



Hello!

Welcome to December. After some balmy late November days, we are certainly going into this final month of the year with a chilly morning. It is hard to believe we are nearing the end of 2022, what a year it has been. Team OAK is fully into the season of gratitude and we hope you are too. We know our farmers work hard to nourish their communities each day. In this season of giving and gifting, the OAK staff looks to you for generosity. With two days left of the [Good Giving Challenge](#), we hope you will consider a gift to OAK. Your donation supports the programming that furthers a sustainable food system in Kentucky!

Winter is also a time for learning and community connection! Have you registered for the 12th Annual OAK Conference in Frankfort on January 26-28, 2023? Everyone is looking forward to sharing those three January days of deep learning and connection. Read on and [register today](#).

There is early bird pricing until mid-December AND OAK Member Discounts, so don't delay.

Give yourself the gift of inspiration this Winter.

Are you planning to attend Acres Eco-Ag Conference in Covington, KY next week? Thanks to a partnership with AcresUSA OAK is thrilled to offer our Members a discount for this information packed event next month. Not an OAK Member? Let this be one more incentive to join the OAK Community! Read Below for more details.

As you read about all of these opportunities, don't forget to check out the resources at the end of this newsletter where you can find new funding programs and an array of both virtual and in-person events.

Finally, please continue to support your local farmers and artisans throughout the month of December and beyond. Local, organic foods and products keep us healthy and our communities thriving. Try searching the [OAK Find-a-Farm Directory](#) to find your farmer and source locally all year long!

Warmly,
Robin Verson
Membership and Communications Coordinator

REGISTER NOW FOR #OAK2023!

**JANUARY 26-28, 2023
FRANKFORT, KY**

Register Now



#OAK2023 is a not-to-miss event featuring Kentucky farmers, production deep dives, research highlights, food system innovations, market opportunities, and the expanding OAK network for 3 days of learning and growing together. This event is open to everyone. Take advantage of early bird pricing through December 15th, register today and join the OAK Community in January 2023 at KSU's [Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm](#).

Registration is open and scholarships are available.

Scholarship requests for OAK's 2023 Conference will be reviewed and awarded by the middle of each month up until the event and as funds allow. Scholarships are only applied to the regular conference and Pre-Conference Workshops are not included at this time. We share gratitude with partners who make it possible to offer scholarships: Grow Appalachia, Kentucky State University and Johnny's Selected Seeds.

Apply for a scholarship here

Conference Agenda is Now Available

Take a look at this incredible line up of speakers gathering for OAK's 12th Annual Conference in Frankfort, KY on January 26-28, 2023. Folks from near and far will come together to deliver relevant, timely and inspirational information for the greater community.

Check out these inspiring voices in sustainable agriculture

Join us for OAK Conference 2023: Rooted in Resilience: Growing Healthy Soils and Opportunities for Kentucky Organics. The Conference includes a growing audience of hundreds of Kentuckians and neighbors active in community food systems: farmers, researchers, nonprofit professionals, federal and state agency partners, allied service providers and conscious consumers working collectively to build a local, resilient and healthy food system. Enjoy keynotes, farm tours, 30+ sessions and 6 half day pre-conference workshops.

Get the full AGENDA here

New for #OAK2023: SIX Pre-Conference Workshops!

Want to dig deeper into a topic that will take you and your farming operation to the next level?

OAK is offering you just that opportunity with 6 immersive, exciting workshops offered on **January 26**.

Take advantage of this third day of learning with the OAK community and register for pre-conference workshops along with the main conference. Note upon registering, there is an additional cost for this extra day of learning!

Year-Round Salad Greens with Farmer/Farm Consultant Ray Tyler

Nutrient Budgeting with UK's Krista Jacobsen, and Grow Appalachia's Chris McKenzie

Forest Farming with Appalachian Sustainable Development's Robin Suggs and Rural Action's Andrea Miller

Marketing with Farm Marketing Guru Corinna Bench

Funding Opportunities for Kentucky Farms with KCARD

Maximizing High Tunnels with OSU's Matt Kleinhenz, UT's Annette Wszelaki, and Kentucky Farm Consultant Paul Wiediger

Register here

2023 Conference Sponsors, Partners & Funders



We are grateful for the strong support from these 2023 partners and sponsors!

