AIRBNB + AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

Farm to Stay Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated Nov.6, 2026

Program Overview

What is the Farm to Stay Grant Program?

The Farm to Stay Grant Program is a national grant opportunity funded by Airbnb and administered by American Farmland Trust (AFT). It is designed for working farmers and ranchers who want to create, expand, or improve a stay or visitor experience connected to their agricultural operation. The goal is to help producers diversify income, strengthen their businesses, and remain on the land.

How much funding can an applicant request?

Applicants may request up to $10,000. Request the amount needed for the proposed project and clearly explain how each expense will help create or strengthen the stay or experience.

Do I have to list my stay or experience on Airbnb?

No. Grant recipients are not required to list on Airbnb. Producers may choose the platform or approach that best fits their operation and business goals.

Is this program only for overnight stays?

No. The program may support both overnight stays and visitor experiences. Examples include farm or ranch stays, tours, workshops, classes, tastings, U-pick activities, farm dinners, seasonal events, and natural resource-based experiences that are meaningfully connected to a working agricultural operation.

Do I need an existing stay or agritourism business to apply?

No. The program is intended to support both new projects and improvements or expansions to existing stays and experiences, as long as the project meets the final eligibility and expense requirements.

Applicant and Farm Eligibility

Who may apply?

Eligible applicants are owners, operators, or primary decision-makers of for-profit working farms or ranches located in one of the 50 United States. The proposed project must be connected to the agricultural operation and intended to generate or strengthen farm business income.

Are nonprofit farms eligible?

No. This funding round is intended for for-profit working farms and ranches. A farm operated by a nonprofit organization is not eligible.

Are U.S. territories eligible?

Applicants must be located in one of the 50 states. U.S. territories, including Puerto Rico, are not currently eligible.

What is the $1,000 farm income requirement?

To qualify, your farm or ranch must have sold, bartered, or exchanged agricultural products with a combined value of at least $1,000 during the most recent cropping season. Products grown or raised for personal consumption do not count toward this requirement. Before an award is made, AFT may request documentation verifying that your operation meets this minimum sales, barter, or exchange requirement.

What types of farms or ranches are eligible?

Eligible farms and ranches are actively operating, soil-based, for-profit production agriculture businesses that grow crops or raise livestock. This includes operations producing vegetables, fruits, grains, flowers, or other soil-grown crops, as well as livestock raised on pasture or rangeland. Eligibility is limited to soil-based agricultural production; offering a stay or visitor experience alone does not qualify. The proposed stay or visitor activity must be meaningfully connected to that agricultural operation. The operation must produce agricultural products for sale, barter, or exchange, rather than solely for personal consumption, and meet the $1,000 minimum described above.

Do I need to own the land?

Not necessarily. Farmers or ranchers who lease land may be eligible, but applicants should have sufficient control of the property and permission to complete the proposed project. Projects involving construction or long-term improvements may require evidence that the applicant has appropriate tenure and landowner approval.

Is there a minimum or maximum acreage?

No. The program has no minimum or maximum acreage limits. Farms and ranches of any acreage may apply, provided they meet the program's other eligibility requirements and propose a qualifying farm-based stay or experience.

Can previous AFT or Brighter Future Fund recipients apply?

Yes. Previous AFT or Brighter Future Fund recipients may apply if they meet all other eligibility requirements and have not received grant funds from American Farmland Trust on or after January 1, 2026. Applicants who received AFT grant funds on or after that date are ineligible for this program. Among eligible applicants, funding will be prioritized for those who have not received AFT grant funding in previous years. Only one application will be reviewed per farm, farm family, or operation. Each awardee may receive funding for only one farm or ranch, with no more than one award per farm, farm family, or operation.

Eligible Projects and Expenses

What makes a project a good fit?

A strong project clearly explains what visitors will do, how the activity connects to the working farm or ranch, how it could create or strengthen farm income, what the grant will pay for, and how the applicant will complete the project safely and realistically. The entire proposed project must be completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement and be marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of that period (minimum 365 days from the date of award), even if the grant funds only a portion of the project.

Can existing hosts or agritourism operators apply?

Yes. Existing hosts and operators may apply to expand, improve, or make an existing stay or experience safer, more accessible, more workable, or more financially viable, provided the proposed expenses are eligible.

Can I apply for both a stay and an experience?

Applicants should plan to submit one clear, cohesive project. If the stay and experience are part of the same project, explain how the pieces work together and present a realistic budget and timeline.

