specializing in natural, organic, Made/Grown in Montana, and Northern Rockies Regional products in expanding markets for current and future Montana suppliers.

Native Ideals Seed Company, LLC

A \$1,500 grant was awarded to Native Ideals Seed Company, LLC to assist with the design, illustration and creation of seed packets and retail seed packet displays for the Montana native plant seed producer in Arlee to expand their retail sales product line.

Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC to assist with packaging and labeling costs for the gluten-free manufacturer in Manhattan and Belgrade, Montana to expand their product line.

Lewis and Clark County Extension

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Lewis and Clark County Extension to assist with the purchase of an egg incubator and costs to host a poultry workshop.

Polson Business Community

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Polson Business Community to assist with advertising costs to promote the Cherry Festival in Polson, Montana.

Community Food and Agriculture Coalition, Inc.

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Community Food and Agriculture Coalition, Inc. located in Missoula, Montana to assist with the completion of a feasibility study for the creation of a land-based incubator farm project.

Montana Brewers Association

A \$1,000 grant was awarded to Montana Brewers Association located in Helena, Montana to assist with marketing costs to develop, print and distribute the Montana Brewers Trail Map.

Farm to School Projects

Farm to School projects were funded up to a maximum amount of \$10,000 for any single application. The Farm to School funding opportunity was designed to assist with equipment costs or other related expenditures needed to access or expand sales to school or institutional markets.

The Community Food Co-op, Inc.

A grant for \$10,000 to assist the co-op in Bozeman, Montana with the purchase of a walk-in freezer in order to expand their ability to purchase, process and store local produce from the area's growers in order to partner with Gallatin Valley Farm to School and provide school snacks for Hawthorne Elementary School for the 2013-2014 school year.

Bear Paw Meats, LLC

A grant for \$10,000 to assist the meat processor in Chinook, Montana with the purchase of linker/stuffer equipment in order to supply additional meat products including hot dogs and sausage into Malta and Turner schools.

Todd Ulizio dba Ten Lakes Farm

A grant for \$3,000 to assist the Eureka area vegetable producer with the purchase of mechanical barrel washer equipment that will allow the farm to provide the 1st stage of processing carrots for the Whitefish Schools.

Lake County Community Development Corporation

A grant for \$10,000 to assist the non-profit organization in Ronan, Montana that contains the Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center with the purchase of a walk-in freezer to increase storage capacity needed to expand production to meet demand from schools in Kalispell and Ronan. The produce is mostly raised by the Western Montana Grower's Cooperative and other area growers and processed by the Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center.

Bausch Potatoes Inc.

A grant for \$3,000 to assist the potato producer and processor near Whitehall, Montana with the purchase of centrifuge equipment to increase processing capacity for the demand of the hashbrowns, French fries and other specialty cuts to Livingston Schools.

Meat Montana, LLC / Germann Ranch, Inc.

A grant for \$3,342.50 to assist the meat processing company in Mc Allister, Montana with the purchase of vacuum packaging equipment to meet the requirements of supplying meat to Montana State University and increase capacity for market expansion into other school and institutional markets.

T.E.C.K. Corp dba On the Rise Bread Co.

A grant for \$10,000 to assist the bakery in Bozeman, Montana with the purchase of baking equipment including an oven to expand their current artisan bread product line to supply Montana State University and Livingston Schools with additional baked items including sliced breads, buns, and cookies in addition to the artisan bread product line it currently produces.