[Become a Sponsor](#)

TWO more days to Support OAK during the Good Giving Challenge

The #GoodGivingChallenge is underway! You have until tomorrow, December 2, at midnight to make that donation to OAK!

We love participating in Good Giving Challenge hosted by the Blue Grass Community Foundation. Do you like the idea of the challenge? There are still match prizes and super funding bonuses for participating



organizations. Email Brooke@oak-ky.org if you want to learn more and get involved.

When you give to the Organic Association of Kentucky during the #GoodGivingChallenge, you can help Team OAK work with farmers to transition more farmland to organic management. Your support now will advance regenerative organic agriculture so Kentucky's family farms and communities can thrive.



Support OAK during the Good Giving Challenge

OAK Members can access discounted registration for AcresUSA Eco-Ag Conference in Covington, KY

There is still time to register for next week's [ACRES Eco-Ag Conference](#) in Covington, KY. ALL active OAK Members are eligible for a **20% registration discount** for the information packed event next month plus each time the code is used ACRES USA will donate \$25 to OAK. Applying this discount to even the single day Eco-Ag Conference ticket nearly pays for a full year as an Individual OAK Member. What are you waiting for?

While you are there, be sure to visit OAK staff at the Trade Show. We're also on the ACRES agenda, join Executive Director, Brooke Gentile, for a Round Table Discussion on *Resources and Technical Assistance for Beginning and Organic Farmers in Kentucky*.

The annual Eco-Ag Conference & Trade Show is where you find farmers and consultants from every facet of eco-farming who come together to share their experience and expertise. Attend the three-day event to learn the latest in cutting-edge technology and methods or dig in even

deeper and join an all-day Eco-Ag U workshop and make your farming operation the best it can be. [Register today!](#)



Still need more reasons to join OAK?

The OAK community is an engaging group of farmers, eaters, ag professionals, entrepreneurs and more! From farmers who are using regenerative practices to those whose farms have been certified organic for decades, we are folks committed to creating a healthier, more nourishing food landscape.

With Member Benefits from partnering businesses and organizations, like AcresUSA, [Ohio Earth Food](#), [Johnny's Seeds](#), [Chelsea Green Publishing](#), [Earth Tools](#), [Felco](#), and more, OAK Members receive product discounts and more! Active Members can now easily access those member discount codes on a newly published [Members Only Access page here](#).

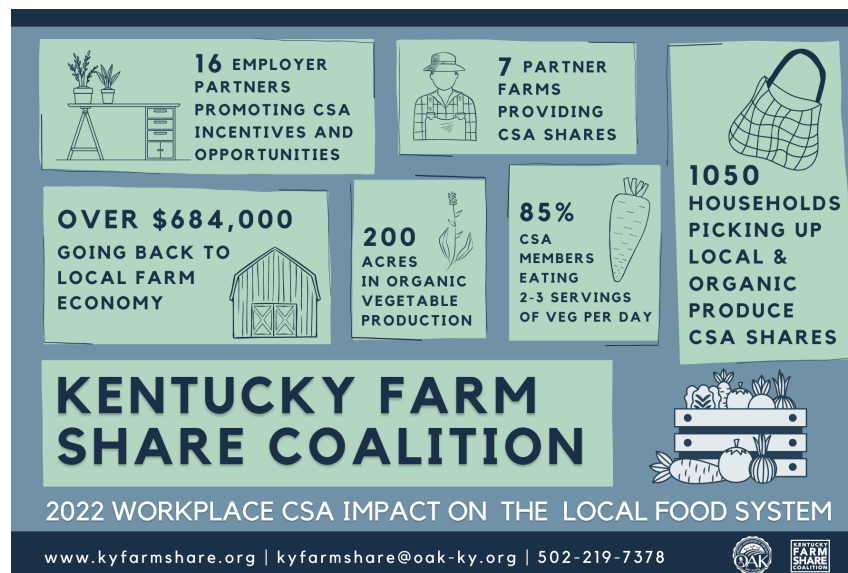
OAK recently rolled out an all-new website which will, in addition to many other items, offer new tools for Membership Engagement. The possibilities are creating a buzz with Team OAK and we know you are going to love this new and easy way to connect with the greater OAK Community.

