



News Release

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USDA seeks applications for grants to develop, expand rural businesses *Rural Business Development Grant workshops planned for north and southeast Ohio*

COLUMBUS, Ohio – April 14, 2015 – U.S. Department of Agriculture Ohio Rural Development State Director Tony Logan today announced the availability of about \$700,000 in grants designed to support the development of small and emerging private rural businesses.

“A result of the 2014 Farm Bill, this competitive grant supports training, technical assistance and related activities for rural businesses with less than \$1 million in gross revenues and fewer than 50 employees,” said Logan. “Among others, rural public entities such as towns, state agencies, nonprofits, institutes of higher learning and cooperatives are eligible to apply.”

Logan said application guidance is available in two upcoming workshops:

- May 4: 9 – 11 a.m.
Massillon Area USDA Office
2650 Richville Drive, SE, Suite 102
Massillon, OH 44646
- May 7: 9 – 11 a.m.
Wayne National Forest Ranger Station
13700 U.S. 33
Nelsonville, OH 45764

Because space is limited and interest in this new program is high, attendees are asked to RSVP no later than April 29 by calling 614-255-2426 or emailing RD.RBS@oh.usda.gov. Completed applications are due in the state office by close of business on June 1, 2015.

Some population restrictions apply. Funds must be directed to projects benefiting rural areas located outside the urbanized periphery of any city with a population of 50,000 or more. Generally, grants range from \$10,000 - \$500,000, and there is no cost sharing requirement.

The grants may be used for:

- Project planning, business counseling and training, market research, feasibility studies, professional and technical reports, or product and service improvements;
- The acquisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way; construction conversion, or renovation of buildings, plants, machinery and equipment; access to streets and roads, parking areas, and utilities;
- Pollution control and abatement;
- Capitalization of revolving loan funds, including funds that will make loans for start-ups, and for working capital;
- Distance adult learning for job training and advancement;
- Rural transportation improvement
- Community and technology-based economic development
- Rural business incubators

Additional, state-specific information regarding the Rural Business Development grant may be found here: http://www.rd.usda.gov/files/150410_RBDG_Ohio_background_information.pdf.

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