

Value Added Producer Grant Harvester Applicants

Notice: This document is for informational purposes only. Applicants must follow the instructions contained in the program regulation and annual Notice of Funding Availability.

General

- Grants funds are available for economic planning activities or working capital activities related to the processing and/or marketing of value-added products that initiate from qualifying harvesting and farming activities.
- Harvester applicants must qualify as an eligible Independent Producer.
- Agricultural commodities are unprocessed plant and animal products and their by-products, and include forestry products, nursery stock, aquaculture products, fish, and seafood, among others.

Harvester

- An individual or entity that demonstrates the legal right to harvest more than 50 percent of the primary (wild) agricultural commodity for the project; but does not cultivate or raise the agricultural commodity.
- May not merely glean, gather, or collect residual commodities that result from an initial harvesting or production of a primary agricultural commodity produced by others. Example: A third party who collects slash from the landing to produce energy, but does not fell and harvest the trees is not eligible.
- Must apply as an Independent Producer - Harvester.
- Not eligible for Reserved Funds or Priority Points for a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, Small-Medium Family Farm, or Farmer Cooperative because Harvester operations do not meet the definitions for a farm or ranch.
- May only request Reserved Funds and/or Priority Points for a Mid-Tier Value Chain proposal, if applicable.

Harvester v. Farmer

A harvester is different from a farmer in that the harvester does not cultivate the agricultural commodity prior to harvest.

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Example 1: Timber

Timber Harvester: Demonstrates the legal right to harvest timber from the forest, but does not cultivate the trees or forest crops. Example: logger.

Tree Farmer: Cultivates the trees on owned or leased land, with direct engagement in the crop production. Would require evidence of sustainable management of woodlands dedicated to the growth of forest crops for commercial purposes, protected and managed for continuous production of forest products, with frequent replanting post-harvest. Example: sustainable woodland practitioner with proper certification.

Example 2: Fishing/Aquaculture

Commercial Fisherman: *Harvests* aquatic organisms from uncontrolled or wild fisheries that naturally exist in the oceans, lakes, and rivers.

Aquaculture: Practices farming of aquatic organisms (fish, mollusks, crustaceans, and aquatic plants) under controlled conditions, including cultivation of freshwater and saltwater populations in tanks, ponds, raceways, or offshore cage/net/rope systems. Utilizes some form of intervention in the rearing process to enhance production, such as regular stocking, feeding, and protection from predators, and maintains ownership of the stock being cultivated.

Resources: Applications must meet ALL program requirements

- VAPG website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>
- Application Toolkits
- Program Regulation 7 CFR 4284-J published May 8, 2015
- [FY2017 Federal Register Program Notice](#) published August 29, 2017.
- Program Information Sheets
- Rural Development State Offices: 1-800-670-6553, then press “1” or <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>.
- Agricultural Marketing Resource Center website: <http://www.agmrc.org>