

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Montana Department of Agriculture

To apply:

<https://funding.mt.gov> Register Online. Before you can fill out an application, make sure that you have registered and received a username and password <https://funding.mt.gov> - see attached instructions below "WebGrants Registration Instructions"

- Log In. After registering, log in with your username and password and click "Start a New Application".

Then fill out the application forms provided, being sure to "Save" often to avoid losing data.
Application

All other questions about submitting application please contact:

Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee
Montana Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Development Division
PO Box 200201
Helena, Montana 59620-0201
(406) 444-2402

Proposals must be received on or before Wednesday January 31, 2024 at 5:00pm.

Legal Authority:

(MCA) Section 80-11-304 Montana Codes Annotated
(ARM) Section 4.8.201-206 Administrative Rules of Montana

MONTANA ALFALFA SEED COMMITTEE

The primary goal of the Montana Alfalfa Seed Industry Act as stated in the enabling legislation, is "to improve the culture and production of and expand the market for alfalfa seed grown in the state by providing for research to develop and improve control measures for diseases and pests which attack alfalfa seed pollinators (i.e. Alfalfa Leaf Cutter Bees); improve alfalfa seed growing culture; and disseminate information to the growers."

INTRODUCTION

The Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee was created by the 1981 Legislature to encourage development of the alfalfa seed industry through improvements and innovations in various aspects of the business. The 1997 legislature incorporated the Alfalfa Leaf Cutting Bee Committee into the Alfalfa Seed Committee.

The Montana Alfalfa Seed Industry Act is administered by an eight-member Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee, which is attached to the Montana Department of Agriculture for administrative purposes.

The Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee invites proposals to fund demonstration projects, applied research, and feasibility analyses designed to address Montana's alfalfa seed industry needs and opportunities. Generally, to qualify for consideration, proposals must have practical, near-term application involving practices or organizational arrangements that will stimulate an expanded alfalfa seed industry. Public and private entities and organizations, business and industry, educational institutions, local governments and individuals are eligible to submit proposals.

Proposals submitted under this RFP must be received on or before Wednesday January 31, 2024. Applicants with questions about information contained in this RFP should contact:

Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee
Montana Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Development Division
PO Box 200201
Helena, Montana 59620-0201
(406) 444-2402

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Proposals for funding will be accepted from:

- Public and private agencies and organizations
- Business and industry
- Educational institutions
- Local governments
- Individuals

If two or more individuals or organizations propose to conduct a project jointly, they should submit one application as co-applicants.

Applicants must demonstrate a proven ability to carry out all elements of the proposed project. In addition, applicants proposing to rely upon the expertise of another individual or organization to undertake any part of the project must clearly define the responsibilities of that party as well as provide evidence of their willingness and demonstrated ability to undertake that area of responsibility.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible projects are as follows:

- Conducting research programs to:
 - improve the quality of alfalfa seed
 - develop and improve control measures for disease and pests which attack alfalfa and alfalfa seed pollinators (i.e. Alfalfa Leaf Cutter Bees)
 - improve alfalfa growing culture
 - other research projects designed to improve the Alfalfa Seed industry
- Disseminating current and new research information
- Developing the Alfalfa Seed Industry markets, including:
 - conducting market assessments
 - planning and conducting publicity and sales promotion campaigns, including media development and trade show exhibition.
- Education

ELIGIBLE COSTS

There is no limit to the grant amount a proposal can request. However, on average, the Committee has \$40,000 annually for grant proposals; therefore, grant amounts should correspond. Eligible costs under the Montana Alfalfa Seed Industry Act include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries and Wages
- Fringe Benefits
- Consultant Services (professional, technical, operational)
- Travel
- Advertising and Promotion
- Equipment (preferably leased versus direct acquisition)
- Supplies and Materials

- Communication (telephone, postage, printing, etc.)

Program funds cannot be used for the payment of institutional overhead or unassociated indirect costs. These costs can be used, however, in calculating an applicant match (see CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT section for more information on match).

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must submit proposals to the Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee at the address listed on the transmittal page of this RFP. **An original copy of the proposal must be received on or before January 31, 2024.** Applicants are responsible for timely submission of proposals.

In order to be considered, proposals must be responsive to the objectives identified in this RFP. Each proposal must be limited to one project or activity only, the title of which must appear on the cover sheet of the application.

The purpose of the proposal application is to provide evaluators with a written statement containing sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed activity is a sound approach to an important area of interest as outlined in the RFP and that it merits financial support. The Committee will conduct its annual meeting in mid-February at which time the applicant may make a presentation in person. The Committee will then make a decision whether or not to fund the project and notify the applicant within 30 days.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE

Request for Proposal Published	Friday December 15, 2023
Deadline to submit proposal	Wednesday January 31, 2024
Committee meeting (tentative)	Thursday February 8, 2024
Grants awarded	February – March 2024
Award duration	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals shall be brief but thorough and utilize the attached form.

Proposal Contact Information

Applicant name:	Applicant title:
Applicant address:	
Applicant phone:	Applicant email:
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if applicant is the same as proposal contact person *If not, please complete the rest of this section.	
Contact name:	Contact title:
Contact address:	
Contact phone:	Contact email:

Project Information

Project title:	
Duration of proposed project: Fill in the begin and end dates below. The Committee allows project durations of up to two years, though the committee would consider longer projects if sufficient need is demonstrated.	
Project begin date/year:	Project end date/year:

Executive Summary

Briefly describe the specific problem, need or opportunity to be addressed, the project objectives, a description of the effort and the project's intended benefits, and how this project will benefit Montana's alfalfa seed and/or leaf cutter bee industries. The overall background and approach should be indicated as well as the role the project will play in achieving the objectives identified in this RFP. The proposal should demonstrate the potential for near-term application of technologies, practices and/or organizational arrangements that will be developed as a result of the project.

Statement of Objectives

A clear, concise description of the objectives of the proposed activity is required. Consistency with the objectives of the program as indicated in the RFP is critical. A guide for developing objectives is as follows:

- State your objectives in quantifiable terms.
- State your objectives in terms of outcomes, not process.
- Objectives should specify the result of an activity.
- Objectives should identify the target audience being served.
- Objectives need to be realistic and capable of being accomplished within the grant period.

Objective 1:

Objective 2:

Objective 3:

Additional objectives may be provided as attachments to this proposal.

Deliverables

Deliverables are the anticipated end product of the proposed project, which will make it useful. This section should clearly describe the deliverables and indicate how these deliverables will be made available and benefit the alfalfa seed industry, including alfalfa leaf cutter bees, after the project is completed.

In addition to a written presentation of findings and recommendations, deliverables may be provided in a number of forms including, but not limited to one or more of the following:

- publication of "how to" guidelines or instructions
- an analysis of economic, scientific or production feasibility for a specific development project
- publication and implementation of a management, business, or marketing plan
- an audio-visual presentation of a new product or technique or methodology, or marketing and promotion effort

Deliverable 1:

Deliverable 2:

Deliverable 3:

Additional deliverables may be provided as attachments to this proposal.

Plan of Work

Provide a detailed description of how the proposed project is to be carried out. The plan should indicate the tasks to be performed, who will carry them out, where they will be conducted, and a timetable for completion. The Committee allows project durations of up to two years, though the committee would consider longer projects if sufficient need is demonstrated.

Task	Responsible party	Location	Start Date	Completion Date

Potential Use

The practical or commercial application of the proposed project activity is important. This section should indicate the means by which the proposed project activity appears to have potential application or may be broadly identified and quantified to the maximum extent possible.

Key Personnel

This section should identify the key people who will be involved in carrying out the proposed project activity and their qualifications for doing so. Qualifications of project participants will be an important consideration in granting funds.

Personnel	Qualifications

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

This section should briefly describe the facilities and equipment, if any, required to carry out the proposed work. Items to be purchased with grant funds should be fully described and justified in this section. **Pertinent equipment sales materials and price quotes should be included with the application.**

Current & Pending Support

Though matching funds are not required for consideration, projects with matching funds may have an advantage in the competitive selection process. The project sponsor or other supporter(s) may provide the match. This section shall identify other sources of funds or resources, including private, State, and Federal funds, when they were received or when they are expected to be received. This section should demonstrate evidence of industry support, including letters of support from alfalfa seed growers, alfalfa leaf cutter bee producers, and alfalfa input manufacturers and sellers.

Matching Funds Receipt Date (Past or Future)	Matching Funds Source	Matching Funds Amount	Type of Match	
			Cash	In-Kind
Total Matching Funds				

PROPOSED BUDGET

A Proposed Budget (form attached) must be completed for each project submitted and indicate how the grant funds would be used by expenditure category, as well as the amount or value of the applicant's matching contribution.

The Montana Department of Agriculture reserves the right to audit an applicant's books and records relating to the performance of the project during and up to seven (7) years after completion of the project.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection of successful proposals will be on a competitive basis and based on availability of funds. All proposals will be judged against the following criteria, consistent with the stated objectives of the program:

- The degree to which the proposed activity addresses a significant industry need or opportunity and evidence of industry support of such an activity.
- Applicant's demonstrated experience and ability to undertake the proposed activity and to manage the grant compliance, including reporting and financial management.
- The adequacy of plan and time frame to achieve the activity goals.

The Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee and Montana Department of Agriculture reserve the right to make selection decisions for all proposals.

AWARDS

The Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee will fund successful projects through contracts under the Montana Alfalfa Seed Industry Act. Selected projects must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, licensing and regulations for funds to be awarded. Evidence of such compliance may be required.

The Montana Department of Agriculture will notify each applicant of selection decisions in writing within 30 days of the annual meeting.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Committee and Department reserve the right to determine the extent of reporting requirements, subject to modification in the course of the project. At a minimum, semi-annual and final reports will be required, as follows:

- January 31 (for the period 7/1 – 12/31)
- July 31 (for the period 1/1 – 6/30)
- A comprehensive final report will be required upon completion of the project.

Report forms will be provided to grantees upon confirmation of selection. Grantees are responsible for timely submission of reports.

OWNERSHIP AND PUBLICATION OF MATERIALS

All information and materials generated by the proposed activity become the sole property of the State of Montana. The grant recipient will retain the right to utilize, reprint and distribute all said information and materials.

LIABILITY

Neither the Montana Alfalfa Seed Committee nor the Montana Department of Agriculture will be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any works performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

RIGHT TO KNOW

Proposals selected for funding and all related contracts shall be subject to disclosure under the Montana Right to Know Law.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Alfalfa Seed Committee and Department reserve the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received in respect to this RFP
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and concurrence of applicant
- Clarify the scope of this RFP, within the program requirements and with appropriate notice to all applicants, to best serve the interests of the state of Montana.

MONTANA ALFALFA SEED COMMITTEE

PROPOSED BUDGET

PROJECT TITLE: _____

PROJECT APPLICANT: _____

PRINCIPAL CONTACT: _____

PROJECT DURATION: _____

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	GRANT FUNDS REQUEST	APPLICANT MATCH	TOTAL
Salaries and Wages			
Fringe Benefits			
Consultant Services			
Travel			
Advertising & Promotion			
Equipment			
Supplies & Materials			
Communications			
Data Processing			
Indirect and Overhead	XXXXXXXXXX		
Other (Specify)			
TOTAL			