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Grazing Champion Program Eligibility Questionnaire and Application

Step 1. Eligibility Questionnaire Form

Before proceeding, please ensure that you have read and understand the requirements, expectations, and guidelines provided in the Network Grazing Champions Request for Applications.

1. **Do you currently operate a beef production business in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, or Mississippi?** **Note**: North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee are *tentatively* eligible states. Eligibility in these states depends on a proposed project expansion currently awaiting approval from NRCS.
2. **Are you currently participating in any other USDA Advancing Markets for Producers ("AMP") project to market beef?**
3. **Do you meet the applicable USDA participant eligibility requirement concerning U.S. citizenship or lawful alien status described in the RFA (Section 6)?**
4. **Are you any of the following:**
   - American Farmland Trust staff member
   - American Farmland Trust board member
   - A substantial contributor to American Farmland Trust (See definition below)
   - A family member of an American Farmland Trust staff member, board member, or substantial contributor? (See definition below)

   Family member: defined as any sibling, spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, or great-grandchild

   Substantial contributor: defined as having given a contribution to American Farmland Trust of $5,000 or more
5. **Are you willing to do the following:**
   - Complete or update a Grazing Management Plan, and prepare an implementation plan and grant budget with AFT support?
   - Participate in project-based data sharing by using tools such as AgriWebb and FieldVision, as outlined in Section 9 of the RFA? (The cost of these tools will be covered by the grant)
   - Mentor and coordinate with beef producers (minimum 4, preferred 8) in your state or region on grazing practice implementation and market development over the project period?
   - Participate in marketing activities, including identifying market opportunities, exploring buyer requirements, testing collaborative approaches, and sharing lessons learned?
6. The core conservation practice implemented in this program is expected to be Prescribed Grazing/Grazing Management (528). However, if a producer is already paid by federal

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programs to implement Prescribed Grazing (528) on all pasture acreage, then additional practices (such as Fence [382], Livestock Pipeline [516], Silvopasture [381], Feed Management [592], and others), can be considered in consultation with AFT staff. In addition, this program will include training and support for producers looking to implement Soil Carbon Amendment (336) through biochar application, but adopting this practice is not required. **Will you implement at least one new eligible conservation practice on at least some eligible acreage on your own operation?**

7. Applicants are required to have USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Records and will be prompted in the application form to upload your FSA Subsidiary Print **and** Farm Data Report, demonstrating registered Farm/tract number, completion of Form AD-2047 (Customer Data Worksheet), and Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) compliance, and certify that they are not a foreign person or entity. **Do you have, or are you willing to obtain, such records to submit with your application prior to the application deadline?**

8. **If selected, can you confirm that the conservation practices funded through this project will not also be paid for by Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), another USDA AMP project, or any other federal funding source on the same acres?** *Duplicate funding for the same conservation practice is not permitted*.

9. Participants are required to document $16,000 in eligible non-federally funded match over the project performance period. Participants are not expected to be required to spend cash out of pocket to meet the match requirement, although that is an option. Participants are not expected to be required to spend cash out of pocket to meet the match requirement, although that is an option. There are many individual and network-collaboration options for documenting match. For more details on eligible match categories, examples, and match guidance, please refer to Section 11 of the RFA. **Will you commit to documenting $16,000 in non-federally funded match?**

If applicant passes eligibility screening, the Application Form will appear in their Task list.

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Step 2. Grazing Champion Program Application Form

Before proceeding with the application, please confirm that you have read and understand the Grazing Champions Request for Applications and Guidelines.

1. Applicant Information

First Name

Last Name

Email

Phone

Website or social media, if applicable

2. Applicant Mailing Address

Street

Town/City

State

Zip code

3. Beginning Farmer/Rancher Status:

Beginning farmer/rancher (fewer than 5 years operating a farm or ranch)

Beginning farmer/rancher (6-10 years operating a farm or ranch)

Not a beginning farmer/rancher (more than 10 years operating a farm or ranch)

4. Veteran/Military Service Status:

Veteran (not currently serving)

Currently serving in the US Armed Forces (Active Duty, National Guard, or Reserves)

Not a veteran and not currently serving

5. Limited Resource Farmer/Rancher Status:

Click here for the online tool to determine limited resource status, per USDA definition.

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Yes - Limited resource farmer/rancher

No - not a limited resource farmer/rancher

Beef Operation Information

6. Farm/Ranch Business Name (if applicable):

7. Location - State(s):

Note: North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee are *tentatively* eligible states. Eligibility for producers in these states depends on approval from NRCS. Producers in these states may apply, but awards cannot be made unless that approval is received.