Current OAK Members, don't forget to update your member profile, create new log in information and connect easily and fluidly with each other. If you have let your Membership lapse or have never taken the plunge to join OAK, now is the time! OAK is growing and working for an exciting future, join us. Be a part of the community working to nourish Kentucky.

Join OAK Today!

KY Farm Share Coalition wraps up an awesome 2022

KY Farm Share Coalition (KYFSC) is sending gratitude and warm wishes as we wrap up the 2022 growing season. We are grateful for the workplace partners that championed the CSA model and made it more convenient and affordable to source local, organic foods. We also want to thank our coalition of endorsed farms (view list [here](#)) that are committed to raising foods with certified organic farming practices, and the more than 1,000 Kentuckians that took part in a KYFSC CSA program this season and supported a Kentucky farm. Together we are building a stronger regional food system that increases the health and well being of produce, people, and the planet.



Board of Directors is Accepting Candidate Nominations

Are you interested to serve as a Board Member for the Organic Association of Kentucky? Do you know someone who is the perfect candidate for OAK's Board of Directors? OAK seeks candidates and is requesting your nominations. As a part of our community, you or someone you know may be the right person to bring their time and talent to serve in this important role. OAK's Board of Directors is selected by OAK membership each year and serves in 3-year terms. Nominations are accepted now through the beginning of November and OAK members vote for 3 candidates in January and February.

[Read more about being a Board Member and make a nomination here](#)

Interested to Go Organic?

We're here to help - for FREE! OAK's Transition Trainers will answer all your questions and work with you to refine techniques, implement best practices, demystify the regulations, develop recordkeeping systems and make a transition plan to help you apply for organic certification. Email us to learn more about process and how we help farmers have a successful certification experience.



Learn more about [OAK's Transition Trainer Program and apply to work with an Organic Transition Trainer today!](#)

Opportunities, the Latest News & Calls to Action

Investment to advance organic agriculture & support equity in farming

[The Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research](#) (FFAR) announced a \$1 million award to Tuskegee University to create an endowment to advance organic agriculture and farming practices through the university's College of Agriculture, Environment and Nutrition Sciences (CAENS). This award matches the \$1 million investment by Clif Bar & Company, for a total Tuskegee University endowment of \$2 million. Clif Bar & Company chose Tuskegee University for this endowment because of their demonstrated commitment to, and leadership in, organic agriculture in the Southeastern U.S., including their partnerships with other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to advance organic practices.

The growth of organic farming lacks regional and racial diversity, which is compounded by funding inequality. A 2022 [Forbes](#) article outlined significant funding disparities at the nation's Black land-grant universities compared to their predominantly white counterparts over the last three decades. Furthermore, the latest [U.S. Census of Agriculture](#) indicates that of the 30,909 certified organic farms in the U.S., only 5% are Black-owned. Through financial inequality and a lack of representation, farmers in the Southeastern U.S. have lacked access to organic agriculture research that could increase production and improve soil health.

National Farm to Food Assistance Survey

Programs that link communities facing hunger with free, locally grown food while also paying farmers a fair price are a powerful way to build community, food security and resilience.

The recently announced USDA-AMS [Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement](#) program has created a ton of new activity and opportunity in this arena. The Wallace Center is working in partnership with Duke World Food Policy Center to capture and amplify the impacts and challenges of these programs to decision-makers, funders, and the USDA.

