



2026 Regenerate Virginia Farm Vitality Grant

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: Applicants must be farming or ranching in Virginia. To be eligible, applicants must be able to provide proof of farming/ranching income (or similar if the farm engages in barter, exchange or community supply). It is not the intention of the Regenerate Virginia Farm Vitality Program to support operations producing food only for personal/household consumption. Farms or ranches must be producing food or agricultural products for your community, to barter or exchange, or for sale.

Q: How do we define ‘farmer/rancher’?

A: For this program, we define “farmer/rancher” as an individual, group, or organization who are intentionally cultivating annual or perennial crops or livestock for harvest. While we recognize many producers earn off-farm income, this grant intends to prioritize applications from individuals who dedicate a majority of their work time to farming or ranching, or who would like to do so.

Q: How much money will be awarded?

A: Applicants may request up to \$15,000 each in Track 1 or Track 2, and up to \$25,000 in Track 3. The total amount of funding awarded will depend on the number and quality of applications we receive.

Q: What sorts of projects will be funded?

A: Regenerate Virginia Farm Vitality projects should outline how producers will use the available funding to purchase equipment or services to improve long-term viability and regenerative management.

1. Track 1 is focused on equipment that will improve regenerative systems alongside product diversification and farm profitability.
2. Track 2 is focused on business development, including business planning for adoption of regenerative farming practices, including product diversification or marketing; analysis of return on investment for purchase of equipment; financial

management training, coaching, or consulting; professional services related to accessing, transferring, or permanently protecting farmland or resolving heirs property issues; etc.

3. Track 3 is focused on product and market expansion, including product diversification, development of value-added products, and/or expansion into markets that support the farm operation and its community. Projects should make a compelling case for how their proposed purchase or activity supports both long-term farm viability and regenerative systems adoption or improvement. Development of new revenue streams that do not also support regenerative agriculture will not be strong proposals under this program.

Q: Can I apply to use these funds for expenses related to the purchase of farmland?

A: Regenerate Virginia funds may be used for farmland purchase, including closing costs, down payments, realtor fees, assessment fees, inspections, and other costs, with the following stipulations:

1. The purchase must fall under one of the tracks and its relevance to the selected track must be clearly stated.
2. Funds must not be used to pay taxes.
3. Funds must not be used towards building a house or any preparatory work for building a house.

Q: I work for a non-profit organization that has a farm supplying food to our local community. Can we apply?

A: We encourage farms associated with non-profit organizations to take advantage of alternate resources designed specifically for non-profits.

Q: Is there a match requirement?

A: There is no match requirement. Grants are intended to leverage other resources (either in-kind from the farmer or other private and public funds). Strong applications will demonstrate how the producer intends to do so.

Q: Do I need to own the land I'm farming to be eligible for this grant?

A: No. Farmers or ranchers leasing land are eligible to apply; however, land tenure for a reasonable time period will be required.

Q: What is the application timeline?

A: Applications will be accepted from 8am ET December 1 through 11:59pm ET December 19, 2025. Applications will be reviewed and applicants will be notified of their status in January 2026. The application questions will be made available as a PDF document for viewing/download and posted on our website. We encourage applicants to view the questions ahead of time.

Q: How are applications accepted?

A: Applications must be submitted through our online application portal (Survey Monkey Apply). The link to apply will be available on our website while the application period is live. In order to submit an application online, applicants must have an email address. All grant and application-related communications will be sent to the applicant via email. If an applicant does not have an email address, a designated contact person, such as a friend, family member, neighbor or service provider, may create and submit an application on behalf of the applicant.

Q: Will applications be accepted in languages other than English?

A: The online application will be available in Spanish.

Q: What does the application consist of?

A: The application questions can be viewed here. The application is designed to be simple and straightforward. The main sections are:

- Eligibility Questionnaire (to determine if the applicant is eligible)
- Applicant Contact Information
- Applicant's Farming Situation (farming status, land tenure, products)
- Project Proposal, including Estimated Costs, Project Budget and Project Timeline
- Applicant Demographic Information

Q: Is labor/farm staff time an eligible expense under this grant?

A: Yes, and we encourage producers to consider their time as a cost in their project budgets, particularly under Tracks 2 and 3.

Q: Is equipment an eligible expense under this grant?

A: Farm equipment is an eligible expense under Tracks 1 and 3.

Q: Can I be awarded for a project our farm has already started working on?

A: This grant will only fund approved expenses that are incurred after award notification. If expenses for an approved project have been paid prior to award notification, we are unable to include those expenses in the award. The grant-funded project timeline begins when the awardee signs their award letter.

Q: When will applicants be notified of final decisions?

A: AFT will send notification to those selected for award via email within 60 days of the application period closing.

Q: How and when are the awards paid?

A: AFT aims to disburse Regenerate Virginia Farm Vitality Grant award payments by 90 days from award notification via direct deposit to the awardee's bank account.

Q: What is the timeline of grant-funded project implementation?

A: The grant-funded project timeline begins when the awardee signs their award agreement. All services supported by the grant must be completed no later than one year from receipt of award funds, which may be up to 90 days after the signing of the award letter. For grants funding long-range succession and transfer planning services, written statements showing progress/milestones may be requested.

Q: If our farm/ranch is awarded a grant this year, do we need to submit copies of receipts for expenses covered by the grant? What documentation do awardees need to provide?

A: Awardees will be required to provide follow-up information to AFT about their award-funded project. AFT will use this information to verify the permitted use of funds and evaluate the success of the grant program. Within one year of the award date, awardees will be asked to submit a brief report verifying completion of the project via the portal system, including a written paragraph describing the completed project and photos or videos documenting the use of funds. If awarded, recipients should keep receipts pertaining to the proposed use of funds for their own reporting purposes.

Q: I received a "Brighter Future Fund" award from AFT in a prior year. Am I eligible to apply for a Farm Vitality Grant?

A: Yes, Brighter Future Fund awardees are able to apply for Farm Vitality Grants.

Q: I received a Healthy Soils Grant from AFT and VSHC in 2024-2025. Am I eligible to apply for a Farm Vitality Grant?

A: Healthy Soils grant recipients are not able to apply for Farm Vitality Grants until their Healthy Soils project has been completed, including all necessary reporting.

Q: Can I apply for both Farm Vitality and Healthy Soils Grants?

A: You can apply for both Farm Vitality and Healthy Soils Grants, but you will only be awarded one grant during the 2025-26 funding cycle.

Q: We just started our operation and won't have an income or dollar value of any farm products sold in the last year. Are we eligible to apply?

A: We encourage applicants to contact us at acather@farmland.org to discuss your unique situation and potential eligibility. Farm operations with a proven track record of production will be stronger applicants for Farm Vitality Grants.

Q: Are individuals who will soon graduate from a farm apprenticeship or training program (who have not yet started their own operations) eligible to apply?

A: Possibly, yes. Again, we encourage potential applicants to reach out to us to discuss particular questions pertaining to your unique situation, to assess eligibility.

Q: Who can I reach out to for support with completing the application?

A: Please direct all inquiries to Amanda Cather, Mid-Atlantic Deputy Director : Phone: 202-378-1244 Email: acather@farmland.org

Q: Are there other grants at AFT that I can apply to?

A: We encourage you to visit AFT's grantmaking webpage to learn more about our funding opportunities and sign up for notifications: <https://farmland.org/brighterfuture/>