Alabama

Georgia

Kentucky

Maryland

Mississippi

North Carolina

Pennsylvania

South Carolina

Tennessee

Virginia

8. Location - County/Counties:

9. FSA (Farm Service Agency) Farm Number:

10. Beef Operation Info

Years operating this business:

Primary enterprise:

Cow-calf

Stocker/backgrounding

Finishing

Seedstock

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Mixed

Other

--If Other, describe:

Average annual number of cattle managed (# head):

Total acres grazed: Owned

Total acres grazed: Leased

Total acres grazed: other arrangement

Number of grazing fields/paddocks:

Typical annual grazing season (# of days):

Typical herd movement frequency:

Multiple times daily

Once daily

Every 2 - 3 days

Weekly

Continuous grazing (No rotation)

Other

--If other, describe herd movement:

11. Describe your beef operation and current grazing system.

Include how cattle are grouped and moved, how you make stocking and forage decisions, seasonal constraints, infrastructure, and the outcomes you seek.

Suggested response: 150 - 350 words

12. Describe your experience developing or implementing grazing management plans and advanced grazing or soil health practices.

Identify practices used, approximate acres, years of experience, adjustments made, and results or lessons learned.

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Suggested response: 150 - 350 words

13. Optional online materials in addition to the above.

If your operation has a website or other online resources that showcase your advanced grazing, marketing, mentoring, or outcomes, please share those here.

14. Other USDA or Federal Funding

List current, prior, approved, pending, or anticipated USDA (Environmental Quality Incentives Program "EQIP," Advancing Markets for Producers "AMP," etc.), or other cost-share or federal assistance connected to your operation, especially the proposed practices or acres. Provide the name of the federal program, year of funding, number of acres, and conservation practice(s), if applicable.

(Participation in these programs does not automatically make you ineligible; AFT will use this information to prevent duplicate payment and confirm you can implement additional practices or acres.)

If you have not received any federal funding, please write *not applicable (N/A)* or *none*.

If you have supporting documentation related to other federal funding, you may upload files later.

Mentorship, Training, and Producer Leadership

15. Describe your experience mentoring, teaching, coordinating, or sharing practical grazing, business, and/or marketing knowledge with other producers.

Include examples, your role, audience size, format, outcomes to date, and lessons learned. *Suggested response: about 150-350 words*.

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16. How would you support Network Graziers?

Describe the approach you'd take to help producers develop and implement grazing plans, use project software to bring records to common network standards, document practices, troubleshoot challenges, and explore market opportunities while respecting each producer's goals and experience. *Suggested response: about 150-350 words*.

17. Network Grazier capacity:

Enter total number of graziers you can support (4 minimum, 8 or more preferred) over the course of the project. (AFT estimates that Champions will spend 50-60 hours per Network Grazier on advising and networking. Refer to Section 8 of the RFA for mentorship and network engagement expectations.)

Year 1:

Year 2:

18. How did you determine this capacity?

19. Describe your existing producer relationships and regional reach.

Include producer groups, associations, supply-chain relationships, peer-learning networks, geographic coverage, and how you would contribute to growing the network and sharing future Beef Grazing Network opportunities. Do not list individuals unless you have permission. *Suggested response: up to 350 words*.

20. Describe how you currently market cattle or beef.

Include products sold, buyers or channels, approximate annual volume, certifications, verification or buyer requirements, pricing approach, and logistics where relevant. *Suggested response: up to 300 words*.

21. Describe your experience exploring premium, direct, wholesale, cooperative, aggregated, or other market opportunities.

What buyer needs, barriers, or opportunities have you observed, and what would you like to explore with the Network? *Suggested response: up to 300 words*.

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22. Please share some thoughts on opportunities you see for leveraging your ideas, experience, and connections in this producer network to enable aggregation and collaboration across beef producers for improved market access and economics.

Suggested response: up to 300 words.

Participation Readiness and Commitments

23. If selected, confirm that you are willing and able to:

- Complete or update a Grazing Management Plan and prepare an implementation plan and budget.
- Complete required recorded and live virtual trainings, and attend the required two-day in-person event in early summer 2027.
- Enroll in AgriWebb's discounted AFT custom network package, complete AgriWebb Academy, enter required information, and provide required data access. (For more information on AgriWebb, see Section 9, "Data, Reporting, and Records" of the RFA.)
- Enroll in Field Vision's AFT custom network package, enter required information, and provide required data access. (For more information on Field Vision, see Section 9, "Data, Reporting, and Records" of the RFA.)
- Complete required soil testing on selected higher- and lower-performing fields.
- Provide timely farm, herd, grazing, implementation, marketing, soil, financial, and reporting information.
- Maintain and submit receipts, invoices, photos, supplier records, time records, match records, and other required documentation upon request per program guidelines.
- Participate in the Champion cohort, peer network, regular meetings, feedback activities, and required Champion deliverables through the program period.