What expenses may be eligible?

As grant administrator, AFT determines which expenses are eligible and ineligible. Eligible expenses should directly support the material project itself. Examples may include infrastructure or renovation for overnight stays and materials or improvements needed for farm-related experiences such as tours, workshops, or farm-to-table dinners. Professional services, photography, website development, other launch costs, and readiness costs may also be eligible when directly tied to the project and allowed by the official guidelines.

- Improvements that prepare an eligible space for overnight guests or visitor activities.
- Safety, accessibility, sanitation, wayfinding, fencing, pathways, or guest-area improvements tied to the project.
- Equipment, furnishings, or materials needed to deliver the approved stay or experience.
- Professional services, photography, website development, or other launch costs directly tied to the project.
- Permitting, design, insurance consultation, or other readiness costs.

Can funds be used to build or renovate lodging?

Yes. Funds may be used to build or renovate lodging if the work is allowed by the official guidelines, is directly tied to the approved farm stay project, and complies with applicable zoning, permitting, building, septic, fire, accessibility, and insurance requirements. Applicants should not assume that grant eligibility guarantees local approval.

Can funds support RV sites, tent sites, tiny houses, barns, buses, campers, or other unusual lodging?

AFT determines eligibility for these lodging types. Eligibility may depend on the specific project, legal use of the structure or site, required facilities, local rules, and the connection to the working farm or ranch.

Can funds pay for livestock, payroll, or ongoing operating costs?

No. Grant funds cannot be used to purchase livestock, pay payroll, or cover ongoing operating costs. These are not eligible expenses, even if they are related to the proposed stay or experience.

Can the grant pay for costs already incurred?

No. Awardees may begin incurring and paying approved project expenses only after submitting their signed award agreement and all required award agreement information. Expenses incurred before that submission are ineligible, even if paid later. Awardees may begin spending before receiving grant funds, provided this will not cause undue financial burden on their operation. Only approved costs incurred within the eligible grant period specified in the award agreement may be covered.

Are quotes or cost estimates required?

You will be asked to provide a project budget, but you do not need to upload formal quotes or professional estimates. A handwritten budget based on your own research is acceptable and will receive the same consideration as a budget supported by service provider quotes. You may also submit supporting budget documentation, such as pricing screenshots, quotes, or estimates. These materials can strengthen your application by explaining your costs and showing that your project is feasible; their value comes from the information they provide, not whether they were professionally prepared. What matters is that your budget

clearly explains the proposed expenses, how you estimated the costs, and how you plan to use the grant funds.

Is matching funding required, and can my project cost more than $10,000?

Matching funds are not required. Applicants may request up to $10,000, and the total project budget may exceed the requested grant amount. If it does, your budget must clearly identify the additional funding or resources needed, explain how you will cover the remaining costs, and show that those resources will be available in time to complete the entire project. The grant may fund only a portion of the proposed project if all project components, including work paid for with other resources, will be completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement and the completed stay or experience will be marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of that period.

Can I combine this grant with other grants or funding?

Yes. Your budget should clearly identify any additional resources needed to complete the entire proposed project and explain how those resources will be available in time. Combining funding sources is allowed only if all project components, not just the grant-funded portion, will be completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement, and the completed stay or experience will be marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of that period.

Application and Review Process

When will applications open?

Applications open through SurveyMonkey Apply at 8 a.m. Eastern Time on Nov. 30, 2026, and close at midnight Eastern Time on Dec. 4, 2026.

Where do I apply?

The application link and final instructions will be posted at farmland.org/farm-to-stay. Applications must be submitted through the online application platform.

Will application questions be available in advance?

Yes. Application questions, eligibility requirements, and program guidelines will be available on AFT's website on November 13, 2026, following the webinar, so you can review them before applications open.

Is the program first come, first served?

We will review approximately 350 applications in the order they are received; however, awards are not made on a first-come, first-served basis. Award selection will be based on the program's scoring rubric, including project fit and clarity, impact on the farm business, community impact, context and timing, budget feasibility and readiness, and administrative readiness. Submitting early does not guarantee funding.

How will applications be evaluated?

