

GROWTH THROUGH AGRICULTURE GRANT/LOAN PROGRAM

Project Summary for Fiscal Year 2016

(July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016)

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 seven members that are appointed by the Governor.

The program also offers Category II Mini Grant funding with application deadlines two times per year and applications for Mini Loan funding 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.

Growth Through Agriculture funding requires 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.

Crooked Yard Hops LLP

A grant for \$38,377 to purchase a specialized mobile hops harvester and other materials necessary to expand and commercialize their hops production in Bozeman, Montana.

Little Big Horn FFA

A grant for \$50,000 for the purchase of a portable silencer chute, fencing material, a portable corral system, and electronic ear tag reader and tags that will go toward the development of a cattle scholarship program for the Lodge Grass High School FFA Chapter.

Shaggy Bear Farm Inc.

Located in Bozeman, the business received a \$50,000 grant to purchase a Leafy Green Machine Unit, a vertical hydroponic system built into a movable shipping container that can accommodate up to 4,000 herbs and vegetables at a time.

University of Montana – Dining

A grant of \$14,010 for a climate battery greenhouse to demonstrate innovative, cost-effective, low-impact technologies to Montana farmers, while providing hands-on educational opportunities for students.

Hatchet Creek Farm

A grant of \$15,357 to purchase start-up materials and supplies, including two high tunnel greenhouse structures to start a vegetable farm in eastern Montana's Yellowstone Valley near Fallon.

North 40 Ag Inc.

Based in Ballantine, the business was awarded a \$50,000 grant to assist with their cover crop seed mixing and bagging facility and to further educate Montana producers on nutrient regenerative agricultural practices.

Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO)

A grant for \$15,000 to hold workshops at Montana's four food and agriculture centers on the new food modernization law.

The Little Company, LLC

A grant for \$30,000 to purchase equipment, walk-in cooler and reach-in freezer, to expand commercial kitchen availability in Missoula, Montana.

Gambill Inc./C&K Meats and Montana Western Flavors

A grant for \$50,000 to assist with expansion costs and the purchase of new meat processing equipment in Forsyth, Montana.

Flathead Lake Cherry Growers', Inc.

A loan of \$60,000 to develop a processing facility for cherry and fruit juice products near Big Fork, Montana.

Homestead Organics Farm, Inc.

A grant for \$34,500 to build an integrated state inspected poultry and commercial food processing facility in the Bitterroot Valley.

Living River Farms, LLC

A grant for \$23,000 to purchase equipment for brooding poultry and raising poultry on pasture in Stevensville, Montana.

Great Harvest Franchising, Inc.

A loan for \$50,000 for a marketing and promotion campaign to grow sales of their products across the country that will increase demand for Montana wheat.

Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC

A loan of \$11,500 to expand the business's cookie processing equipment to increase efficiencies and expand manufacturing and co-packing opportunities in Manhattan, Montana.

Cross Country Brewing, LLC

A grant for \$25,000 to purchase equipment to open a brewery in Glendive, Montana.

The National Center for Appropriate Technology, Inc. (NCAT)

A grant for \$25,000 to cover part of the cost of hosting a statewide summit of food and agriculture in 2016.

Schuldt Services

A grant of \$20,000 for the purchase of a gooseneck trailer and the materials to construct a modern shearing trailer and a hydraulic wool press for the sheep shearing operation based out of Miles City, Montana.

Dry Hills Distillery, LLC

A grant of \$48,000 for the business located in Bozeman, Montana to purchase a potato peeler and dicer equipment to help automate the preparation process before distillation of vodka and gin.

Category II: Mini Grant/Loan Projects

Category II projects may potentially be funded in a single application for a total amount of \$7,500 in the form of a grant up to \$2,500 and a loan up to \$5,000.

The Mini Grant program was developed to encourage economic and agricultural development through educational, promotional, marketing, travel and other business activities.

The Mini Loan program was developed to support costs for small processing equipment, construction, infrastructure costs and inventory/working capital costs (excluding payroll).

Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO)

A grant of \$2,500 for costs to promote local food opportunities through the organization's Abundant Montana online directory.

Stonehouse Distillery, LLC

A grant of \$2,500 for the distilling operation located in Winston, Montana to increase processing capacity with the purchase of distillery production equipment.

Black Bear Soups, LLC

A grant of \$1,600 to complete a marketing/branding package for the soup making business located in Hamilton, Montana using locally sourced produce.

Farm to Fork Co-op

A grant of \$2,500 to develop an online website resource where producers can list their products and consumers can order and purchase them.

Whipped, LLC

A grant of \$2,500 for the specialty bakery located in Bozeman, Montana to purchase expansion equipment in preparation for writing a cookbook featuring recipes utilizing Montana agriculture products and highlighting local producers.

Mr. McGregor's Garden, LLC

A grant of \$2,500 for the syrup and jam manufacturing business located in Bozeman, Montana to expand with the purchase of labeling that includes Montana fruit and other local ingredients.

Hamilton Farmers Market Cooperative

A grant of \$350 to upgrade the cooperative's wireless terminal to accommodate new chipped credit cards.

Lake County Conservation District

A grant of \$2,500 for costs to perform on-farm soil improvement and forage production research.

Trade Show Assistance Program

The [Trade Show Assistance Program](#) (TSAP) aids qualified Montana agricultural companies with developing new and existing markets by supplementing exhibiting costs at U.S. wholesale trade shows. TSAP support includes reimbursement for 50% of booth space and related exhibiting expenses, such as shipping and show services (drayage, decorating, electricity, etc.) up to \$2,500.

Gluten Free Prairie, LLC

A grant of \$2,475.00 for the certified gluten-free food product company located in Manhattan, Montana to participate in the Natural Products Expo East trade show in Baltimore, Maryland.