Complete [this survey](#) to help better understand this growing market channel. This survey will contribute to reports and outreach efforts to make Farm to Food Assistance Programs more sustainable and effective. The Wallace Center will also use it to design relevant technical assistance to support your work. The Wallace Center will enter survey participants in a raffle to win \$250. The [survey](#) deadline is Friday, December 2nd.

Regional KY Water Testing Labs now available

Kentucky State University (KSU) has established regional water testing labs for farmers wishing to have their irrigation water sources tested. This is a voluntary program to help farmers become familiar with some of the water quality requirements that may be required under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The water tests are free to farmers, and results are available within 1 week of dropping off water samples at the regional testing lab. These results can supplement farmers' Farm Safety Plan, Agriculture Water Quality Plan (AWQP) and other relevant record keeping needs. Contact Kevin Gurtowski - kevin.gurtowski@kysu.edu or John Thomas - john.thomas1@kysu.edu for more information.

Vermont Compost Bulk Order Deadline 12/15/22

Fresh Start Growers Supply (Louisville) is organizing a bulk order from Vermont Compost again this year. Order and pay for Vermont Compost products before December 1st and receive discounted pricing on bulk (2 cubic yards) bags. To take advantage of the offer, simply email Steve@freshstartgrowers.com or call 502-442-7883 with the quantity of product that you want with delivery specifics. More details and pricing can be [found here](#).

Become a Council Member at the Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council

For Boone, Campbell, Grant, Kenton County (and Ohio) friends:

If you are interested or involved in growing, distributing, studying, or selling food in this area, you belong with the Council!

As a Council Member, you will:

- inform the way our regional food system grows
- collaborate with other resident leaders
- learn from experts in the field

Application Deadline is December 31, 2022

Learn more and apply here: <https://forms.gle/kqTFDWFjdLjsSNDg9>

USDA Requests Public Input on Implementation of Inflation Reduction Act Funding

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will use the investments provided through IRA-funded conservation programs to support farmers and ranchers in adopting and expanding climate-smart activities and systems. NRCS asks for comments on how to target program benefits, quantify impact, and improve program delivery and outreach, especially for underserved producers. Comments are due Dec. 21, 2022. NRCS will identify immediate changes that can be made in fiscal year 2023 and will continue to identify and adopt additional changes in future years. [More details and links to comment are here](#).

Want to scale up?

For direct market farmers, expanding your operation to capture local and regional wholesale markets can represent an opportunity. But such a shift brings with it many changes to how you run your farm because the expectations that wholesale buyers have is much different than your direct market customers. [Scaling Up Your Vegetable Farm for Wholesale Markets](#), a free SARE publication, guides you through the likely changes you'll need to take into consideration when planning to branch out into wholesale markets. These include business planning, working with wholesale buyers, and areas of production that range from increasing yield and produce quality, to harvest and postharvest handling, food safety and more.

Year End Financial and Tax Support

With the end of 2022 just around the corner, many farmers and small businesses are already starting to crunch numbers. Here are some useful links:

[Does the IRS consider my operation a Hobby Farm?](#)

[Rural Tax Education](#)

[Can I qualify for Kentucky Small Business Tax Credit?](#)

New Organic Food and Farming Report Details Policy Opportunities for Upcoming Farm Bill and Beyond

NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council), the Swette Center at Arizona State University (ASU) and Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) published a new report, featuring over a dozen organic farmers and ranchers across the nation and detailing the climate, economic and public health benefits of organic food and farming.

The report, [Grow Organic: The Climate, Health, and Economic Case for Expanding Organic Agriculture](#), provides a roadmap for lawmakers to unlock the potential of organic agriculture in the 2023 Farm Bill and beyond,

Educational & Farming Support

In-person Events Throughout the Region

12th Annual Tennessee Local Food Summit

Dec. 2-4, 2022

Cumberland University Alumni Center in Lebanon, TN on Dec. 2 & 3

Demeters Common on Dec.4.