AFT will independently review applications and select awardees without Airbnb's approval of the award list. Among eligible applicants, funding will be prioritized for those who have not received AFT grant funding in previous years. The review framework considers project fit and clarity, impact on the farm business, community impact, context and timing, budget feasibility and readiness, and administrative readiness. Reviewers may also consider whether the entire proposed project can be completed with the requested grant or with clearly identified supplemental resources, whether the applicant has a plan to sustain the project after the grant, and how the project could generate farm income and connect visitors to agriculture. The grant may fund only a portion of the project if the entire project, including all work supported by supplemental resources,

will be completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement. By the end of that period, the completed stay or visitor experience must be marketable and ready for immediate use. Completing only the grant-funded portion does not meet this requirement.

Are certain regions, farm sizes, or project types preferred?

No. The program does not give preference based on region, farm size, agricultural production type, or eligible project type. All applicants must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Applications will be evaluated using the published scoring rubric. Applicants should focus on showing how the proposed project fits their operation, supports farm or ranch income, and can be completed with a realistic budget and timeline.

Do I need to be a professional grant writer?

No. Applications are not evaluated on polished writing. Clear, specific answers in your own words are more useful than grant jargon. Explain your operation, your idea, what the funds would pay for, and what you expect to change as a result.

Can AFT help me write or review my application?

AFT can clarify published eligibility rules and general program requirements, but cannot review drafts, advise applicants on how to make their proposal more competitive, or provide individualized grant-writing assistance.

Can I mail or email my application?

No. Applications must be submitted through the online application portal. Applications submitted by email or mail will not be accepted or considered for funding.

What happens if more than 350 applications are submitted?

We will review approximately 350 applications, in the order received. This is an estimate, not a firm cap. Awards will be based on the scoring rubric, not submission order.

Can I save my application and return to it before submitting?

Yes, the grant application portallets you save your responses and resume your application later. However, once you click Submit, you will no longer be able to edit your application. The grants team cannot modify submitted applications or add missing information on your behalf. Before submitting, please ensure your application includes all information and supporting materials you want considered. Only information included in your application at the time of submission will be reviewed.

How will I know my application was successfully submitted?

Upon submission, a confirmation email will be sent to the email address of the application owner. Applicants should retain their confirmation for reference.

Can I edit my application after submitting it?

Applications cannot be modified after submission. Only information included in your application at the time of submission will be reviewed.

How many applications will be reviewed per farm, farm family, or operation?

Only one application will be reviewed per farm, farm family, or operation. Please submit one clear, cohesive proposal that includes all requested project components.

What should I have ready before applications open?

Review the application questions, eligibility requirements, guidelines, and FAQs available on AFT's website beginning November 13, 2026. Prepare a description of your operation, the proposed stay or experience, its

connection to agricultural production, expected business benefits, a project budget, and a realistic timeline. Formal quotes and professional estimates are not required; supporting budget documentation is optional.

What if I experience a technical problem with the application portal?

For technical issues, use the help feature in SurveyMonkey Apply. Select the information (i) icon in the top-right corner of the application portal, then select "Contact support." Choose "SurveyMonkey Apply" as the product and select "Get Started." Describe the problem to the support assistant and follow the prompts for help. Include the error message, the steps you were taking, and screenshots if available. Applications must be submitted through the online portal; emailed or mailed applications will not be accepted. Do not assume that a technical problem extends the application deadline.

Awards, Payments, and Reporting

How many grants will be awarded?

The program has a limited national funding pool, and not every eligible application will receive an award. The final number of grants will depend on the approved program budget and award amounts. If your application is not selected for an award, it does not reflect your operation's need or the quality of your proposed project, but rather the competitive nature of the program and the limited funding available.

When will applicants be notified?

The official guidelines will provide the award notification timeline.

How and when will grant funds be paid?

Award payments will be made in full by ACH direct deposit approximately 90 days after the award agreement is finalized. Awardees may begin incurring and paying approved project expenses after submitting their signed award agreement and all required award agreement information, before receiving grant funds, provided this will not cause undue financial burden on their operation. Awardees are not required to begin spending before payment arrives.

How long will awardees have to complete their projects?

Awardees will have at least 365 days from the date of award to complete their projects. The grant period may be longer. The final timeline and specific requirements will be outlined in the official guidelines shared before applications open and finalized in the award agreement.

When does the project timeline begin?

The timeline begins on the date of award—the date the applicant is notified of the award and required to submit their signed award agreement. It does not begin when the applicant receives grant funds.

Does the entire project need to be completed by the grant deadline?

Yes. The entire proposed project must be completed within the grant period, including any portions paid for with other resources. By the deadline, the completed stay or visitor experience must be marketable and ready for immediate use. Completing only the grant-funded portion is not sufficient.