___ Yes, I confirm that, if selected, I will commit to the above activities.

24. Describe any timing, staffing, technology, internet access, travel, accessibility, or other constraints that may affect participation, and any support that would help you succeed.

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Optional Interests and Additional Information

25. Optional biochar interest: Are you interested in training or a possible AFT-guided trial as part of the Biochar Trials Network related to Soil Carbon Amendment (336) through biochar application? (Click here to read more about AFT's Growing with Biochar trainings.)

Yes

No

Maybe

If yes or maybe, briefly describe your interest:

26. Is there anything else reviewers should understand about your operation, project, leadership experience, or potential contribution to the Beef Grazing Network?

Suggested response: up to 300 words.

Supporting Documents

27. REQUIRED: Please upload your Subsidiary Print file obtained from your FSA office.

- If you already have FSA records, you may call your FSA office and request your subsidiary print.
- If you do not yet have FSA records, you'll need to contact your FSA office and register prior to submitting this application.

- Upload a file

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28. REQUIRED: Please upload your Farm Data Report obtained from your FSA office.

- If you already have FSA records, you may call your FSA office and request your Farm Data Report.
- If you do not yet have FSA records, you'll need to contact your FSA office and register prior to submitting this application.

- Upload a file

29. Optional: Existing grazing management plan, conservation plan, and/or other relevant planning documents, if available. (3 files max)

- Maximum: 3
- Upload a file

30. Optional: Farm, field, or grazing unit map identifying proposed project areas, if available.

- Upload a file

31. Optional: Documentation related to any other federal funding received (for example, EQIP, CSP, other AMP funding)

- Upload a file

32. Optional: Any other relevant supporting documentation.

- Upload a file

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Applicant Certification and Authorization

- I certify that this application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- I have disclosed current, prior, approved, pending, and anticipated federal assistance relevant to the proposed practices and acres.
- I understand that duplicate federal payment for the same practice on the same acres is not allowed.
- I authorize AFT to contact me and request clarification or supporting documentation needed to review this application.
- I understand that AFT may verify eligibility, negotiate scope, budget, schedule, deliverables, and Network Grazier capacity, and decline or withdraw an award before an agreement is executed.
- I understand costs incurred before the award agreement is signed will not count toward match or be considered a qualifiable expense.
- If selected, I agree to comply with all program requirements.
- I understand that, if selected, the payment timeline (as outlined in Section 10 of the RFA) may be subject to change.
- I understand that grant-related communication will primarily be sent via email and may come from any of the following email addresses: beefgrazingnetwork@farmland.org; American Farmland Trust / noreply@mail.smapply.net; and may come from other staff members with a farmland.org email. Email communication will be sent to the email address associated with the Survey Monkey Apply applicant account.

I understand and certify the above.

Type your first and last name: _____

Next: Click Mark as Complete below, and then find the final task in your application task list: "Additional Questions and Demographics."

Applicant Demographics

To help us understand who this program is reaching and how we can continue improving access to those producers most in need of support, applicants may voluntarily provide demographic information. Responses are optional, kept confidential, not visible to reviewers or USDA, and do not affect funding decisions.
Applicants may choose to answer any, all, or none of the following questions.

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Select your age group:

Under 25
26 - 34
35 - 44
45 - 54
55 - 64
65 or over
Prefer not to answer

Sex/gender identity:

Man
Woman
Transgender
Non-binary
Prefer to self-describe:
Prefer not to answer

Race/ethnic category/categories:

American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Black or African American
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
Middle Eastern or North African
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White
Other, please specify...
Prefer not to answer

STEPS TO COMPLETE & SUBMIT APPLICATION:

You have reached the end of the application. You may review your responses.

When you are ready to submit, click Mark as Complete below, and then click the green SUBMIT button located under your task progress in order to fully submit your application package. You may edit your application prior to submitting, but you will not be able to make any changes to your application after you click Submit.
Once successfully submitted, you'll receive a confirmation email that we've received your application. The confirmation email will come from beefgrazingnetwork@farmland.org. Please check your Spam/Junk or Other folders in your inbox if you don't see it.

Thank you for applying!