Register at this link: <https://www.tnlocalfood.org/>
Find out more by checking out the [Facebook event](#)

Selling Produce from Small Scale Farms

Sunday December 4, 2022

Xenia, Ohio

Central State University in partnership with Agraria's BFN presents "Selling Produce from Small Scale Farms", a marketing conference for small scale farmers. This conference discusses local and regional sales and food safety for small scale fruit and vegetable growers.

[Click here to learn more and register.](#)

Ohio Organic Grains Conference

January 4-5, 2023

Archbold, OH

Are you a current, transitioning, new-to organic grain farmer, or a crop consultant? Register or view the conference agenda at www.go.osu.edu/organicgrainsreg or [read more details here.](#)

Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference

January 2-4, 2023

Bowling Green, KY

OAK staff invite you to join this event. We'll see you in the Organic Production track.

[More details and registration here.](#)

International Grassland Conference

Save the Date: May 14-19, 2023

Covington, KY

Scholarships available and due by December 30, 2022

[More details and registration here.](#)

Virtual Events

CFA Farm Bill series, Part 2

December 5, 2022 5:00 ET

Join CFA virtually for a look at Farm Bill policies that affect local food. From farmers markets and farm to school to nutrition access programs and food safety regulations, we'll look at the current policies and proposed changes. There will be a special guest, Ben Feldman, from the Farmers Market Coalition to talk about the coalition's priorities for the 2023 Farm Bill. Register for the zoom: <https://bit.ly/3UR8Y2L> or join on [Facebook live.](#)

Use Your Numbers to Assess Profitability and Full Cost of Production

December 5, 12, 19, 2022 at 9 am - 12 pm ET

Registration is now open for this three-part winter course from OEFFA with farm consultant Ellen Polishuk of [Plant to Profit!](#) This course will build on the material covered in the introductory sessions in January and March 2022 (available [here](#)). Take a deep dive into your numbers from the season to understand your farm's costs of production and calculate fair prices and wages. [Register here](#)

Guide to Entrepreneurship Online Coaching

December 6, 10, or 15

Because farming is more than just growing crops / raising livestock... The Kentucky Small Business Development Center is offering free, online "Guide to Entrepreneurship" group coaching sessions. The curriculum covers the basic steps to starting a business - forming a marketable idea, assessing your competitors, writing a business plan, securing financing, and registering the business. Register at:

<https://www.louisvillesmallbusiness.com/workshops>

Savanna Institute's Perennial Farm Gathering

December 7-9, 2022 | 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | Virtual |

3 DAY VIRTUAL GATHERING of farmers, landowners and perennial enthusiasts from across the country. This premier Midwest event is available to global audiences every year! Share your work and learn from others who are committed to growing perennial agriculture for climate, conservation and economic vitality. Find out more and register here: <https://www.savannainstitute.org/perennial-farm-gathering>.

KY Food Action Network Upcoming Trainings

December 7, 2022 at 3:00pm EST **Food RX 101** Register [Here](#)

December 14, 2022 at 3:00pm EST **Administrative Advocacy Training** Register [Here](#)

January 11, 2023 at 3:00pm EST **Advocacy 201** Register [Here](#)

January 25, 2023 at 3:00pm EST **Media Training** Register [Here](#)

USDA Risk Management Agency Workshop

December 13, 2022 11 AM ET

Learn about the latest updates and improvements to the [Whole-Farm Revenue Protection](#) (WFRP) and the [Micro Farm](#) insurance options designed to help specialty crop, organic, urban and direct market producers. The event will include RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger and other team members to highlight and answer questions about these insurance options.

Vegetable Farms Becoming the Employer of Choice

Motivating and managing employees is essential to most diversified vegetable farms, and rare is the farmer who comes to farming with those labor management skills. Whether you have worked with employees for many years or are in the early stages of hiring staff, this series will give you practical tools to make your farm an employer of choice. Please note that this program is for all vegetable farm owners and for hired managers with at least 10 years of experience.