What reporting will be required?

Current planning anticipates a progress report at approximately six months, a final report at the end of the grant period, and a two-year progress check-in. The final reporting schedule will be outlined in the official guidelines shared before applications open and finalized in the award agreement. Awardees should expect to report on project progress, completion, spending, and results. The final report should address completion of the entire proposed project, including portions paid for with other resources, and confirm that the completed

stay or experience is marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of the grant period. Measures may include new projects launched, agritourism income generated, changes in guest or visitor numbers, local partners engaged, workshops or activities held, and other farm or community benefits. Final reporting forms and required documentation will be included in the award agreement.

Will recipients be required to share their story publicly?

Awardees are expected to participate in publicity about the project's progress and completion at the timeframes specified in the award agreement. This may include host stories, photographs or videos, media participation, and completion or success measures such as changes in income or guest visits. The final application and award agreement will clearly explain the required activities, permissions, and how names, images, property information, and stories may be used.

When can I begin spending grant funds?

You may begin incurring and paying approved project expenses after submitting your signed award agreement and all required award agreement information, even if you have not yet received grant funds, provided doing so will not cause undue financial burden on your operation. Expenses incurred before submitting your signed award agreement, and all required award agreement information are ineligible, even if paid later. You are not required to begin spending before payment arrives. Award payments will be made in full by ACH direct deposit approximately 90 days after the award agreement is finalized. All expenses must fall within the eligible grant period specified in your award agreement.

What if my project changes, costs increase or I cannot finish on time?

The entire proposed project, including portions paid for with other resources, must be completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement and be marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of that period. The grant period will be at least 365 days from the date of award and may be longer, as outlined in the official guidelines shared before applications open and finalized in the award agreement. Cost increases are understandable, and you should explain minor adjustments resulting from those increases in your awardee reports. Major changes must be discussed with the Brighter Future Fund team. To request a project change, email the team and obtain written approval before proceeding. Submitting an emailed request does not guarantee approval. Any proposed change must still meet the requirement to complete the entire project within the grant period.

How will my application information be used and shared?

Awardees are expected to participate in project publicity, with activities and permissions explained in the application and award agreement. AFT will share generalized application information with Airbnb. AFT will also share awardee information, including but not limited to stories, project updates, photographs, videos, progress check-ins, and reports, with Airbnb for Airbnb to publicize the program. As part of the award agreement, awardees will be asked to grant the rights and licenses needed for Airbnb to use their likeness and materials in Airbnb's marketing materials.

Safety, Insurance, and Local Requirements

Does receiving a grant mean local authorities have approved my project?

No. Applicants and awardees are responsible for understanding and following all applicable zoning, permitting, building, fire, health, tax, lodging, food-service, accessibility, and other local or state requirements.

Who is responsible for insurance and visitor safety?

The farmer or rancher remains responsible for appropriate insurance, liability planning, visitor safety, animal welfare, biosecurity, and site management. Grantees must follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing short-term rentals, visitor experiences, and agritourism. Applicants should consult qualified legal, insurance, tax, and permitting professionals for advice specific to their project.

What outcomes is the program intended to achieve?

The program is intended to help working farms and ranches kickstart a project that can add or strengthen an agritourism income stream, supporting farm viability while bringing visitors and spending into rural communities. The entire proposed project must be achievable with the grant request or with clearly identified supplemental resources, completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement, and marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of that period.

How will program success be measured?

Program-level success may include agritourism income generated, new projects launched, benefits to local businesses and partners, workshops or visitor activities held, overall program reach across project types, and the number of awardees who share their experiences publicly.

Does Airbnb choose or approve the grant recipients?

No. AFT will independently review applications and select awardees. Airbnb may review or approve partnership communications after selection, including grant announcements, media activities, and local activations, but it does not approve the award list.

Do permits, insurance, and landowner approval need to be in place when I apply?

Applicants are responsible for ensuring they have all applicable permits and insurance, comply with all local, state, and federal laws and requirements, and secure permission to complete work on leased land.

Where to Get Updates

Where can I find the latest information?

Visit farmland.org/farm-to-stay for the official guidelines, eligibility requirements, application link, deadlines, webinars, and program updates. Applicants should rely on the official guidelines and application terms if they differ from this FAQ.

Who should I contact with a program question?

