

Agriculture Innovation Center Program

What does this program do?

The Agriculture Innovation Center Program awards grants to eligible Agriculture Innovation Centers that provide technical assistance to agricultural producers to help them develop and market value-added agricultural products.

Who can apply for this program?

- **Local governments**
- **State governments**
- **Federally-recognized Tribes**
- **Nonprofit organizations**
- **Commercial organizations**
- **Institutes of higher education**

How can funds be used?

Grant and matching funds can be used to operate an Agriculture Innovation Center, and to provide the following services and support to agricultural producers:

- Business development services, including feasibility studies and business plans
- Marketing development services, including marketing plans, branding, and customer identification
- Financial advisory services, including assistance with preparing financial statements and assessing financing options
- Process development services, including engineering services, scale production assessments, and systems development
- Organizational assistance, including legal and technical advisory services
- Value chain coordination, including connecting agricultural producers to distribution systems, processing facilities, or commercial kitchens
- Product development (excluding research and development), including concept testing, feasibility and cost analysis, product taste-testing, demographic and other types of consumer analysis, production analysis, and evaluation of packaging and labeling options
- Grants of \$5,000 or less to agricultural producers for the above services (where the aggregate amount does not exceed \$50,000)

How do we get started?

Before you apply:

- If your organization doesn't already have an active number in the System for Award Management (SAM), you will need to register for one. This free process requires several steps, so plan to start at least a month before the application deadline.

Prior to registering, we encourage you to read the HELP materials available on the SAM website at this link: <https://sam.gov/content/help>.

Who can answer questions?

- You can email your questions to SM.RBCS.AIC@usda.gov.

Where can I get more information about the program?

You can learn more about the AIC program by visiting the program page at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xh4Vvk>. The Code of Federal Regulations that governs this program (7 CFR Part 4284) is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xh4Vp>.

NOTE: Because information is subject to change, always consult official program instructions or contact your local Rural Development office for help. A list is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xJHPE>. You will find additional resources, forms, and program information at <https://rd.usda.gov>. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.