

USDA Announces Funding To Train And Educate Next Generation Of Farmers And Ranchers

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - More than \$19 million in federal grant dollars is earmarked to help sustain the next generation of farmers and ranchers through what's called the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP).

Applications for the grants are due in June. The grants were part of the newly approved Farm Bill. Roughly \$100 million is allocated over the next five years.

“USDA is committed to the next generation of America's farmers and ranchers because they represent the future of agriculture and are the backbone of our rural economy. As the average age of farmers continues to rise, we have no time to lose in getting more new farmers and ranchers established.” said U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in a statement. “Reauthorizing and expanding the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program is one of the many resources the 2014 Farm Bill gave us to build America's agricultural future. Through this program, we can build a diverse next generation of farmers and ranchers.”

The grant program is managed by the National Institutes of Food and Agriculture, which will competitively award grants to organizations conducting programs to help beginning farmers and ranchers.

Priority will be given to projects that are partnerships and collaborations led by or including non-governmental, community-based, or school-based agricultural educational organizations, according to USDA. All applicants are required to provide funds or in-kind support from non-federal sources in an amount that is at least equal to 25 percent of the federal funds requested.

More information is available on the grants during two upcoming webinars on April 30 and May 6 at 2:00 p.m. EST. The first webinar will focus on general guidelines for the program, while the second webinar will focus on the funding allocations for socially-disadvantaged and military veteran farmers and ranchers.