Because of the high level of interest in this program, AFT staff cannot respond to every inquiry. All information needed to prepare and submit a complete application will be available in the resources posted on our website at farmland.org/farm-to-stay. Please review the application questions, eligibility requirements, guidelines, and FAQs carefully before applying.

Will the webinar recording be available?

Webinar recordings are not available for legal reasons. However, all information shared during the webinar about preparing and submitting an application is available on our website at farmland.org/farm-to-stay.

Suggested Eligible and Ineligible Projects and Expenses

Eligible expenses must support a farm stay or visitor experience connected to an eligible, soil-based, for-profit farm or ranch, strengthen farm income, and fall within the approved grant period. For all examples below, the grant may fund only a portion of a project if the entire proposed project, including portions paid for with other resources, will be completed within the grant period specified in the official guidelines and award agreement and be marketable and ready for immediate use by the end of that period. Projects that will complete only the grant-funded portion by the deadline are ineligible. Livestock purchases, payroll, ongoing operating costs, expenses incurred before submitting the signed award agreement, and all required award agreement information, and unrelated projects are ineligible.

These examples are not exhaustive or a guarantee of funding. As the grant administrator, AFT determines which expenses are eligible and ineligible, based on the official guidelines and approved budget.

Suggested Eligible Projects and Expenses

Project or expense	Explanation and examples
Build or renovate farm guest lodging	Construct or renovate guest accommodations connected to the working farm or ranch, including bathroom improvements, flooring, painting, and other work needed to prepare the space for guests. Applicable permits and local approvals are required.
Furnish an approved farm stay	Purchase beds, tables, seating, curtains, or other furnishings needed for the approved guest space—not for personal household use.
Prepare space for farm tours, workshops, or classes	Improve a classroom or covered activity area and purchase reusable equipment or materials for visitor experiences meaningfully connected to the farm's agricultural production.
Launch or improve U-pick or harvest-your-own experiences	Add visitor wayfinding, designated access routes, collection equipment, or other project-specific improvements that connect visitors to the operation's crops.
Develop farm-to-table or crop-based culinary experiences	Purchase reusable tables, chairs, dinnerware, or equipment for experiences connected to the farm's products. Food-service facilities must meet applicable requirements; recurring food purchases and event operating costs are not included.
Improve visitor safety and accessibility	Install guest pathways, accessible entrances, handwashing facilities, signs, or fencing separating visitors from livestock and production areas, when directly tied to the approved experience.
Improve guest access and arrival areas	Make project-specific parking, driveway, entrance, or wayfinding improvements needed for farm guests. General property improvements without a clear visitor-project connection do not qualify.
Create project-specific photography, video, or website content	These costs would develop materials to launch or improve the approved stay or experience. Distinguish one-time project development from recurring advertising and other ongoing operating costs. AFT determines final eligibility.
Obtain project design, permitting, or professional guidance	Project-specific design, permit fees, or insurance consultation may support readiness if allowed by the official guidelines. Consultation does not automatically make recurring insurance premiums eligible.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses

Project or expense	Explanation and examples
Purchase livestock	Grant funds cannot purchase animals, even when the animals would be part of a visitor experience.
Pay payroll or ongoing staffing costs	Employee wages, routine staffing, and payroll for operating the farm stay or experience are not eligible expenses.
Cover ongoing operating costs	Routine utilities, feed, recurring supplies, cleaning services, subscriptions, and other continuing operating expenses are not eligible, even when related to the stay or experience.
Cover expenses incurred before submitting the signed award agreement and all required award agreement information	Expenses incurred before submitting the signed award agreement, and all required award agreement information are ineligible, even if paid later. Awardees may begin incurring and paying approved expenses after that submission, including before grant funds arrive, provided this will not cause undue financial burden. Only approved costs incurred within the eligible grant period may be covered.
Fund routine agricultural production without a visitor-project connection	General production purchases or improvements that do not directly support the proposed stay or agricultural visitor experience fall outside this program's purpose.
Improve a personal residence or household space unrelated to the project	Personal renovations, household furnishings, or other private-use expenses do not qualify without a direct connection to the approved guest project.
Create lodging or recreation unrelated to a qualifying working farm or ranch	A vacation rental, entertainment venue, or recreational activity does not qualify solely because it is located in a rural setting or on land described as a farm.
Develop a visitor project at an operation that does not meet farm eligibility requirements	Adding lodging or visitor activities does not make a nonqualifying operation eligible. Examples include operations based solely on aquaponics, fisheries, or other non-soil-based production, as well as nonprofit farms and personal-consumption operations.