Be prepared to attend online sessions with your camera on and ready to engage in discussions with your farmer peers. [Space is limited - register here.](#)

5 January from 9-11 AM CT: Strategic Leadership

9 January from 4-6 PM CT: Developing a Motivated Workforce

12 January from 9-11 AM CT: Hiring the Right People

16 January from 4-6 PM CT: Employee Onboarding and Training

19 January from 9-11 AM CT: Farm Business Culture

23 January from 4-6 PM CT: Reviews and Feedback

30 January from 4-6 PM CT: Becoming an Ethical H-2A Employer

2 February from 9-11 AM CT: Developing Intercultural Competence for Farm Employers

6 February from 4-6 PM CT: Managing Conflict

A Guide to USDA Resources for Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers

This new multi-agency guide for USDA assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers, is available online from USDA. If you are a farmer or rancher and are a minority, woman, veteran, beginning, or limited-resource producer, you can use this 40-page booklet to learn about assistance and targeted opportunities available to you. This includes programs offered through the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Risk Management Agency. The guide is also available in Spanish, Hmong, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, and Chinese.

USDA announces assistance for on-farm food safety expenses for specialty crop growers

Application period closes: January 31, 2023

Apply at your local FSA office: <https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator>

Specialty crop operations may receive assistance for the following costs:

- Developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification.
- Maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan.
- Food safety certification.
- Certification upload fees.
- Microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water.
- Training.

Silvopasture and Forest Farming Support / Funds Available

The Catalyzing Agroforestry Grant Program is focused on implementing silvopastures and forest farming practices through direct support payments and will assist producers in designing appropriate projects using technical assistance and science-based planning strategies. The ultimate goal of the effort is to increase ecosystem sustainability and diversity by scaling up agroforestry practices. The Appalachian Beginning Forest Farming Coalition (ABFFC) project will provide up to \$1500/acre for silvopasture implementation and up to \$1000/quarter acre for forest farming implementation depending on project scale and scope. To enhance shared learning, producers who receive support will share successes and lessons-learned with their peers and other interested stakeholders. Minority, female, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and/or socially disadvantaged farmers are highly encouraged to apply.

<https://www.appalachianforestfarmers.org/emef>

EKY Flood Damage Farm Equipment Program

A program for commercial farmers to repair/refurbish small-scale farm equipment damaged during the floods. If you would like to donate to this program, please send an email to info@kyhortcouncil.org. [Learn more and apply here](#)

Developing Shearer & Mentor Grant

Deadline: January 1, 2023

Link to Apply: <https://www.sheepusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2023-Developing-Shearer-Mentor-Grant-Application.pdf>

The American Sheep Industry Association's Wool Council has developed a grant program to incentivize the development of domestic shearers.

This grant program will support developing shearers – \$500 up front and \$1,000 at the conclusion – as they work to increase the quality of their shearing. Additionally, as the mentor provides the developing shearer with knowledge and an avenue to shear – thereby sharing their work and income and slowing the number of operations they can shear – mentors are also supplemented with \$1,500 at the conclusion of the grant.

USDA Offers Assistance to Protect Privately-Owned Agricultural Lands

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages people and groups wanting to protect agricultural lands to consider enrolling their property into conservation easements.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP - ALE) focuses on protecting and conserving productive agricultural lands. Landowners are compensated for enrolling their land in easements. [Partners include state or local agencies and certain non-profits.](#) Eligible lands include privately owned cropland, pastureland and forestlands. Landowners do not apply directly to NRCS for funding under this program. Applications from eligible entities for 2023 ACEP-ALE funding must be received by December 1, 2022 to be considered for the current funding cycle. Landowners who wish to be considered for ACEP-ALE must make application to an eligible entity.

Entities interested in agricultural easements should contact their [local USDA service center](#) or visit the [Kentucky NRCS ACEP-ALE website](#).

Slow Food Bluegrass Garden Grant

Deadline: ongoing

Link: <http://www.slowfoodbluegrass.org/gardens>

Slow Food Bluegrass micro-grants support groups in Kentuckiana who foster education about and access to good, clean, fair food. Special priority is given to limited resource communities and to projects that demonstrate a strong buy-in from participants. Grants range from \$500 - \$1,000 and may be awarded throughout the year. If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach us at slowfoodbluegrass@gmail.com.

KSU Small Scale Farm Grant

Deadline: The 1st day of every other month

Funding Amount: Up to \$5,000 for farmers, \$15,000 for groups benefiting multiple farmers

Eligible Entities: Kentucky farmers and Kentucky agriculture groups including farmers markets

Link:<http://ksu.edu/academics/cafsss/research-extension/small-scale-farm-grant-program/>

Overview: The KSU Small Scale Farm Grant is designed with the small operation farmer in mind. This grant application is relatively simple to complete and the funds can be used to purchase needed equipment related to the proposed project. To qualify, applicants must be producing a value-added product, be an organic farmer, and/or be an aquatic farmer. Farmers markets are often eligible. Previously approved projects have included canning equipment, a walk-in cooler, a water line to a hoop house, a root cellar, a cool-bot for vegetables, and a trailer for keeping meat cool and recently added farmer education assistance with a maximum of \$500.

Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant

Deadline: On-going

Funding Amount: Up to 10% annual gross farm income, max at \$8,000 per year; \$1 for \$1 match

Eligible Entities: Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses

Link: <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/grants.html>

Overview: The Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant is a cost share program to help Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses pay for advertising and marketing expenses. The award amount is based on 10% of direct farm impact; for a farmer it would be 10% of their total farm gross sales. The applicant must be a registered member of Kentucky Proud to apply and use the Kentucky Proud logo/brand in marketing efforts paid for with program funds. Examples of fundable items include TV ads, radio ads, web expenses, hats, t-shirts, demos,

sampling, labels, packaging, tradeshows, UPC, and bar codes. This is a great program that helps promote our local farms!

ON-Farm Energy Efficiency Incentives Program

Deadline: Applications are accepted year round

Funding Amounts: 50% cost share - up to a \$10,000 incentive, plus \$150 for an approved third party energy audit

Eligible Entities: Kentucky farmers with a gross farm income of at least \$25,000

Link: <https://agpolicy.ky.gov/energy/Pages/default.aspx>

Overview: The Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund offers an On-Farm Energy Efficiency Program to help Kentucky farmers with energy projects. These cost share funds are available to increase on farm energy efficiency and to support renewable fuel production projects. The applicant is required to have a third party energy audit completed. This program can be combined with the USDA-NRCS Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) to get up to 75% of a total project cost covered.

Rural Energy for America Program - Grants and Guaranteed Loans

Funding Amount: \$1,500 to \$500,000 (25% of the total project cost)

Eligible Entities: Farmers and rural businesses

Link: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-energy-audit-renewable-energy-development-assistance>

Overview: USDA Rural Development offers REAP grants and grant/loan combos to help agricultural producers and rural businesses install renewable energy systems and do efficiency upgrade projects. A grant only application can pay up to 25% of total project costs. A grant/loan combo can fund up to 75% of total project costs. Guaranteed loan only applications do not have an application or funding deadline to be processed. Some project examples include: lighting efficiency, heating efficiency, bio-energy, solar energy, and dairy ventilation upgrades. An energy assessment or audit is required as part of the application process. If you are interested, you need to inquire as soon as possible. The October 31 due date prioritizes "restricted" or smaller projects that have total project cost of \$80,000 or less (and are requesting \$20,000 or less in grant funds). Fall is the best time for small projects to apply!

Many thanks to [KCARD](#) for promoting many of these grant opportunities. Did you know KCARD can also answer questions about funding programs and help you prepare an application? resources



Stay in touch:

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Follow Along:



