



VAPG Grant Application Portal User Guide

December, 2024

Welcome to the Grant Application Portal

The Grant Application Portal (GAP) is your tool for completing and submitting applications for the USDA's Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. This guide provides step-by-step instructions to help you navigate the portal. Ensuring your application is accurate, complete and submitted on time

For additional guidance, you can watch our instructional video or visit the 'Support' section at the end of this guide for support and resources.

Disclaimer: This User Guide is intended to assist you in completing a VAPG application through the Grant Application Portal. This is not intended to be a complete list of program rules and requirements. For a comprehensive list of program rules and requirements, please refer to the program regulations and the annual Notification.

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Getting Started



Getting Started

Step 1: The GAP Login Page can be accessed at: <https://vapg.rd.usda.gov/>. Once on the log in page, click ‘**Sign in to VAPG**’ and save the URL for ease of access in the future.



The screenshot shows the VAPG Application Portal login page. At the top left is the USDA Rural Development logo with the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE". At the top right are links for "HOME" and "HELP". The main content area features a large dark blue box on the left with the text "Welcome to the VAPG Application Portal!" and a "Sign in to VAPG" button highlighted with a green border. To the right is a white box titled "Using the Grant Application Portal" containing two paragraphs of text. The background of the page is a photograph of a field with rows of crops under a blue sky.

USDA Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HOME HELP

Welcome to the VAPG Application Portal!

Sign in to VAPG

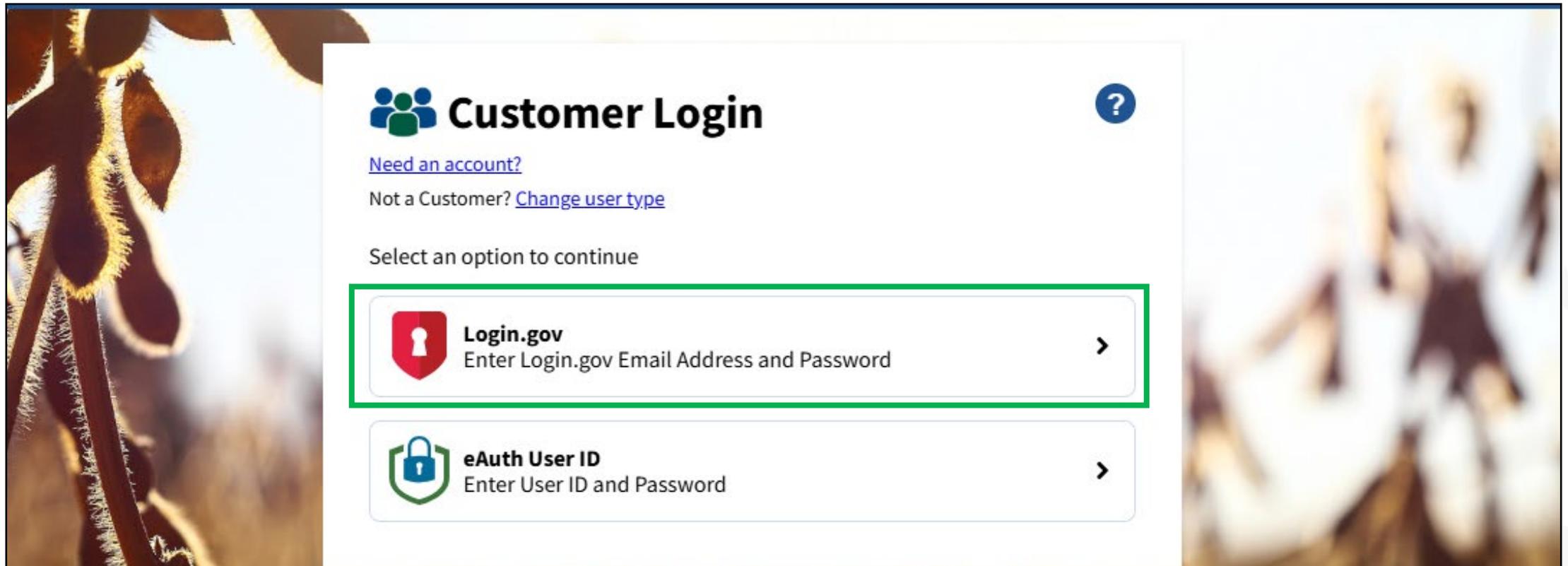
Using the Grant Application Portal

Applications in the Grant Application Portal must be started by the Applicant. Applicants may work with a collaborator (grant writer, technical assistance provider, or similar) or other representatives (owners or family members) of the Applicant Entity, however, the Applicant will be responsible for starting the application, responsible for edits made to the application by collaborators or representatives, and will be required to certify to the trueness, accuracy, and completion of the application.

The Applicant will also provide the required assurances and agree to comply with any resulting terms if accepting an award. Applicants must be aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject them to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001).

Getting Started

Step 2: Applicants with an existing eAuthentication (eAuth) account may continue their log in process through the Login.gov tab.

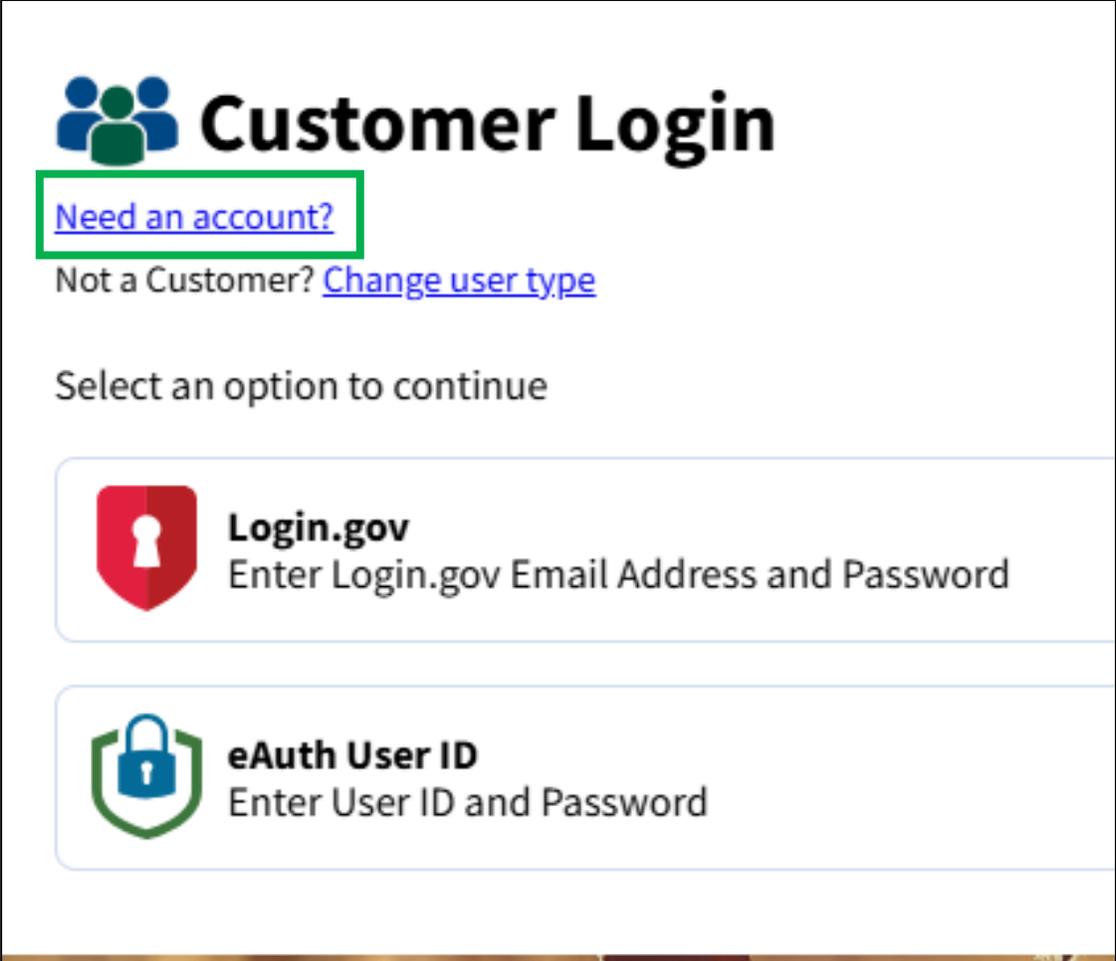


Getting Started

Don't have an eAuth account? Applicants without an existing eAuth account may create an account using the 'Create Account' tab.

Note: Applicants will need Level 2 eAuthentication access (eAuth) to log into the GAP. USDA eAuth is the system used by USDA agencies to enable individual customers and employees to obtain accounts that will allow them to securely access USDA Web applications and services via the Internet. The eAuth policy defines four assurance levels, Level 2 access is required for GAP and provides some confidence in the asserted identity's validity.

Note: Instructions for creating an eAuth account are included in the User Guide on page 101.



The screenshot shows the 'Customer Login' page. At the top left is a logo of three stylized people. To its right is the title 'Customer Login'. Below the logo is a blue link 'Need an account?' which is highlighted with a green box. Underneath is another blue link 'Not a Customer? Change user type'. The main content area is titled 'Select an option to continue' and contains two options in rounded rectangular boxes. The first option features a red shield icon with a white keyhole, the text 'Login.gov', and the instruction 'Enter Login.gov Email Address and Password'. The second option features a green shield icon with a blue padlock, the text 'eAuth User ID', and the instruction 'Enter User ID and Password'.

GAP Homepage



GAP Homepage

Step 1: Access the GAP Homepage to view the welcome message and important links.

The screenshot shows the USDA Rural Development website for Winston Clay. At the top, it identifies itself as an official U.S. government website. The main header includes the USDA logo and the text 'Rural Development U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'. A large blue banner in the center reads 'Welcome, Winston Clay'. Below this, there are two white callout boxes. The left box asks 'Want to learn more about the program?' and provides a link to the 'Value-Added Producer Grants' website. The right box asks 'Do you have an active SAM Registration?' and explains that an active SAM registration with a Unique Entity ID (UEI) is required for application, with a link to the SAM.gov website. At the bottom, there are two buttons: one partially visible on the left and one on the right labeled 'Ready to'.

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ✓

USDA Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Welcome, Winston Clay

Want to learn more about the program?

For more information about the VAPG program, we encourage you to visit the [Value-Added Producer Grants](#) website.

Do you have an active SAM Registration? ⓘ

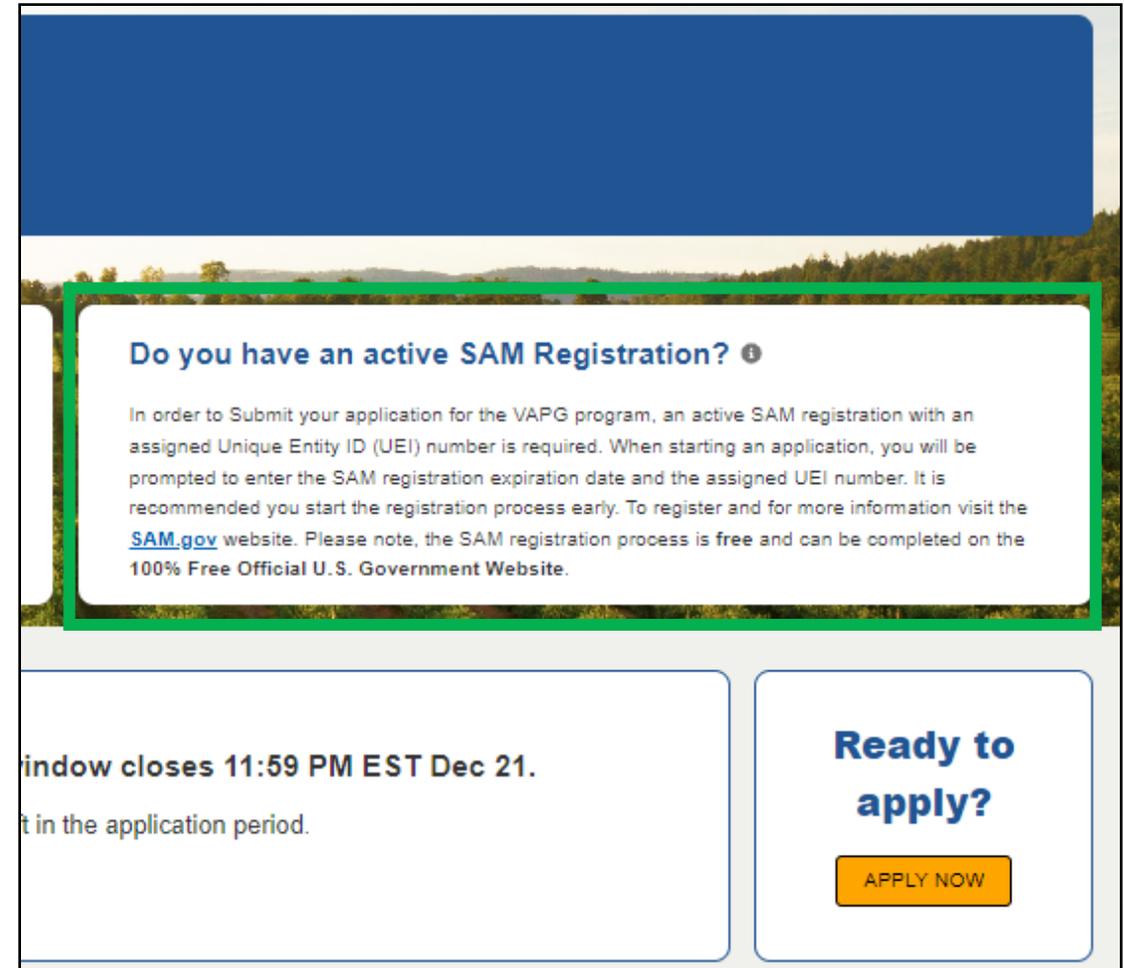
In order to Submit your application for the VAPG program, an active SAM registration with an assigned Unique Entity ID (UEI) number is required. When starting an application, you will be prompted to enter the SAM registration expiration date and the assigned UEI number. It is recommended you start the registration process early. To register and for more information visit the [SAM.gov](#) website. Please note, the SAM registration process is free and can be completed on the 100% Free Official U.S. Government Website.

Ready to

GAP Homepage

Step 2: Applicants must have an active SAM registration to submit their application. We encourage you complete or renew your SAM registration at sam.gov at your earliest convenience to ensure your SAM account is active.

Note: Your SAM registration must remain active throughout the application process and for the duration of your Project. Completing or renewing your SAM registration is **100% free on the Official U.S. Government Website.**

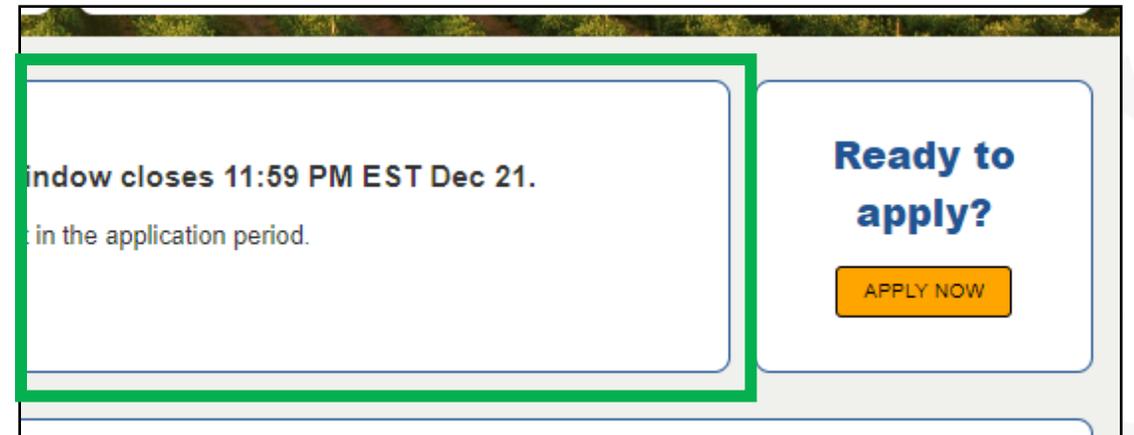
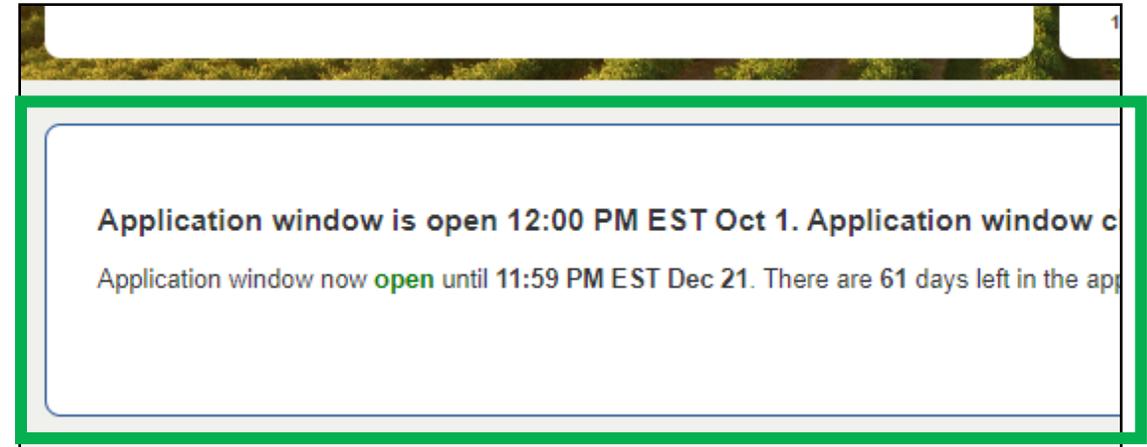


The screenshot displays a notification box with a green border. The notification title is "Do you have an active SAM Registration?" followed by an information icon. The text inside the box states: "In order to Submit your application for the VAPG program, an active SAM registration with an assigned Unique Entity ID (UEI) number is required. When starting an application, you will be prompted to enter the SAM registration expiration date and the assigned UEI number. It is recommended you start the registration process early. To register and for more information visit the [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) website. Please note, the SAM registration process is free and can be completed on the 100% Free Official U.S. Government Website." Below the notification, there is a section with a blue header "Ready to apply?" and a yellow button labeled "APPLY NOW". To the left of the button, there is a text box that says "Window closes 11:59 PM EST Dec 21." and "t in the application period."

GAP Homepage

Step 3: The VAPG GAP Homepage contains information about the application window to include when the window opens and when it closes. The Apply Now tab will only be selectable when the application window is open.

Note: Need additional training on the VAPG GAP, Watch the Video Tutorial in the Application Resources section.



Managing Applications

Managing Applications

Step 1: View all in-progress and submitted applications in the **'My VAPG Applications'** section.

• [watch the video tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of the system.

Only a history of the last 4 concurrent years will be stored on the site beginning Fall 2024. All applications prior to the past four years are archived and inaccessible.

My VAPG Applications

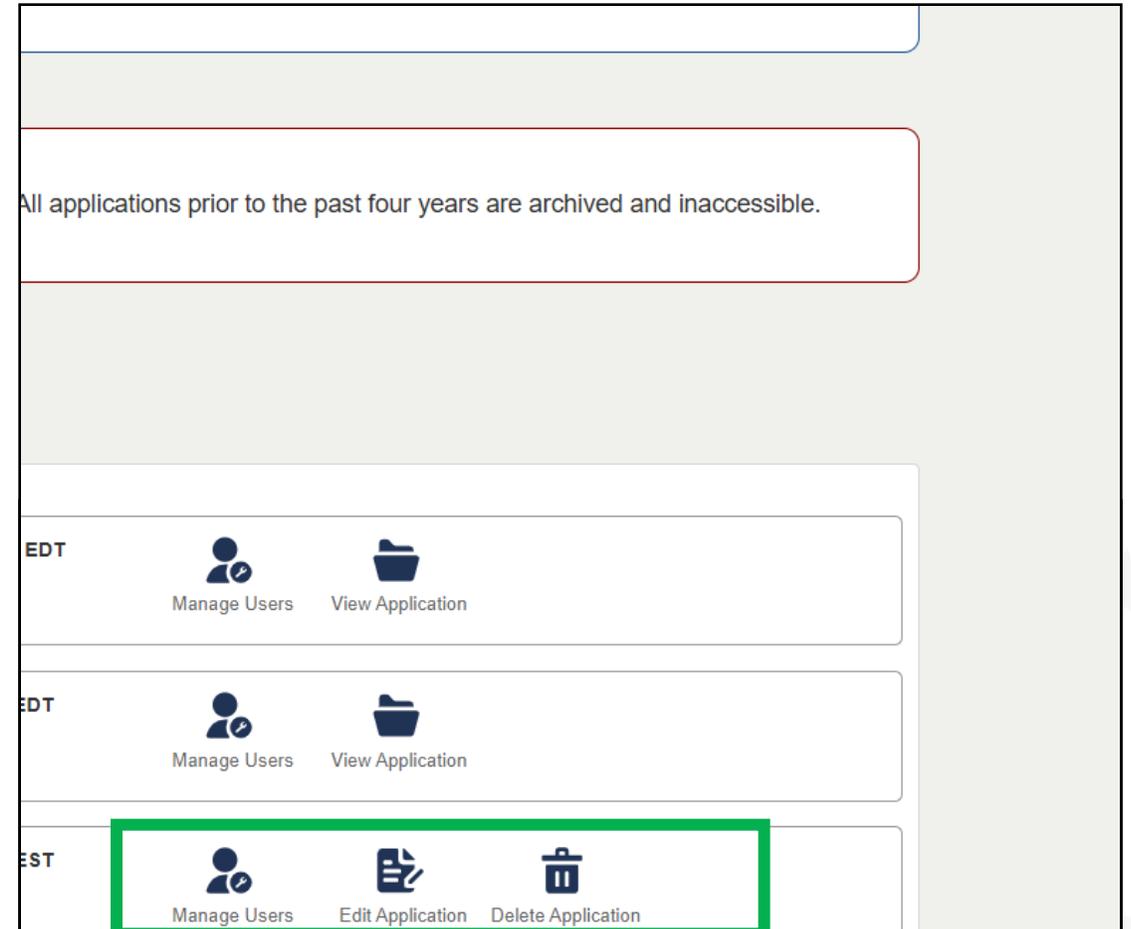
	Clay Farms Length Restricted Fields 202409191 Entity Name	02080 Portal ID	Submitted Status	Sep 26, 2024, 10:25 AM EDT Date Modified	Manage Users	View Application
	Clay Farms Length Restricted Fields 202409241 Entity Name	02089 Portal ID	Draft Status	Sep 25, 2024, 4:09 PM EDT Date Modified	Manage Users	View Application
	Clay Farms Length Restricted	02095	Draft	Nov 20, 2024, 2:38 PM EST		

Managing Applications

Step 2: Manage Users, Edit Application, or Delete Applications options are available for applications in process where the application window is still open.

Once an application window has closed for a VAPG program cycle, you will only be able to Manage Users and View Application for those impacted Projects.

Note: *If you need to withdraw a submitted application after the window closes, contact your state representative.*



Managing Applications

Step 3: Ready to start a new application? Click **'Apply now'** during an open application window.

Want to learn more about the program?

For more information about the VAPG program, we encourage you to visit the [Value-Added Producer Grants](#) website.

Do you have an active SAM Registration? ⓘ

In order to Submit your application for the VAPG program, an active SAM registration with an assigned Unique Entity ID (UEI) number is required. When starting an application, you will be prompted to enter the SAM registration expiration date and the assigned UEI number. It is recommended you start the registration process early. To register and for more information visit the [SAM.gov](#) website. Please note, the SAM registration process is **free** and can be completed on the **100% Free Official U.S. Government Website**.

Application window is open 12:00 PM EST Oct 14. Application window closes 12:00 PM EST Dec 26.

Application window now **open** until **12:00 PM EST Dec 26**. There are **15** days left in the application period.

**Ready to
apply?**

APPLY NOW

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.

Managing Applications

Step 4: Fill out all required fields on the 'First Things First' pop up and click the 'Save & Continue' Button

The screenshot shows a web application interface with a dark blue header bar containing the text "Welcome, RDTPS QASP25" and a close button (X). A white pop-up window titled "First Things First" is centered on the screen. The pop-up contains the following text and form elements:

Before we get you started on your application, we just need a few details to correctly save your application.

Please Note: You must be the Authorized Representative from the Applicant Entity with signing authority to start an application. If you are not the Authorized Representative and do not have the authority to enter into a contract with the United States Department of Agriculture for the Applicant Entity, please do not start an application. An Authorized Representative from the Applicant Entity with signing authority for the Applicant must create the application through their eAuthentication log in.

* Legal Name of Applicant Entity

* State where the Agricultural Commodity that is subject of the application is Produced/Harvested?

* Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)

Save & Continue

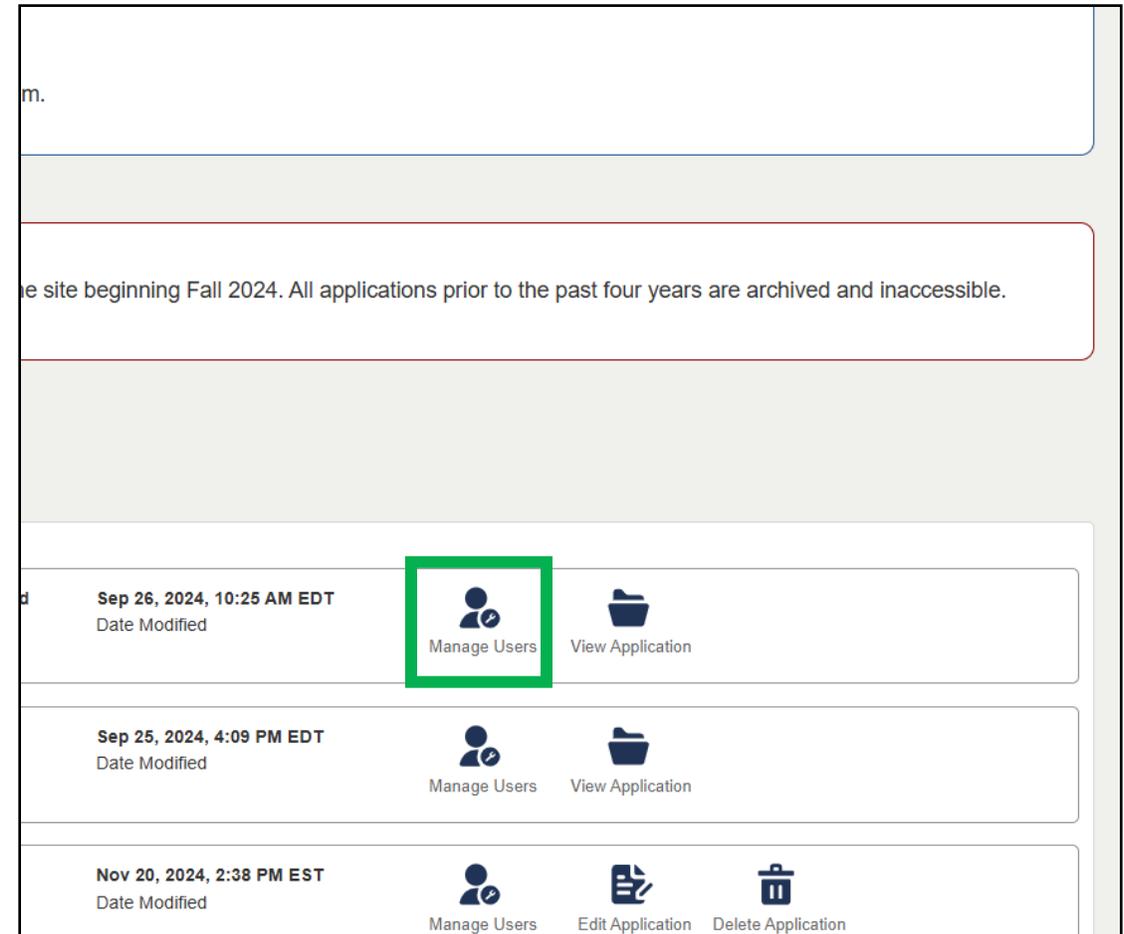
PRIVACY ACT NOTICE: United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA-RD) is collecting information for the purpose of assessing applications for the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. Please be aware that your decision to submit a VAPG application through the Grant Application Portal (GAP) is voluntary and that the information you provide to USDA-RD could be made available to sources outside of USDA-RD through the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) (FOIA). In addition, be aware that USDA-RD customarily makes public announcements describing the applications selected for award.

Collaborating with the 'Manage Users' Feature from the VAPG GAP Homepage

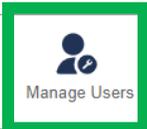
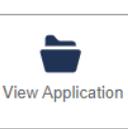
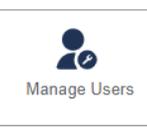
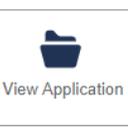
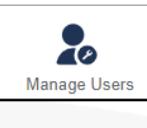
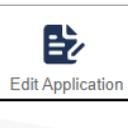
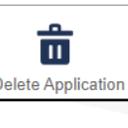
Collaborating with the 'Manage Users' Feature...

Step 2: Are you working on your application with a consultant, grant writer, technical assistance provider, or another representative from your Agricultural Business? You can provide editing access to the application by clicking the **'Manage Users'** tab and adding them to your application. You may also delete a user at any time through the **'Manage Users'** tab.

Note: All representatives and collaborators must have an active eAuth account to be added to your Project. If they don't, they can create one at eauth.usda.gov. Additional eAuth setup instructions are on page XXX of this User Guide.

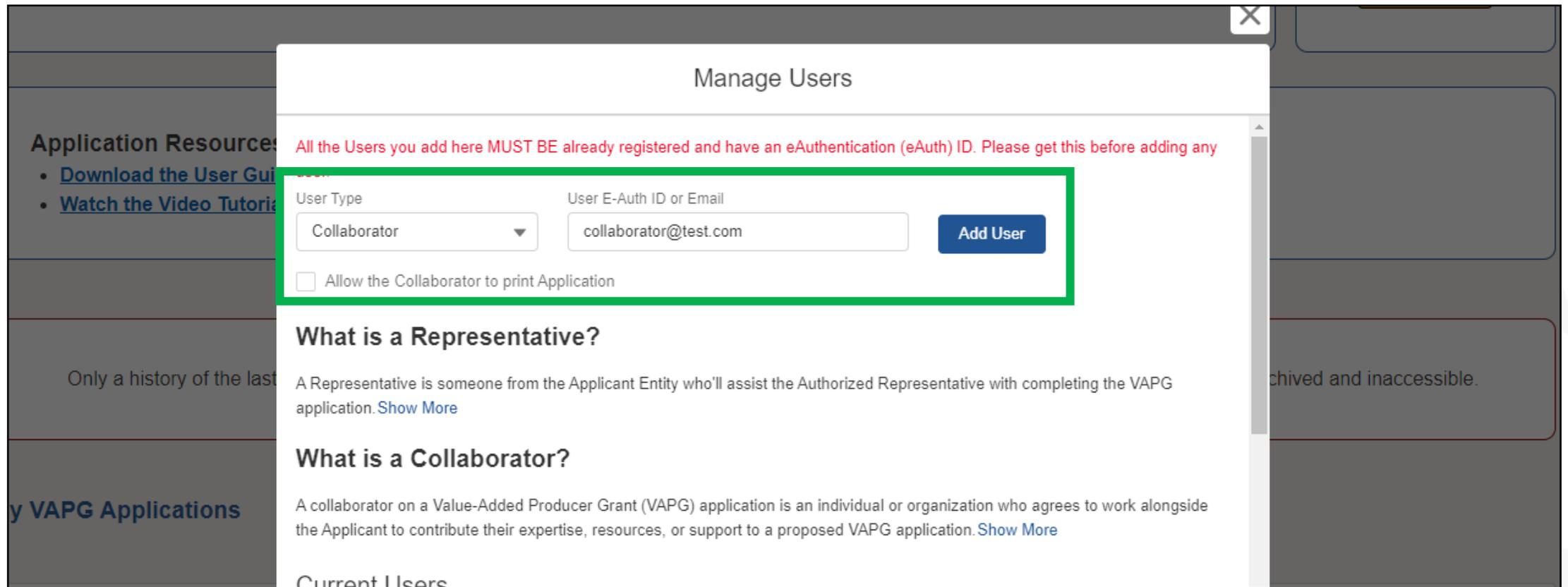


The screenshot displays a web application interface with a list of applications. The interface includes a search bar at the top, a notification box, and a table of application entries. The 'Manage Users' button for the first application is highlighted with a green box.

Date Modified	Manage Users	View Application	Edit Application	Delete Application
Sep 26, 2024, 10:25 AM EDT				
Sep 25, 2024, 4:09 PM EDT				
Nov 20, 2024, 2:38 PM EST				

Collaborating with the 'Manage Users' Feature...

Step 2: Assign users to the application by entering their eAuth ID or Login.gov email and selecting their role from the dropdown menu.



The screenshot displays a 'Manage Users' modal window. At the top, a red warning message states: "All the Users you add here MUST BE already registered and have an eAuthentication (eAuth) ID. Please get this before adding any". Below this, a form is highlighted with a green border. The form includes a 'User Type' dropdown menu set to 'Collaborator', a text input field for 'User E-Auth ID or Email' containing 'collaborator@test.com', and a blue 'Add User' button. A checkbox labeled 'Allow the Collaborator to print Application' is also present. Below the form, there are two informational sections: 'What is a Representative?' and 'What is a Collaborator?', each with a 'Show More' link. The background shows a sidebar with 'Application Resources' and 'Current Users' sections.

Collaborating with the 'Manage Users' Feature...

Step 3: You may assign Roles as a Representative or a Collaborator. We define the roles as follows:

What is a Representative?

A Representative is someone from the Applicant Entity who'll assist the Authorized Representative with completing the VAPG application. It could be an owner or employee but is not a Third-Party Contributor (See Collaborator Role for Third-Party). A Representative will not be able to submit the final application as this must be done by the Authorized Representative who started the application and who has signing authority for the Applicant Entity.

What is a Collaborator?

A collaborator on a VAPG application is an individual or organization who agrees to work alongside the Applicant to contribute their expertise, resources, or support to a proposed VAPG application. Collaborators can be experts in a relevant field or institution and their assistance with a VAPG application is strictly voluntary and arranged between an Applicant and the collaborator. An Applicant may revoke or remove collaborator access to an application at any time. The Applicant is responsible for any agreements or contracts it has entered into with the collaborator. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is not responsible for any agreements or contracts between the Applicant and the collaborator.

Collaborating with the 'Manage Users' Feature...

Step 4: Click 'Add User' to assign Representatives or Collaborators to your application. Once added, the Representatives or Collaborators will be able to access your application by logging into the VAPG GAP using <https://vapg.rd.usda.gov/>.

Note: Only the Authorized Representative can submit the final application. Representatives and Collaborators cannot complete the submission process.

Manage Users

Users you add here MUST BE already registered and have an eAuthentication (eAuth) ID. Please get this before adding users.

ator

User E-Auth ID or Email

collaborator@test.com

Add User

the Collaborator to print Application

Is a Representative?

ntative is someone from the Applicant Entity who'll assist the Authorized Representative with completing the VAPG application. [Show More](#)

Is a Collaborator?

tor on a Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) application is an individual or organization who agrees to work along with the Applicant to contribute their expertise, resources, or support to a proposed VAPG application. [Show More](#)

Users

Authorized Representative	winston.clay@usda.gov
e	User E-Auth ID

Completing an Application

Completing an Application

Step 1: Start a new Application using the ‘**Apply Now**’ tab or return to an application already started by selecting the ‘**Edit Application**’ tab.

Recommended you start the registration process early. To register and for more information visit the [SAM.gov](#) website. Please note, the SAM registration process is free and can be completed on the 100% Free Official U.S. Government Website.

Open 12:00 PM EST Oct 14. Application window closes 12:00 PM EST Dec 26.
Until 12:00 PM EST Dec 26. There are 15 days left in the application period.

Ready to apply?
APPLY NOW

For step-by-step support.
a visual walk-through of the system.

Dec 12, 2024, 8:20 AM PST Date Modified	 Manage Users	 View Application	
Dec 12, 2024, 8:22 AM PST Date Modified	 Manage Users	 Edit Application	 Delete Application

Completing an Application

Step 2: Complete the ‘First Things First’ module. If you are returning to the application, this is the only section within the Grant Application Portal where you can modify the Legal Name of Applicant Entity, the State where the Agricultural Commodity that is subject of the application is Produced/Harvested, or the Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN).

First Things First

Before we get you started on your application, we just need a few details to correctly save your application.

Please Note: You must be the Authorized Representative from the Applicant Entity with signing authority to start an application. If you are not the Authorized Representative and do not have the authority to enter into a contract with the United States Department of Agriculture for the Applicant Entity, please do not start an application. An Authorized Representative from the Applicant Entity with signing authority for the Applicant must create the application through their eAuthentication log in.

* Legal Name of Applicant Entity	* State where the Agricultural Commodity that is subject of the application is Produced/Harvested?
<input type="text" value="Peach Farms, LLC"/>	<input type="text" value="Alabama"/>
* Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)	
<input type="text" value="555999888"/>	

[Save & Continue](#)

Filling Out the Application Contacts Page

Filling Out the Application Contacts Page

Step 1: The First Name, Last Name, Organization, and Email for the Authorized Representative will auto populate from users eAuth account, and the First Things First pop up. Applicants will need to fill in the Title and Telephone number for the Authorized Representative.

Application Contacts

- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue
- Merit Evaluation
- Additional Documents

Authorized Representative

The Authorized Representative **must** be the individual from the Applicant Entity with signing authority for the Applicant. All VAPG applications must be initiated by the Authorized Representative of the Applicant Entity. If the Application was started by someone other than an Authorized Representative, the application must be deleted, and the Authorized Representative must start a new application under their eAuthentication log in. The Authorized Representative **will not** be able to start a new application until the previous one is deleted as there can only be one application per Applicant in a given program cycle.

The Authorized Representative does have the option to add Representatives or Collaborators to an application through the "Manage Users" option on the home screen, or the top right corner of the Application Contacts page.

First Name: Jill

Last Name: Farmer

Organization: Peach Farms, LLC

* Title: Owner

* Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Filling Out the Application Contacts Page

Step 2: Applicants may manage and add users using the ‘Add Users’ tab. This is the same process as described on page 18 of the User Guide.

The screenshot displays the 'Application Contacts' page. On the left is a 'Table of Contents' with a vertical list of menu items, each preceded by a blue circle icon. The 'Application Contacts' item is highlighted. The main content area on the right is titled 'Application Contacts' and 'Authorized Representative'. It contains explanatory text about the role of the Authorized Representative and a form with the following fields:

- First Name: Jill
- Last Name: Farmer
- Organization: Peach Farms, LLC
- Title: Owner (indicated by a red asterisk)

An 'Add User' button is located in the top right corner of the main content area, enclosed in a green rectangular box.

Filling Out the Application Contacts Page

Step 3: The Point of Contact on Matters Involving This Application can be the Authorized Representative, a Representative, or a Collaborator. Use the dropdown arrow to select the user. If you haven't added the desired user yet, you can do so as described in the previous screen. The information that isn't auto populated will need to be completed.

Point of Contact on Matters Involving This Application
If the desired Point of Contact is not listed in the dropdown selection, you may add a contact by selecting the "Add Users" button in the top right corner of the page.

* Contact
Jill Farmer , Authorized Representative

First Name: Jill
Last Name: Farmer

Organization: Peach Farms, LLC

* Title: Owner

* Telephone: 555-555-5555
Email: myemail@email.com

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of

Navigation: Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, Application Preview, Review & Submit

Filling Out Entity Details

Filling Out Entity Details

Step 1: Your 'Legal Name of Applicant Entity' and 'Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)' will populate from the 'First Things First' pop up. Applicants will need to complete the 'Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number' and the 'SAM Registration Expiration Date'. The 'SAM Registration', 'Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number', and 'Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)', **must** be for the Applicant Entity applying for the Value-Added Producer Grant.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details**
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds

Entity Details

Legal Name of Applicant Entity and Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) can only be modified by the AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE from Things First* popup when entering the application.

* Legal Name of Applicant Entity

Peach Farms, LLC

SAM Registration, Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number, and Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN), must be for the Applicant Entity applying for Value-Added Producer Grant.

* Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number

65546sd65406

* Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)

555999888

* SAM Registration Expiration Date ⓘ

12/31/2025

Filling Out Entity Details

Step 2: Provide the 'Applicant Address' and 'Congressional District'. Please enter your '**Congressional District**' in the format 001, 002, etc. You can look up your congressional district at [house.gov](https://www.house.gov).

Table of Contents <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Application Contacts○ Entity Details○ Application Details○ Applicant Type○ Value-Added Agricultural Product○ Work Plan & Budget○ Matching Funds○ Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue○ Next Evaluation	Applicant Address	
	*Street 123 Main	Street 2
	*City My Town	*County / Parish My County
	*State Alabama	Country United States
	*Zip Code 12345	
	Congressional District	
	*Congressional District - Applicant ⓘ 111	*Congressional District - Program / Project ⓘ 111

Filling Out Entity Details

Step 3: Applicants must certify to their 'Citizenship'. 'Applicant Demographic Information' is optional but is encouraged.

The screenshot shows a web-based application form. On the left is a vertical progress bar with 11 steps, each marked with a blue circle. The steps are: Entity Details (selected), Application Details, Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, Application Preview, and Review & Submit. Below the progress bar is a section titled 'Application Resources' with a link to 'Download the User Guide for step-by-step support.'

The main content area is titled 'Congressional District' and contains a text input field with the placeholder '(3 digits)'. Below this is a section titled 'Citizenship' with a disclaimer: '* I certify that the Applicant is more than 50% owned by individuals who are for permanent residence.' followed by a checkbox labeled 'Yes, I certify.' which is currently unchecked. Below that is a section titled 'Applicant Demographic Information' with a disclaimer: 'Disclaimer: The purpose of these questions is to gather race, ethnicity, and information provided will not be used when reviewing the application or who and are not required for the application to be considered as complete. The i design additional opportunities for program participation, and to monitor enf check all that apply. The information will be kept private to the extent permit'. This section contains two groups of checkboxes: 'What is the Applicant's race (Check all that apply)' with options for American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and White; and 'What is the Applicant's ethnicity?' with a radio button for Hispanic or Latino.

Filling Out the Application Contacts Page

Step 4: Answer all eligibility questions, including those related to debarment, suspension, or federal debt. Some questions may create eligibility concerns. If this situation applies to you and you have questions, please contact your State Representative using the **'Need Help?'** Icon on the bottom left.

The screenshot displays a web application interface for filling out an application. On the left, a vertical navigation menu lists the following steps: Entity Details, Application Details, Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, and Application Preview. The 'Entity Details' step is currently active. The main content area contains several eligibility questions, each with radio button options for 'Yes' and 'No'. The questions are:

- * Has an outstanding judgement been obtained against the Applicant by the United States in a Federal court (other than U.S. Tax Court)?
 Yes
 No
Applicants who are debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded from, or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs, have outstanding judgements issued by the United States in a Federal court, are delinquent on payments of Federal income taxes, or has been convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the past 24 months, are ineligible for assistance under this program in accordance with 7 CFR 4284.921.
- * Is the Applicant delinquent on payment of Federal income taxes?
 Yes
 No
- * Is the Applicant delinquent on any Federal debt?
 Yes
 No
- * Has the Applicant been convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the past 24 months?
 Yes
 No
- * Does the Applicant have any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have elapsed?
 Yes
 No

At the bottom of the form, there are four buttons: 'Need Help?' (highlighted with a green box), 'Save Progress & Exit', 'Save Page', and 'Back'. To the right of these buttons are 'Back' and 'Next' buttons.

Filling Out Application Details

Filling Out Application Details

Step 1: Complete the 'Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project' and 'Provide an Executive Summary' as detailed in the instructions.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details**
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Application Details

* Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project

Bottled Milk and Ice Cream

Examples of Project descriptions include but are not limited to, CSA Baskets, Packaged Meats, Bottled Milk and Ice Cream, Hot Sauce and Salsa, Vacuum Packed Halibut Fillets, Organic Vegetables, Hempcrete Wall Panels, Craft Spirits (Whisky, Bourbon, and Vodka), Locally Grown and Marketed Fruits and Vegetables, etc.

* Provide an Executive Summary of the Project that includes a brief description of the Project, the Project goals, and how you intend to use grant and Matching Funds. For more information, please visit 7 CFR 4284.931.

My project will...

Filling Out Application Details

Step 2: Applicants must provide 'Grant Details' about their Project to include 'What is your Grant Type', 'Requested Grant Amount', and 'Matching Funds' information.

Note: Applicants may only apply for either a Working Capital Grant or a Planning Grant. Depending on the option you choose, subsequent questions in the Grant Application Portal will be related to that option.

Grant Details

Planning Grant is a grant to facilitate the development of a defined program of economic planning activities for a value-added Project, and specifically for the purpose of paying for conducting and developing a Feasibility Study associated with the processing and/or marketing of a Value-Added Agricultural Product.

Working Capital Grant is a grant to provide funds to operate a value-added Project, specifically to pay for processing and/or marketing of the Value-Added Agricultural Product.

* What is your Grant Type? ⓘ

Working Capital Grant

Working Capital Grant is a grant to provide funds to operate a value-added Project, specifically to pay for processing and/or marketing of the Value-Added Agricultural Product.

* What is your Grant Type? ⓘ

Working Capital Grant

* Requested Grant Amount ⓘ * Matching Funds ⓘ

\$250,000 \$250,000

Total Project Cost

\$500,000

Filling Out Application Details

Step 3: 'Project Start Date' and 'Project End Dates' for your proposed Project must be entered. Your Project timeframe or grant period can be a maximum of 36 months in length from the date of award, depending on the complexity of your Project. Your proposed grant period should begin no earlier than the anticipated award announcement date in the annual notification and should end no later than 36 months following that date.

The screenshot displays a web-based application form. On the left side, there is a vertical progress bar with nine steps, each marked with a blue circle. The steps are: Application Details (selected), Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, and Application Preview. The main content area on the right contains a questionnaire with the following questions and options:

- No
Applicants who are debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded from, or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs, have outstanding judgements issued by the United States in a Federal court, are delinquent on payments of Federal income taxes, or has been convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the past 24 months, are ineligible for assistance under this program in accordance with 7 CFR 4284.921.
- * Is the Applicant delinquent on payment of Federal income taxes?
 Yes
 No
- * Is the Applicant delinquent on any Federal debt?
 Yes
 No
- * Has the Applicant been convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the past 24 months?
 Yes
 No
- * Does the Applicant have any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have elapsed?
 Yes
 No

At the bottom of the form, there are four buttons: 'Need Help?' (light blue), 'Save Progress & Exit' (light blue), 'Save Page' (dark blue), and 'Back' (light blue) and 'Next' (dark blue) buttons.

Filling Out Application Details

Step 4: Applicants must certify they are submitting only one application in response to this solicitation, including separate but related, Applicant entities or from a parent, subsidiary or affiliated organization in the 'Multiple Grant Submission' section. Applicants must also list all 'Prior Year VAPG Awards' they have received.

The screenshot displays a web application interface. On the left is a 'Table of Contents' sidebar with a vertical list of sections: Application Contacts, Entity Details, Application Details (highlighted with a blue circle), Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, and Additional Documents. The main content area is titled 'Multiple Grant Submission' and contains a red asterisked note: '* I am submitting only one application in response to this solicitation, including separate but related, Applicant entities or from a parent, subsidiary or affiliated organization.' Below this is a checked checkbox labeled 'Yes, I certify.' The next section is 'Prior Year VAPG Awards', featuring a red asterisked question: '* Has the Applicant received a prior year VAPG Award?' with radio buttons for 'Yes' (selected) and 'No'. There is a '+ Add Year' button and a dropdown menu currently showing '2022' with a 'Remove' button to its right. Below the dropdown is another red asterisked question: '* Type of Award (Working Capital or Planning Grant)' with a dropdown menu showing 'Working Capital Grant'. At the bottom, the text 'Award Year' is followed by '2022'.

Filling Out Application Details

Step 5: Applicants must disclose if they have a 'Current VAPG Award'. If an Applicant does have a 'Current VAPG Award', they are encouraged to work closely with their State Office to exhaust all current VAPG award funds and submit final financial and performance reports to the Agency by the application submission deadline. Failure to closeout a current grant by the application submission deadline will result in new application being deemed ineligible.

Progress Bar:

- Merit Evaluation
- Additional Documents
- Application Preview
- Review & Submit

Current VAPG Awards

If an Applicant has a current VAPG award at the time of the subsequent competition, the Applicant must exhaust all VAPG award funds and submit final financial and performance reports to the Agency by the application submission deadline for the subsequent VAPG competition. If VAPG award funds will not be exhausted by the subsequent VAPG application submission deadline, the Applicant must request a cancellation of the current VAPG award prior to the subsequent VAPG application submission deadline.

* Do you have an active VAPG award that has not been formally closed in accordance with the Program Regulation and the Financial Agreement?

Yes
 No

Please work closely with your State Office to exhaust all current VAPG award funds and submit final financial and performance reports by the application submission deadline. Failure to closeout your current grant by the application submission deadline will result in your new application being deemed ineligible.

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of the system.

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 1: Select your 'What is your Applicant Type' from the dropdown menu and complete all fields with an asterisk (*). Applicant types include **Agricultural Producer, Agricultural Producer Group, Farmer or Rancher Cooperative, and Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business**. Definitions for each are provided and you may only select one. If you are unsure which Applicant Type applies to you, contact your State Representative using the 'Need Help?' icon.

The screenshot shows a web application interface. On the left is a vertical 'Table of Contents' with blue circular icons next to the following items: Application Contacts, Entity Details, Application Details, Applicant Type (highlighted in blue), Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, and Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue. The main content area is titled 'Applicant Type' and contains the following text:

Please address eligibility requirements for your Applicant Type below. Please review 7 CFR 4284.920 and 7 CFR 4384.921, the definitions in 7 CFR 4284.903, and the annual funding Notice to address this section. All Applicants must provide the requested information for the appropriate Applicant Type.

Eligible Applicant Types Include:

Agricultural Producer means a for profit agricultural business, or entity that is owned and controlled by an individual, entity or Family Farm that produces an Agricultural Commodity through participation in the day-to-day labor, management, and field operations; or that has the legal right to harvest an Agricultural Commodity that is the subject of the VAPG Project.

Agricultural Producer Group means a non-profit membership organization that represents Agricultural Producers and whose mission includes working on behalf of Agricultural Producers and the majority of whose membership and board of directors is comprised of Agricultural Producers.

Farmer or Rancher Cooperative means a business owned and controlled by Agricultural Producers that is incorporated, or otherwise identified by the State in which it operates, as a cooperatively operated business. The Agricultural Producers, on whose behalf the Value-Added work will be done, must be identified by name or class.

Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business refers to a venture greater than 50 percent of the ownership and control of which is held by either; One or more Producers; or one or more entities, 100 percent of the ownership and control of which is held by one or more Producers. For purposes of definition, the term 'entity' means a partnership; a limited liability corporation; a limited liability partnership; and a corporation.

At the bottom of the main content area, there is a dropdown menu with the label '*What is your Applicant Type?' and the selected option 'Agricultural Producer'. The dropdown menu is highlighted with a green border.

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 2: Please disclose if the Applicant is a 'Tribal Entity' and supply the 'Name of the Tribal Entity' applying. The Agency will determine the Agricultural Producer status of Tribes or Tribal entities without regard to ownership of the commodity to which value will be added so long as the Tribal member participant, Tribal entity and/or Tribe own and control more than 50 percent of the Agricultural Commodity necessary for the Project.

Value-Added Agricultural Product

- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue
- Merit Evaluation
- Additional Documents
- Application Preview
- Review & Submit

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of

Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business refers to a venture greater than 50 percent of the ownership and control of which is held by either; One or more Producers; or one or more entities, 100 percent of the ownership and control of which is held by one or more Producers. For purposes of definition, the term 'entity' means a partnership; a limited liability corporation; a limited liability partnership; and a corporation.

*What is your Applicant Type?

Agricultural Producer

Tribal Entity

*Are you a Tribal Entity applying for the VAPG as an eligible Applicant Type?

Yes

No

*What is the name of your Tribal Entity?

Agricultural Producer

See definitions in 7 CFR 4284.903 for Agricultural Producer. Acknowledge that you meet the following requirements by certifying to the appropriate statements and providing the requested information.

Agricultural Producer Applicant Type

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 3: Agricultural Producer Applicant Types must disclose whether they are an individually owned entity or if the entity is owned by multiple individuals. All owners must be disclosed, and 100 percent of the entity ownership must be accounted for. All owners must meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

The screenshot shows a web application interface. On the left is a 'Table of Contents' sidebar with a vertical list of items: Application Contacts, Entity Details, Application Details, Applicant Type (highlighted with a blue circle), Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, and Merit Evaluation. The main content area is titled 'Agricultural Producer' and contains the following text: 'See definitions in 7 CFR 4284.903 for Agricultural Producer. Acknowledge that you meet the following requirements by certifying to the appropriate statements and providing the requested information.' Below this is a paragraph: 'If selected, and as a condition of the award, grant recipients must provide a copy of your organizational documents. (Examples: By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation or Organization) as well as any applicable licenses and inspections. Sole Proprietors may submit a copy of their IRS tax forms showing farm income.' There are two certification sections. The first is: '* I certify that I have the legal authority to carry out the purpose of the grant, and/or my business is in good standing in the State where it is incorporated and/or in the State that is the primary location of my business operations for the VAPG Project.' with a checked checkbox 'Yes, I certify.' The second is: '* Two Options (Must select one, but only one, if applying as an Agricultural Producer Applicant Type.)' followed by a dropdown menu. The dropdown is open, showing three options: 'I am an eligible Agricultural Producer and am the only owner of my business.' (selected with a checkmark), 'I am an eligible Agricultural Producer and am the only owner of my business.' (with a 'name' label to its right), and 'There are multiple owners of my business and 100 percent of them are eligible individual ...'. Below the dropdown is a text input field with the label 'Describe your role in day-to-day production of the agricultural commodity through participation in the day-to-day labor, management, and field operations and how...'

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 4: Agricultural Producer Applicant Types with multiple owners can use the 'Add Owner/Member' tab to add owners. As a reminder, 100 percent of the ownership of the Applicant entity must be accounted for and the individual owners must be Agricultural Producers.

See definitions in 7 CFR 4284.903 for Agricultural Producer. Acknowledge that you meet the following requirements by certifying to the appropriate statements and providing the requested information.

If selected, and as a condition of the award, grant recipients must provide a copy of your organizational documents. (Examples: By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation or Organization) as well as any applicable licenses and inspections. Sole Proprietors may submit a copy of their IRS tax forms showing farm income.

* I certify that I have the legal authority to carry out the purpose of the grant, and/or my business is in good standing in the State where it is incorporated and/or in the State that is the primary location of my business operations for the VAPG Project.

Yes, I certify.

* Two Options (Must select one, but only one, if applying as an Agricultural Producer Applicant Type.)

There are multiple owners of my business and 100 percent of them are eligible individual Agricultural Producers, or entities that are solely owned ...

* List full names of all owners or members of the Agricultural Producer owner Applicant organization and their individual percentage of ownership/membership in the table below. For each owner or member, please select 'Add Owner/Member' to enter their information.

[+ Add Owner/Member](#)

Total Ownership Percentage: 0%

* You have not added enough related Owner/Members at this time. Please add at least two Owner/Members associated to this Application.

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 5: Agricultural Producer Applicant Types must disclose if they are a Harvester and if they are, they must summarize their harvesting rights and operation. **Agricultural Producer Group, Farmer or Rancher Cooperative, and Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business** Applicant Types are not eligible to apply as Harvesters.

Work Plan & Budget

Matching Funds

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Merit Evaluation

Additional Documents

Application Preview

Review & Submit

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of

Please note: Harvesters are not eligible for Reserved Funds or Priority Points for a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, Veteran Farmer or Rancher, Operator of Small or Medium Sized Farms or Ranches structured as a Family Farm, or Farmer or Rancher Cooperative because Harvester operations do not meet the definitions for a Farm or Ranch.

***Is the Applicant a Harvester?**

Yes

No

*** Please summarize the harvesting rights and operation. Applicants may supply a copy of, or reference to, written contracts, rights-of-way, Memorandums of Understanding, license, or other documentation establishing "legal rights" to access and harvest the subject Agricultural Commodity. If your application is awarded, copies of these documents must be submitted to the agency as a condition of the award. Failure to provide these documents will result in your award being rescinded.**

Type...

Please provide any optional supporting documents

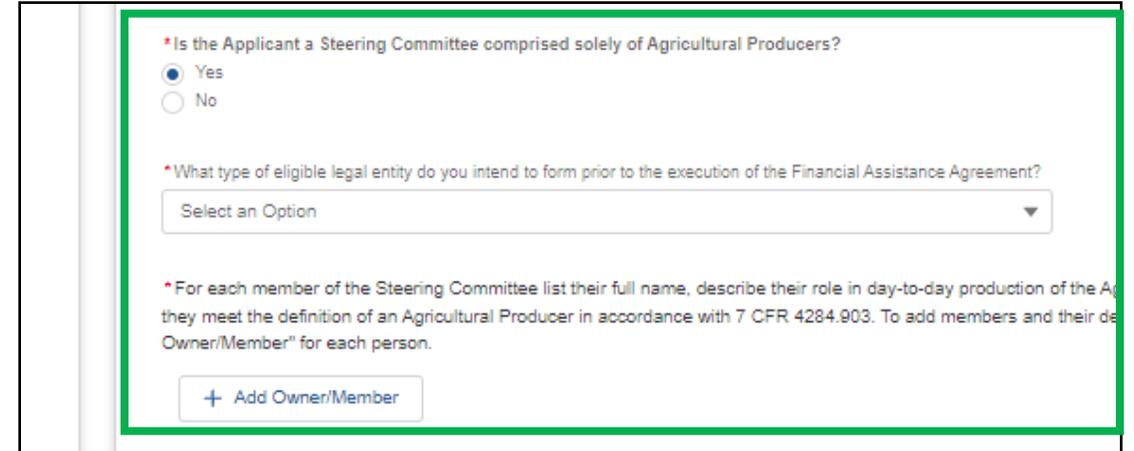
[Upload Files](#) Or drop files

*** I certify that I have the legal right to access and harvest more than 50 percent of the Agricultural Commodity that will be used for the value-added**

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 6: Agricultural Producer Applicant Types have the option of applying as a Steering Committee. If applying as a Steering Committee, the Applicant must disclose what type of eligible legal entity they intend to form prior to the execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement. 100 percent of the ownership/membership of the entity must be disclosed.

Note: *Steering Committees are not commonly applied for.*

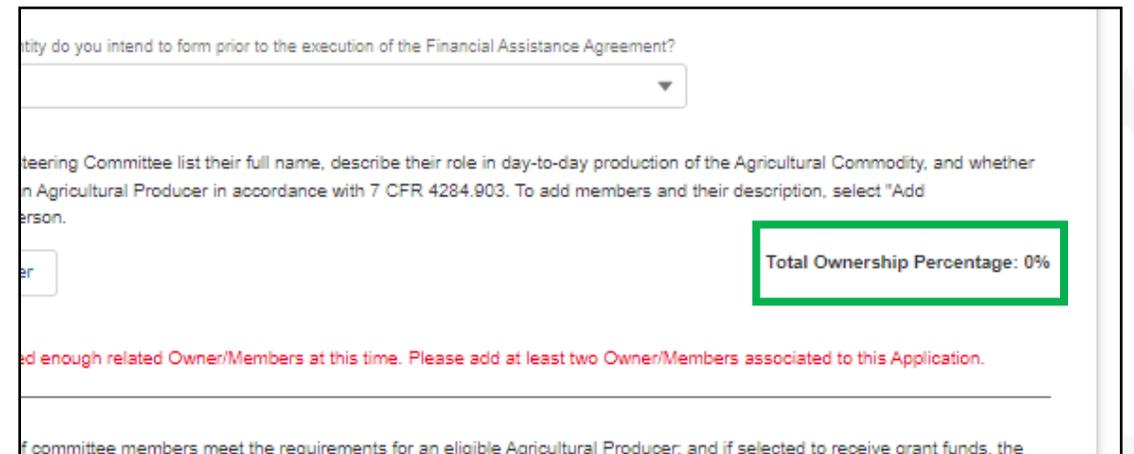


* Is the Applicant a Steering Committee comprised solely of Agricultural Producers?
 Yes
 No

* What type of eligible legal entity do you intend to form prior to the execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement?
Select an Option

* For each member of the Steering Committee list their full name, describe their role in day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity, and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer in accordance with 7 CFR 4284.903. To add members and their description, select "Add Owner/Member" for each person.

+ Add Owner/Member



entity do you intend to form prior to the execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement?
Select an Option

Steering Committee list their full name, describe their role in day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity, and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer in accordance with 7 CFR 4284.903. To add members and their description, select "Add Owner/Member" for each person.

Total Ownership Percentage: 0%

add enough related Owner/Members at this time. Please add at least two Owner/Members associated to this Application.

If committee members meet the requirements for an eligible Agricultural Producer, and if selected to receive grant funds, the

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 7: Agricultural Producer Group Applicant Types must disclose the number of individuals on the Governing Board and the total number of individuals on the governing board who are eligible Agricultural Producers. The total number of members, the number of members who are Agricultural Producers, and the number of participating members must be disclosed.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for an Agricultural Producer Group. On the left, a vertical navigation menu lists steps: Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, Application Preview, and Review & Submit. Below this is an 'Application Resources' section with links to a user guide and a video tutorial. The main content area contains a certification statement: 'I certify the majority (more than 50 percent) of the membership and board of directors is made up of Agricultural Producers who are eligible individual Agricultural Producers, or entities that are solely owned and controlled by eligible Agricultural Producers and are directly engaged in the production of the Agricultural Commodity to which value will be added for this Project.' A checked checkbox indicates 'Yes, I certify.' Below this are three sections of input fields: 'Governing Board' with questions about total individuals (5) and eligible Agricultural Producers (4); 'Member of the Agricultural Producer Group' with questions about total members (200) and eligible Agricultural Producers (198); and a question about participating members (198).

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of the system.

Governing Board

* I certify the majority (more than 50 percent) of the membership and board of directors is made up of Agricultural Producers who are eligible individual Agricultural Producers, or entities that are solely owned and controlled by eligible Agricultural Producers and are directly engaged in the production of the Agricultural Commodity to which value will be added for this Project.

Yes, I certify.

* What is the total number of individuals on the governing board?

5

* What is the total number of individuals on the governing board who are eligible Agricultural Producers?

4

Member of the Agricultural Producer Group

* What is your total number of members?

200

* What is your total number of members that are eligible Agricultural Producers?

198

* Of the total number of members that are eligible Agricultural Producers, what is the total number that will participate in the Project?

198

Selecting Your Applicant Type

Step 8: Agricultural Producer Group Applicant Types must provide information on the Participating Members either by Name or Class. If by name, all Participating Members must be identified, and all members must meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer. If listing by class, the Applicant must describe the role of the members in the day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

Entity Details

Application Details

Applicant Type

Value-Added Agricultural Product

Work Plan & Budget

Matching Funds

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Merit Evaluation

Additional Documents

* Identify by name or class (general description of type of producer) the members who will participate in the Project. Please select from the options below:

Member Name: Disclose all participating members by name to include their role in the production of the Agricultural Commodity and how they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

Member Class: Disclose all participating members by class and include a general description of all member's role (by class) in the production of the Agricultural Commodity and how they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

For each member (by name or class) describe their role in the day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

Please note, for the class of participating members, you must describe the role of the members (by class) in the day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

* Class of Members (Examples Include but not Limited to: Almond Producers, Salmon Fishermen, Cattle Ranchers)

* Describe by class the member's role in the production of the subject Agricultural Commodity through participation in the day-to-day labor, management, and field operations.

Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Applicant Type

Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Applicant Type

Step 1: Farmer or Rancher Cooperative

Applicant Types must disclose whether they are Legally Incorporated as a Farmer or Rancher Cooperative or Identified by the State in which it operates as a Farmer or Rancher owned and cooperatively operated business.

The total percentage of ownership shares owned by Agricultural Producers must be disclosed along with the number of eligible Agricultural Producer owners/members who will participate in the value-added Project.

Details on how the Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Organization's work on this Project will benefit the participating owner/members must be discussed.

Farmer or Rancher Cooperative

If selected, and as a condition of the award, grant recipients must provide a copy of your organizational documents (Organization) as well as any applicable licenses and inspections.

* I have legal authority to carry out the purpose of the grant, and my business is in good standing in the State where primary location of my business operations for the VAPG Project.

Yes, I certify.

* Applicant certifies by selecting one of the following that it is a business controlled by eligible Agricultural Producers

Legally Incorporated as a Farmer or Rancher Cooperative.

Identified by the State in which it operates as a Farmer or Rancher owned and cooperatively operated business

* State where Identified:

Alabama

* What is the percentage of the total ownership shares owned by Agricultural Producers?

55%

* How many eligible Agricultural Producers owner/members will participate in the value-added Project?

17

* Provide details on how the Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Organization's work on this Project will benefit the participants

Members will benefit by

Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Applicant Type

Step 2: Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Applicant Types must provide information on the Participating Owners/Members either by Name or Class. If by name, all participating Owners/Members must be identified, and all owner/members must meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer. If listing by class, the Applicant must describe the role of the owners/members in the day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

Participating Owner/Member Information

* For each cooperative Owner/Member (by name or class) describe their role in day-to-day production of the Agricultural Commodity and whether they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer. Please select and option below:

Owner/Member Name: Disclose all participating owner/members by name to include their role in the production of the Agricultural Commodity and how they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

Owner/Member Class: Disclose all participating owner/members by class and include a general description of all owner/members role (by class) in the production of the Agricultural Commodity and how they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer.

[+ Add Owner/Member](#)

Agricultural Producer Certification

* I certify the Applicant owner/members, or class, identified are those Agricultural Producers on whose behalf the Project work will be done.

Yes, I certify.

Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Applicant Type

Step 3: Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Applicant Types must provide details on how the Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Venture's work on this Project will benefit the participating owners/members.

<p>Table of Contents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Application ContactsEntity DetailsApplication DetailsApplicant TypeValue-Added Agricultural ProductWork Plan & BudgetMatching FundsExpansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue	<h3>Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business</h3> <p>If selected and as a condition of the award, grant recipients must provide a copy of your organizational documents (Examples: By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation) as well as any applicable licenses and inspections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* I have legal authority to carry out the purpose of the grant, and my business is in good standing in the State where it is incorporated and/or in the State of my primary location of my business operations for the VAPG Project. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, I certify.* I certify we are a legal entity in which more than 50 percent of the financial ownership and voting control is held by eligible individual Agricultural Producers held by an entity/entities solely owned and controlled by Agricultural Producer, and we are directly engaged in the production of the Agricultural Commodity which value will be added for Project. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, I certify.* I certify the owners listed comprise 100 percent of the ownership of the organization, including both Agricultural Producer owners and owners that are Agricultural Producers. If any owners are entities themselves, the ownership of those entities is also identified, by name or class (general description of product or type of producer) and confirmed as eligible. Additional verification of the status and participation of these parties may be requested. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, I certify.* Provide details on how the Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Venture's work on this Project will benefit the participating owners/members. <input type="text" value="Our project will benefit the participating owners/members"/>
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Farmer or Rancher Cooperative Applicant Type

Step 4: Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Applicant Types must provide a list by name of all owners, their percentage of financial ownership of the organization, their percentage of voting control in the organization, and whether they are an eligible Agricultural Producer.

Note: More than 50 percent of the ownership and the voting control must be held by those who meet the definition of an Agricultural Producers.

Provide a list by name of all owners, their percentage of financial ownership of the organization, their percentage of voting control in the organization, and whether they are an eligible Agricultural Producer.

Please Note: A majority of the ownership and voting control needs to be made up of Agricultural Producers.

+ Add Owner/Member

Owner/Member First Name	Owner/Member Last Name	Total Percentage Ownership	Total Percentage of Voting Control
Jill	Farmer	40%	40%
* Does the Owner/Member meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer in accordance with 7 CFR4284.903? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No			
* Describe Owner/Member's role in the production of the subject Agricultural Commodity through participation in the day-to-day labor, management operations and how they meet the definition of an Agricultural Producer in accordance with 7 CFR 4284.903. I participated in the farming and harvesting of the...			
> Julie Farmer			

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Step 1: Specify if the Project involves a 'Food Related Product'.

Note: *The USDA gathers information for the purpose of Project reporting. Your answer to this question does not impact eligibility or scoring. Value-Added Agricultural Products derived from Agricultural Commodities do not need to be Food Related to qualify for VAPG.*

Value-Added Agricultural Product

Food Related Product

Disclosure: The USDA gathers information for the purpose of Project reporting. Your answer to this question does not imp

*** Is your Value-Added Agricultural Product an Agricultural Food Product? ⓘ**

Yes, my product is intended for human consumption.

No, my product is not intended for human consumption.

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Step 2: Disclose whether your Value-Added Agricultural Product is alcohol or hemp related.

Note: Upon award selection, if the Project will produce and market a Value-Added Agricultural Product in the industries of wine, beer, distilled spirits or other alcoholic merchandise, a valid TTB Permit must be provided.

If the Project will market a Value-Added Agricultural Product made from hemp, a copy of a valid producer license issued by a State, Tribe, or USDA must be provided, as applicable in accordance with 7 CFR part 990.

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) Requirements

Please visit TTB's website for more information. If you are not in compliance with TTB's requirements, you are not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another Applicant. If you are found to be in noncompliance with TTB's operational reporting or tax requirements, the Agency may terminate the award and its terms and conditions.

* Is the Value-Added Agricultural Product alcohol related?

Yes

No

Hemp Related Projects

Please visit the AMS Hemp Production Program website for more information. If you are not in compliance with AMS's requirements, you are not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another Applicant. If you have received a VAPG award, you are found to be in noncompliance with AMS's requirements, the Agency may terminate the award and its terms and conditions.

* Is the Value-Added Agricultural Product hemp related?

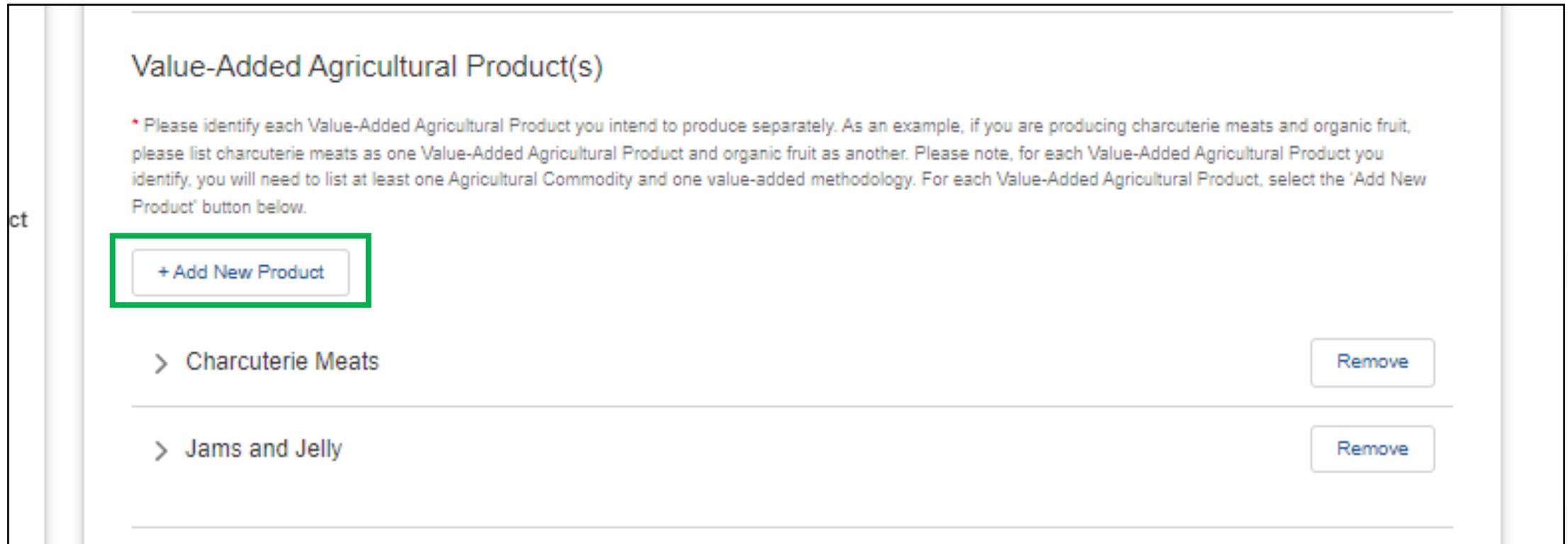
Yes

No

Applicants must comply with other applicable Federal laws. Applicants who are proposing to produce a Value-Added Agricultural Product must provide an active producer license issued from an approved State, Tribal, or Federal plan.

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Step 3: Provide information about the Value-Added Agricultural Product. If you are producing more than one Value-Added Agricultural Product, you may list them separately by using the **'Add New Product'** tab. Each product added must meet eligibility criteria.



The screenshot shows a web interface for adding value-added agricultural products. The title is "Value-Added Agricultural Product(s)". Below the title is a red asterisk followed by instructions: "Please identify each Value-Added Agricultural Product you intend to produce separately. As an example, if you are producing charcuterie meats and organic fruit, please list charcuterie meats as one Value-Added Agricultural Product and organic fruit as another. Please note, for each Value-Added Agricultural Product you identify, you will need to list at least one Agricultural Commodity and one value-added methodology. For each Value-Added Agricultural Product, select the 'Add New Product' button below." A green box highlights the "+ Add New Product" button. Below this, there are two entries: "Charcuterie Meats" and "Jams and Jelly", each with a "Remove" button to its right. The word "ct" is visible on the left side of the form.

ct

Value-Added Agricultural Product(s)

* Please identify each Value-Added Agricultural Product you intend to produce separately. As an example, if you are producing charcuterie meats and organic fruit, please list charcuterie meats as one Value-Added Agricultural Product and organic fruit as another. Please note, for each Value-Added Agricultural Product you identify, you will need to list at least one Agricultural Commodity and one value-added methodology. For each Value-Added Agricultural Product, select the 'Add New Product' button below.

+ Add New Product

> Charcuterie Meats Remove

> Jams and Jelly Remove

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

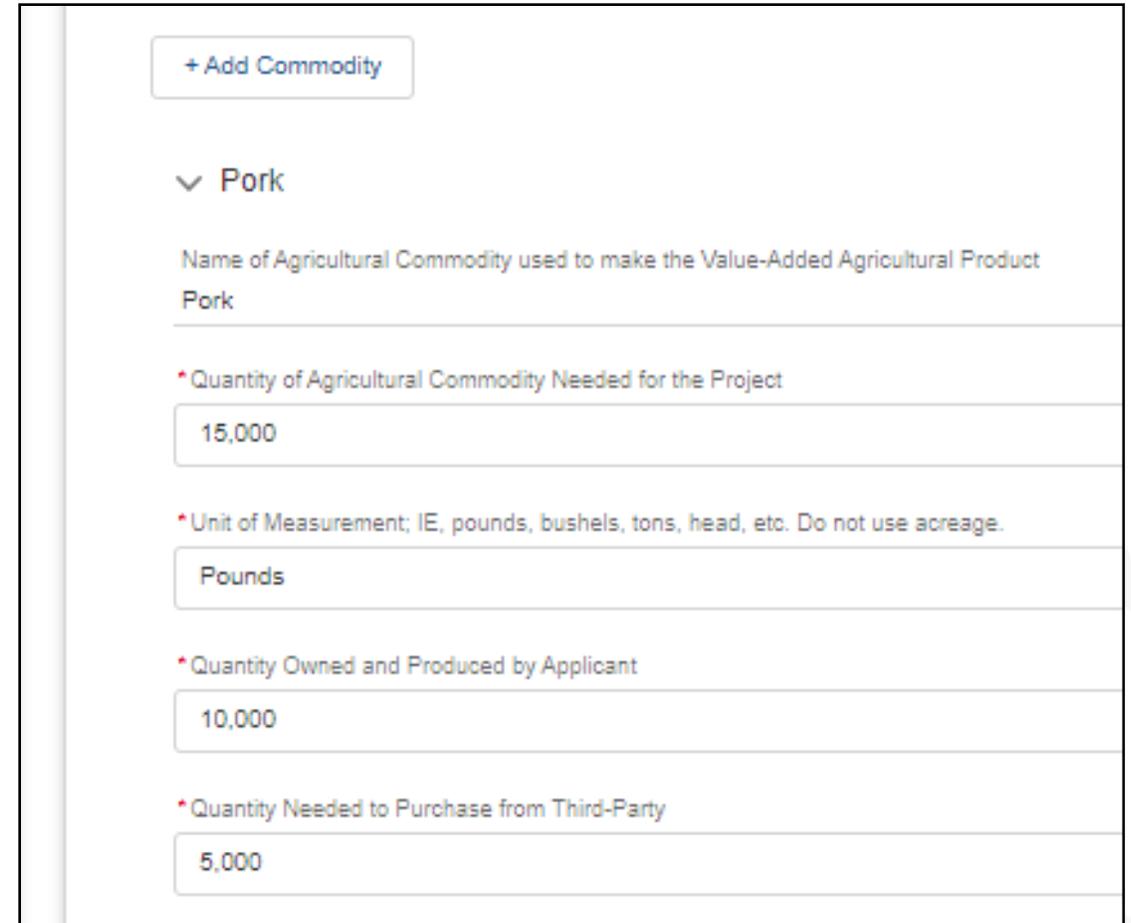
Step 4: For each Value-Added Agricultural Product you intend to produce as a result of the Project, you must provide the Agricultural Commodity it is produced from. Do so by using the '+Add Commodity' tab under each of the Value-Added Agricultural Products you have listed.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for describing a Value-Added Agricultural Product. On the left is a sidebar with navigation options: Application Contacts, Entity Details, Application Details, Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product (selected), Additional Documents, Application Preview, and Review & Submit. The main content area is titled 'Agricultural Commodity' and contains the following text: '* List each raw Agricultural Commodity(ies), including the unit of measure (i.e., pounds, bushels, tons, head, etc.) that will be used as the input(s) for this Value-Added Agricultural Product. Identify only if you own and produce more than 50 percent of the subject Agricultural Commodity needed for the Project.' Below this text is a red-bordered button labeled '+ Add Commodity'. A red error message is displayed below the button: '* You have not added any Agricultural Commodities to this Product. Please add at least one Agricultural Commodity associated to this Product.' A dialog box titled 'Add Commodity' is open in the foreground, featuring a text input field with 'Pork' entered and two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Add'. The dialog box also contains the instruction: '* Name of Agricultural Commodity used to make the Value-Added Agricultural Product'.

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Step 5: Working Capital Applicants must provide the 'Quantity of Agricultural Commodity Needed for the Project', 'Unit of Measurement', 'Quantity Owned and Produced by Applicant', and the 'Quantity Needed to Purchase from Third-Party'.

Note: Applicants must own, and producer more than 50 percent of the Agricultural Commodity needed for the Project.



+ Add Commodity

▼ Pork

Name of Agricultural Commodity used to make the Value-Added Agricultural Product
Pork

* Quantity of Agricultural Commodity Needed for the Project
15,000

* Unit of Measurement; IE, pounds, bushels, tons, head, etc. Do not use acreage.
Pounds

* Quantity Owned and Produced by Applicant
10,000

* Quantity Needed to Purchase from Third-Party
5,000

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Step 6: For each Value-Added Agricultural Product listed and for each Agricultural Commodity you are producing it from, you must select the Value-Added Methodology that best fits your proposed Value-Added Agricultural Product and explain the method of process used.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product**
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

> Pork Remove

Value-Added Methodology

* Based on the definitions in 7 CFR 4284.903, choose the Value-Added Methodology below that best fits your proposed Value-Added Agricultural Product and explain the method of process used. You may select only one methodology for each product.

Change in Physical State (Examples include, but are not limited to, strawberries into jam, milk into cheese, wheat into flour, wool into clothing or rugs, livestock into packaged meat).

* Explain the method or process used to add value to your agricultural product, and how the Change in Physical State or form of the product enhances its value.

I will process the pork into...

Produced in a Manner that Enhances the Value of the Agricultural Commodity (Examples include, but are not limited to, organic carrots, eggs produced from free-range chickens).

Describing Your Value-Added Agricultural Product

Step 7: Complete all Agricultural Commodity Certifications.

- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue
- Merit Evaluation
- Additional Documents
- Application Preview
- Review & Submit

Agricultural Commodity Certifications

All Applicants must acknowledge and agree to the following by certifying to each:

- * I/We do not grow/raise the subject Agricultural Commodity(ies) under contract for another entity, nor contract out the production of the subject Agricultural Commodity(ies) to another entity.
 Yes, I certify.
- * I/We currently grow/raise and own the majority (more than 50 percent) of the subject raw Agricultural Commodity(ies) to which value will be added in this Project.
 Yes, I certify.
- * I/We will maintain ownership of the subject Agricultural Commodity(ies) from its raw state through the production, marketing and sale of the Value-Added Agricultural Product during the Period of Performance.
 Yes, I certify.
- * I/We certify the majority of the raw Agricultural Commodity that will be used as the input for the Project is produced in the United States including the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or American Samoa.
 Yes, I certify.

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of the system.

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital Applications)

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 1: Select the appropriate Working Capital application type for your Project and respond to all corresponding questions. Explanations for the four available Working Capital options are provided.

Note: Some options are dependent on prior selection in the Grant Application Portal and may not be selectable (grayed out). As an example, if you listed a grant amount of \$50,000 or more on the Application Details page, you will not be able to chose 'Simplified Application of Less Than \$50,000' as shown in the diagram below.

Work Plan & Budget

Eligible Working Capital Application Types:

Emerging Market - Is for a new market, either geographically or demographically, that has been supplied by the Applicant or less. Any Applicant that has produced and marketed the Value-Added Agricultural Product for less than two (2) years an Emerging Market. Food Safety expenses are eligible for Emerging Market Projects.

Food Safety - Applicants seeking food safety related activities. To qualify for the Food Safety simplified application, must be for Food Safety related activities.

Market Expansion - Means a Project in which the Agricultural Producer Applicant seeks to expand the market either geographically or new customers in existing markets. Value-Added Agricultural Product produced and marketed by the Applicant for at least two (2) years at time of application or new customers in existing markets. Food Safety expenses are eligible for Market Expansion Projects.

Simplified Application of Less Than \$50,000 - All Applicant Types submitting a simplified Working Capital Grant application (including Food Safety) of LESS THAN \$50,000.

Please Note: Agricultural Producer Groups, Farmer or Rancher Cooperative, and Majority-Controlled Producer Based Entities are eligible for Market Expansion grants. Only Agricultural Producer Applicant Types are eligible for Market Expansion. For Applicants requesting \$50,000 or more are not eligible for Simplified Applications less than \$50,000. If you intend to apply for a grant of \$50,000 or more, you must update your requested grant amount on the Application Details page under Requested Grant Amount.

* Type of Working Capital Application

- Emerging Market
- Emerging Market
- Food Safety
- Market Expansion
- Simplified Application of Less Than \$50,000

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 2: Emerging Market applications must include an independent Feasibility Study, and a Business Plan completed specifically for the proposed Value-Added Project. The Applicant cannot have supplied the proposed product, either geographic or demographic market for more than two years at time of application submission.

The screenshot shows a web-based application form. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with eight items, each preceded by a blue circle icon: 'Value-Added Agricultural Product', 'Work Plan & Budget', 'Matching Funds', 'Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue', 'Merit Evaluation', 'Additional Documents', 'Application Preview', and 'Review & Submit'. The 'Work Plan & Budget' item is highlighted. Below the menu is a section titled 'Application Resources'. The main content area on the right contains the following fields and instructions:

- Information on Feasibility Study and Business Plan requirements, please visit program Definitions at 7 CFR 4284.903 and Application Requirements at 7 CFR 4284.931.
- * Upload Feasibility Study: A dashed box containing an 'Upload Files' button and the text 'Or drop files'.
- * First Name of Feasibility Study Author: A text input field containing 'Joe'.
- * Last Name of Feasibility Study Author: A text input field containing 'Contractor'.
- * Date Feasibility Study was completed: A date input field containing '12/12/2024' with a calendar icon on the right.
- * Upload Business Plan: A dashed box containing an 'Upload Files' button and the text 'Or drop files'.
- * Provide a summary description of your new product and/or markets and summarize the results of your Feasibility Study and Business Plan. Below this is a text input field starting with 'My description of...'.

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 3: Food Safety applications that demonstrate they meet the eligibility requirements for Food Safety will automatically be considered for Food Safety reserved funds. Applicants must certify that more than 50 percent of the related budget expenses are for Food Safety related activities. Applicants must describe the need or requirement for Food Safety related training, certifications, and/or supplies and equipment for a post-harvest Value-Added Agricultural Product. Applicants must also discuss how their Food Safety related Value-Added Project will reach a new customer base, enter into a new market, or reach new customers through either the Emerging Market or Market Expansion requirements.

The screenshot shows a web-based application form. On the left is a vertical sidebar with a list of steps: Application Contacts, Entity Details, Application Details, Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget (highlighted), Matching Funds, and Expansion of Customer Base and. The main content area is titled 'Work Plan & Budget' and contains the following text:

* I certify and understand I am applying for a simplified Food Safety Working Capital Grant and more than 50 percent of the related budget expenses must be for Food Safety related activities. I understand that I am not required to provide a Feasibility Study and/ or a Business Plan. I also understand that this does not change the merit evaluation or scoring elements and that I must demonstrate the expected increases in customer base and revenue returns to the producer Applicants supplying the majority of the Agricultural Commodity for the Project.

Yes, I certify.

* The Applicant must describe the need or requirement for Food Safety related training, certifications, and/or supplies and equipment for a post-harvest Value-Added Agricultural Product.

Project will

* Applicants must discuss how their Food Safety related Value-Added Project will reach a new customer base, enter into a new market, or reach new customers through either the Emerging Market or Market Expansion requirements. Agricultural Producer Groups, Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives and Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Ventures are not eligible for Market Expansion.

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 4: Market Expansion (Agricultural Producers only) Projects are for an existing Value-Added Agricultural Product that has been produced and successfully marketed for at least two years by the Applicant at the time of application submission. Market Expansion Applicants must provide a Business and/or Marketing Plan and must summarize their history of producing and marketing the subject Value-added Agricultural Product and summarize the results of their Business or Marketing Plan.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget**
- Matching Funds

Market Expansion

* I am an Agricultural Producer Applicant seeking a Working Capital Grant of \$50,000 or more for a Market Expansion Project for an existing Value-Added Agricultural Product that I have produced and successfully marketed for at least two years at time of application submission.

Yes
 No

What date was the Value-Added Agricultural Product first marketed for sale?

* Sale Date

Select Date 

In lieu of an independent Feasibility Study for this Project, I am submitting a Business Plan or Marketing Plan for the Value-Added Project.

* Upload Business Plan or Marketing Plan

 Upload Files Or drop files

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 5: Simplified Application of Less Than \$50,000 are eligible for all four Applicant types. Applicants must discuss how their Value-Added Project will reach a new customer base, enter into a new market, or reach new customers either through the Emerging Market or Market Expansion requirements. However, Agricultural Producer Groups, Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives and Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Ventures are not eligible for Market Expansion and must describe how they are entering into an Emerging Market. Applicants for this type of Working Capital Application do not need to provide a Feasibility Study or Business Plan.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product

Simplified Application of Less Than \$50,000

* I certify and understand I am applying for a Working Capital Grant of less than \$50,000 and understand that I am not required to provide a Feasibility Study or Business Plan. I understand that this does not change the merit evaluation or scoring elements and that I must demonstrate the expected increase in sales and revenue returns to the Agricultural Producer Applicants supplying the majority of the Agricultural Commodity for the Project.

Yes, I certify.

* Applicants must discuss how their Value-Added Project will reach a new customer base, enter into a new market, or reach new customers either through the Emerging Market or Market Expansion requirements. Agricultural Producer Groups, Farmer or Rancher Cooperatives and Majority-Controlled Producer Based Business Ventures are not eligible for Market Expansion.

My project will

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 6: Regardless of Working Capital Application type, all Applicants must provide a detailed Work Plan and Budget narrative that shows how the Project's goals will be accomplished, including a narrative description of the eligible activities and the tasks associated with those activities; a detailed budget breakdown of the estimated costs allocated to those activities and tasks; identification of the Key Personnel responsible for each of the activities and tasks; timeframes for completion of the activities and tasks; identification of the sources and uses of grant and Matching Funds for all activities and tasks; and a Period of Performance that meets start and end date requirements.

Work Plan & Budget

* You must provide a detailed work plan and budget narrative that shows how the Project's goals will be accomplished; activities and the tasks associated with those activities; a detailed budget breakdown of the estimated costs allocated to those activities and tasks; identification of the Key Personnel responsible for each of the activities and tasks; timeframes for completion of the activities and tasks; identification of the sources and uses of grant and Matching Funds for all activities and tasks; and a Period of Performance that meets start and end date requirements. This section will also be scored as part of the proposal Merit Evaluation criterion 3 Work Plan and Budget.

Note: Information provided in this section will also be scored as part of the proposal Merit Evaluation criterion 3 Work Plan and Budget.

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 7: Upload required documents and itemized expenses using the ‘**Add Expenses**’ button. Please follow the instructions as provided in the Grant Applications Portal. There is no limit to how many expenses you may add. However, each expense must be for eligible purposes and the explanation for the expense must be thoroughly described.

The screenshot displays the 'Work Plan & Budget' section of the Grant Applications Portal. On the left, a vertical navigation menu lists several steps: 'Work Plan & Budget' (highlighted with a blue circle), 'Matching Funds', 'Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue', 'Merit Evaluation', 'Additional Documents', 'Application Preview', and 'Review & Submit'. Below this menu is an 'Application Resources' section with a link to 'Download the User Guide for step by step support'. The main content area on the right lists eligible expense categories: Advertising (Social Media, Facebook, Google, Billboards, Print), Website Development and Hosting, Transportation Expenses for the Post Processing of the Value-Added Agricultural Product (shipping, mileage), and Supplies. It also provides examples of eligible Food Safety expenses (must be post-harvest activities related to the Value-Added Agricultural Product) that can be included with a Working Capital Grant but are not limited to: Employee/Visitor Signage, Pest Control for Post-Harvest Processing Facilities, Food Safety Training, and Food Safety Certification. A note states: 'For a list of ineligible expenses, please visit 7 CFR 4284.926.' A button labeled '+ Add Expenses' is highlighted with a green rectangular box. Below this, two expense items are listed: 'Commercial Kitchen Rental' and 'Supplies', each with a 'Remove' button to its right.

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 8: For each expense, list how it will be paid for (Grant Funds or Matching Funds). Ensure all expenses align with grant or matching cost eligibility.

Note: Review your budget carefully, as this section will impact both eligibility and scoring. Program staff are available through the ‘**Need Help**’ icon if you have questions concerning the eligibility of expenses.

Supplies

Grant Funds

If a portion of this expense will be paid for with Grant Funds, please include the amount.

Matching Funds

If a portion of this expense will be paid for with Matching Funds, please include the amount in one of the following categories:

Common Forms of Matching Funds:

In-Kind Agricultural Commodity ⓘ	<input type="text" value="\$200"/>
In-Kind Labor ⓘ	<input type="text" value="\$0"/>
Applicant Cash ⓘ	<input type="text" value="\$0"/>

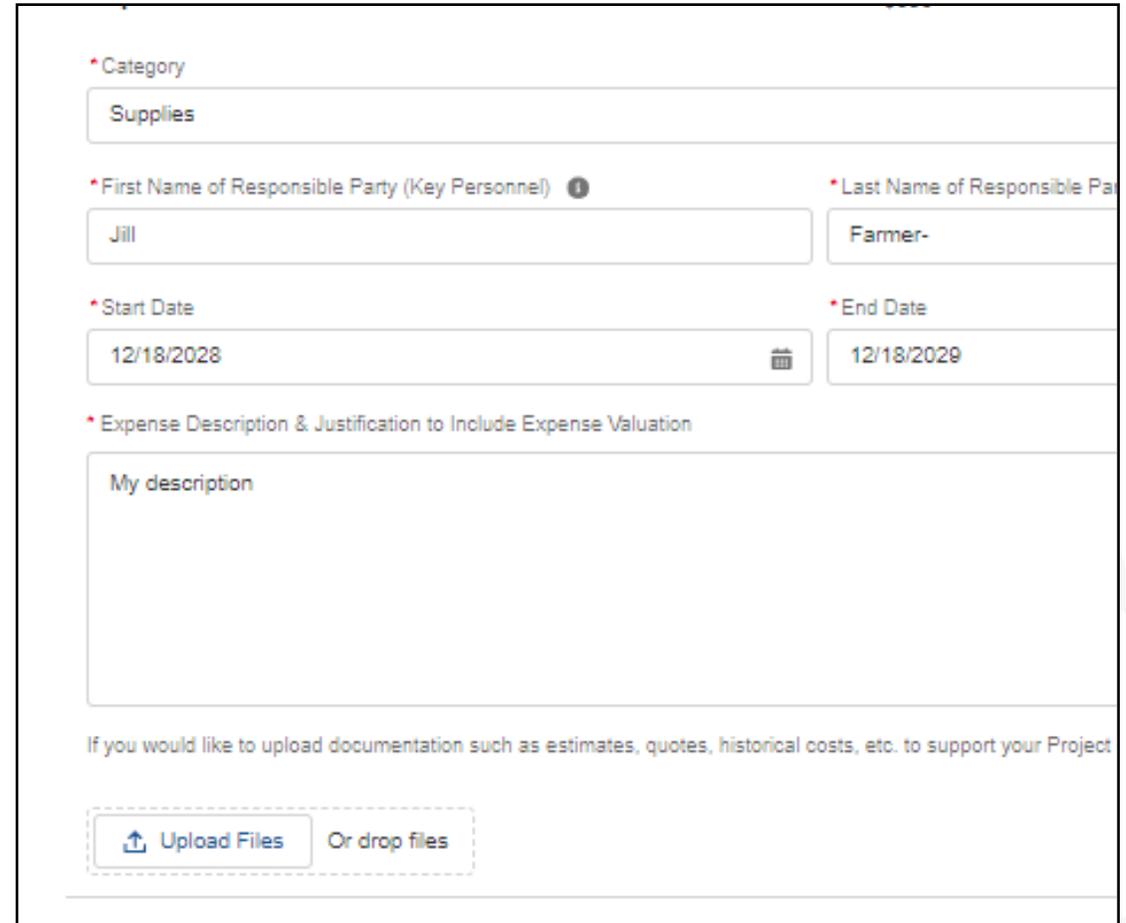
Less Common forms of Matching Funds:

Third-Party In-Kind Labor ⓘ	<input type="text" value="\$0"/>
Third-Party Cash ⓘ	<input type="text" value="\$0"/>
Applicant Approved Loan or Line-of-Credit ⓘ	<input type="text" value="\$0"/>

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 9: For each expense, list the category it will be paid from, the Key Personnel responsible for the task, the start and end date for the activity, and included a thorough description & justification for the expense to include an expense valuation.

Note: *If you would like to upload documentation such as estimates, quotes, historical costs, etc. to support your Project expenses, you may do so using the 'Upload Files' tab.*



The screenshot shows a web form with the following fields and content:

- Category:** Supplies
- First Name of Responsible Party (Key Personnel):** Jill
- Last Name of Responsible Party:** Farmer-
- Start Date:** 12/18/2028
- End Date:** 12/18/2029
- Expense Description & Justification to Include Expense Valuation:** My description

Below the description field, there is a note: "If you would like to upload documentation such as estimates, quotes, historical costs, etc. to support your Project". At the bottom, there is a button labeled "Upload Files" with an upward arrow icon, followed by the text "Or drop files".

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 10: In the Budget Summary, ensure that you've added adequate expenses to account for the amount listed on the Application Details page in Grant and Matching Funds. You'll receive a red error message if your amounts don't match.

Note: If you need to adjust your requested Grant or Matching Funds amount, please return to the Application Details page to do so.

Budget Summary

Expense	Grant Funds	Match Funds	Total Expense
Commercial Kitchen Rental	\$200	\$100	\$300
Supplies	\$350	\$50,200	\$50,550
Shipping	\$150	\$150	\$300
Marketing	\$300	\$550	\$850
Total Project Costs	\$1,000	\$51,000	\$52,000

Total Expenses Breakdown

Grant Funds Expenses	\$1,000
The total amount of expenses entered as coming from the Grant Funds must equal the previously disclosed amount: \$49,999. From Application	
Match Total Expenses	\$51,000
The Total amount of expenses entered must be equal to the previously disclosed Matching Funds amount entered in your Application Details Page. Please review and correct accordingly.	
Total Project Expenses	\$52,000

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Working Capital)

Step 11: Complete all certifications in the Use of Working Capital Funds Certification section.

Work Plan & Budget

- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue
- Merit Evaluation
- Additional Documents
- Application Preview
- Review & Submit

Application Resources

- [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.
- [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of the system.

Use of Working Capital Funds Certification

* I certify that Working Capital funds will only be used to pay eligible Project operational costs directly related to the processing and/or marketing of a Value-Added Agricultural Product. See 7 CFR 4284.925 for examples of eligible Working Capital activities.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify the proposed Project does NOT include costs for ineligible activities, as illustrated at 7 CFR 4284.926.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify my proposed Project does NOT include costs associated with a Conflict of Interest for owners, employees, officers, agents, or their Immediate Family members having a personal, professional, financial or other interest in the outcome of the Project, including organizational conflicts, or conflicts that restrict open and free competition for unrestrained trade; except as provided for in 7 CFR 4284.925(a) and (b) relating to Applicant or family member in-kind contribution of Matching Funds for eligible activities.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify and understand that applications that propose ineligible expenses of more than 10 percent of total Project Costs will be deemed ineligible to compete for funds. Applications containing ineligible expenses totaling less than 10 percent of total Project Costs must remove those expenses from the Project budget or replace with eligible expenses, if selected for an award.

Yes, I certify.

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Planning Grant Applications)

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Planning Grant)

Step 1: Planning Grant Applicants, Complete the Work Plan and Budget. Ensure your responses are thorough and that you respond to all questions with an asterisk (*). Applicants must provide a Work Plan & Budget description that outlines how the funds will be used and must be for the development of a Feasibility Study, Business Plan and/or a Marketing Plan.

Application Details

Applicant Type

Value-Added Agricultural Product

Work Plan & Budget

Matching Funds

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Merit Evaluation

Additional Documents

Application Preview

Yes, I certify.

* I certify the proposed Project does NOT include costs for ineligible activities, as illustrated at 7 CFR 4284.926.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify the Project does NOT include costs associated with a Conflict of Interest for owners, employees, officers, agents, or their Immediate Family members having a personal, professional, financial or other interest in the outcome of the Project, including organizational conflicts, or conflicts that restrict open and free competition for unrestrained trade; except as provided for in 7 CFR 4284.925 (a) and (b) relating to Applicant or family member in-kind contribution of Matching Funds for eligible activities, and limited to 25 percent of Total Project Costs.

Yes, I certify.

Work Plan & Budget

* Insert Work Plan narrative: Planning Grant funds may be used to pay for a Qualified Consultant to conduct and develop a Feasibility Study, Business Plan, and/or Marketing Plan associated with the processing and/or marketing of a Value-Added Agricultural Product.

Type...

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Planning Grant)

Step 2: Planning Grant Applicants - When completing the 'Itemized Expense' section, Planning Grant Applicants may request funds to pay for the development of a Feasibility Study, Business Plan, or Marketing Plan. The budget can be for one, all, or any combination of these three items. It is most common that Applicants apply for a Feasibility Study and Business Plan.

The screenshot shows a web application interface with a sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The sidebar contains a list of menu items: 'Application Details', 'Applicant Type', 'Value-Added Agricultural Product', 'Work Plan & Budget', 'Matching Funds', 'Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue', 'Merit Evaluation', 'Additional Documents', and 'Application Preview'. The 'Work Plan & Budget' item is highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Activity Task Breakdown' and contains the following text: 'Planning Grant funds can be used to pay a Qualified Consultant to develop a Feasibility Study, Business Plan, and/or a Marketing Plan. VAPG Project funds can be used to pay for all three or any combination of them. Planning Grant funds cannot pay for Working Capital activities.' Below this is a bulleted note: '* For Planning Grants, please select the expense items you wish to include (Feasibility Study, Business Plan, and/or a Marketing Plan). Provide a breakdown for the total Project Costs of the grant proposal in the budget table. For each expense, you must identify if it will be paid for with grant, Matching Funds, or both. Your total grant amount, Matching Fund amount, and total Project Cost must equal what you listed on the Application Details Page. Matching Funds must be verified on the Matching Funds Page. For each document that will be developed as a result of this Project, include the category it will be expensed from, the responsible party overseeing the activity, a start and end date specific to the expense item that falls within the Period of Performance, a detailed explanation/clarification, and include the basis for the valuation (such as vendor quote, contract, etc.).' At the bottom of the main content area, there is a link: 'For a list of ineligible expenses, please visit 7 CFR 4284.926.' Below the link is a list of three checkboxes: 'Feasibility Study', 'Business Plan', and 'Marketing Plan'. The 'Feasibility Study' checkbox is highlighted with a green rectangular box.

Application Details

Applicant Type

Value-Added Agricultural Product

Work Plan & Budget

Matching Funds

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Merit Evaluation

Additional Documents

Application Preview

Activity Task Breakdown

Planning Grant funds can be used to pay a Qualified Consultant to develop a Feasibility Study, Business Plan, and/or a Marketing Plan. VAPG Project funds can be used to pay for all three or any combination of them. Planning Grant funds cannot pay for Working Capital activities.

* For Planning Grants, please select the expense items you wish to include (Feasibility Study, Business Plan, and/or a Marketing Plan). Provide a breakdown for the total Project Costs of the grant proposal in the budget table. For each expense, you must identify if it will be paid for with grant, Matching Funds, or both. Your total grant amount, Matching Fund amount, and total Project Cost must equal what you listed on the **Application Details Page**. Matching Funds must be verified on the **Matching Funds Page**. For each document that will be developed as a result of this Project, include the category it will be expensed from, the responsible party overseeing the activity, a start and end date specific to the expense item that falls within the Period of Performance, a detailed explanation/clarification, and include the basis for the valuation (such as vendor quote, contract, etc.).

For a list of ineligible expenses, please visit [7 CFR 4284.926](#).

Feasibility Study

Business Plan

Marketing Plan

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Planning Grant)

Step 3: Planning Grant - for each expense, list the category it will be paid from, the Key Personnel responsible for the task, the start and end date for the activity, and included a thorough description & justification for the expense to include an expense valuation.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget**
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Expense Item Total \$15,100

* Category

* First Name of Responsible Party (Key Personnel) i * Last Name of Responsible Party

* Start Date 📅 * End Date 📅

* Expense Description & Justification to Include Expense Valuation

To develop a

Completing the Work Plan and Budget (Planning Grant)

Step 4: In the Budget Summary, ensure that you've added adequate expenses to account for the amount listed on the Application Details page for Grant and Matching Funds. You'll receive a red error message if your amounts do not match.

Note: If you need to adjust your requested Grant or Matching Funds amount, please return to the Application Details page to do so.

Examples of eligible Food Safety expenses (must be post-harvest activities related to the Value-Added Agricultural Product) that can be included in a Working Capital Grant but are not limited to:

- Employee/Visitor Signage
- Pest Control for Post-Harvest Processing Facilities
- Food Safety Training
- Food Safety Certification

For a list of ineligible expenses, please visit 7 CFR 4284.926.

[+ Add Expenses](#)

* You have not added any Expenses at this time. Please add at least one Expense associated to this Application.

Budget Summary

Expense	Grant Funds	Match Funds	Total Expense
Total Project Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0

Total Expenses Breakdown

Grant Funds Expenses	\$0
The total amount of expenses entered as coming from the Grant Funds must equal the previously disclosed amount: \$125,000. From Application Details Page.	
Match Total Expenses	\$0
The Total amount of expenses entered must be equal to the previously disclosed Matching Funds amount entered in your Application Details Page. Please review and correct accordingly.	
Total Project Expenses	\$0

Understanding Matching Funds Requirements

Understanding Matching Funds Requirements

Step 1: Validate your Matching Funds on the Matching Funds tab. The Grant needs to be matched with at least \$1 in Matching Funds for every \$1 in Grant requested.

Note: *If you need to adjust your requested Grant or Matching Funds amount, please return to the Application Details page to do so.*

You must provide all of the information requested and demonstrate and confirm the eligibility of the source and in-kind contributions; and the availability of both cash and in-kind contributions during the proposed Period of Performance. Matching Funds must meet the definition requirements for Matching Funds and Conflict of Interest. Do not include projected income that cannot be verified as available.

If grant funds are awarded, Applicants will be required to verify the availability of cash match, loan or line of credit prior to the execution of the grant agreement. Failure to verify the availability of Matching Funds may result in the suspension of the grant.

If you have questions about your Project budget or eligible use of grant and/or Matching Funds, please contact your Project Manager.

Verification of Matching Funds: Third-Party Cash

Applicant must provide the name of the third-party providing the cash, amount of cash to be donated, and the date of contribution (month/day/year) corresponding to the Period of Performance proposed in the work plan and budget, or the date the Matching Funds will be made available to the Project. As a reminder, donations of goods, services, or time are not eligible for Matching Funds Contribution and must be verified as Third-Party In-kind match.

Total Third-Party Cash: \$100

The Verification of Third-Party Cash Matching Funds has not been completed. Please disclose all Source of Funds needs to total: \$100.

+ Add Third-Party

Understanding Matching Funds Requirements

Step 2: Return to the 'Itemized Task Expenses' section of the 'Work Plan & Budget' page if edits are needed to your pledged Matching Funds.

Work Plan & Budget

* You must provide a detailed work plan and budget narrative that shows how the Project's goals will be accomplished, including a narrative description of the eligible activities and the tasks associated with those activities; a detailed budget breakdown of the estimated costs allocated to those activities and tasks; identification of the Key Personnel responsible for each of the activities and tasks; timeframes for completion of the activities and tasks; identification of the sources and uses of grant and Matching Funds for all activities and tasks; and a Period of Performance that meets start and end date requirements. Please note that information provided in this section will also be scored as part of the proposal Merit Evaluation criterion 3 Work Plan and Budget.

Itemized Task Expenses

* Provide a breakdown for the total Project Costs of the grant proposal in the budget table. For each expense, you must identify if it will be paid for with grant, Matching Funds, or both. Your total grant amount, Matching Fund amount, and total Project Cost must equal what you listed on the **Application Details Page**. Matching Funds must be verified on the **Matching Funds Page**. For each expense associated with the Project, please use the "Add Expenses" button provided below. For each expense that will be completed as a result of this Project, include the category it will be expensed from, the responsible party overseeing the activity, a start and end date specific to the expense item that falls within the proposed Period of Performance, a detailed explanation/clarification, and include the basis for the valuation (unit cost and source, such as vendor quote, documented historical cost, etc.).

Examples of eligible expenses for a Working Capital Grant include but are not limited to:

- Processing Labor
- Commercial Kitchen Rental
- Co-Packer Expenses
- Packaging (Vacuum-Packages, Jars, Labels, etc.)
- Ingredients

Understanding Matching Funds Requirements

Step 3: Complete all verifications and 'Matching Funds Certifications' for Matching Funds.

> TP Cash Provider #1 Remove

Matching Funds Certifications

* I certify that the cost-share Matching Funds for the Project will be spent in advance of grant funding, such that for every dollar of grant funds disbursed, not less than an equal amount of Matching Funds will have been expended prior to submitting the request for reimbursement.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify that if Matching Funds are proposed in an amount exceeding the grant amount, those Matching Funds will be spent in advance of grant funding at a proportional rate equal to the match-to-grant ratio identified in the proposed budget.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify that I will not substitute any cash match identified and credited for to in-kind once the award is made and I understand that the agency will not approve any such request.

Yes, I certify.

* I certify that Applicant or third-party Matching Funds contributions in the form of Agricultural Commodity, time contributed to the Project, or other goods or services, have been characterized as in-kind contributions.

Expanding Customer Base & Increasing Revenue

Expanding Customer Base & Increasing Revenue

Step 1: Provide details about your expanded customer base and increased revenue (Both Working Capital and Planning Grant Options)

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue**
- Merit Evaluation
- Additional Documents

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

You must cite one or more relevant sources to support the response statements and data below. Responses must be supported by Project specific analysis, such as a Feasibility Study, Marketing Plan, or Business Plan developed for the Project and included with this application. For Working Capital Grant applications that do not require submission of a Feasibility Study, Market Plan, or Business Plan, responses must identify a relevant authority source or independent basis for response data provided.

* Discuss the estimated expansion of customer base resulting from the Project, including a baseline of current customers for the commodity or Value-Added Agricultural Product, and an estimated target number of customers that will result from the Project.

Type...

* Discuss the estimated amount of increased revenue resulting from the project that will be available to the Applicant Agricultural Producers of the Agricultural Commodity, including a baseline of current revenues from the sale of the Agricultural Commodity or Value-Added Agricultural Product, and an estimated target number of increased revenues that will result from the Project.

Type...

Expanding Customer Base & Increasing Revenue

Step 2: Enter anticipated revenue and any job creation information (Working Capital applications only).

The screenshot shows a multi-step application process. The left sidebar contains a vertical list of steps, each with a blue circle icon. The current step, 'Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue', is highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Please provide the following information:' and contains four input fields, each preceded by an asterisk. The first field is for 'Current baseline of customers'. The second field is for 'As a result of the Project, what is the new customer baseline (current baseline of customers + new customers)?'. The third field is for 'Current baseline of revenue to Agricultural Producers'. The fourth field is for 'As a result of the Project, what is the new anticipated revenue to the Agricultural Producers (current baseline of revenue + anticipated increase of revenue)?'. Below these fields is a section titled 'Jobs Created and Saved as a Result of the Project' with a sub-header. The text below the sub-header explains that applicants must provide specific jobs estimates and provides instructions for estimating the number of jobs created or saved. It defines 'Jobs Created' as jobs directly related to the VAPG project and 'Jobs Saved' as existing jobs that would have been lost without VAPG funding. It also provides instructions for counting part-time and seasonal jobs.

Application Contacts

Entity Details

Application Details

Applicant Type

Value-Added Agricultural Product

Work Plan & Budget

Matching Funds

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Merit Evaluation

Additional Documents

Application Preview

Review & Submit

Please provide the following information:

* Current baseline of customers

Input Number

* As a result of the Project, what is the new customer baseline (current baseline of customers + new customers)?

Input Number

* Current baseline of revenue to Agricultural Producers

Input Number

* As a result of the Project, what is the new anticipated revenue to the Agricultural Producers (current baseline of revenue + anticipated increase of revenue)?

Input Number

Jobs Created and Saved as a Result of the Project

Applicants must provide specific jobs estimates anticipated as a result of the VAPG Project. Please use the following instructions for estimating the number of jobs created or saved as a result of the project:

Jobs Created – Jobs created refers to the jobs created by the VAPG applicant that are directly related to, a result of, and attributed to the VAPG project funded by USDA Rural Development. Jobs created are generally located at the project site.

Jobs Saved – Jobs saved refers to existing jobs (in terms of FTEs) where it can be documented that without VAPG project funding, the jobs would have been lost. Not all existing jobs are jobs saved.

Count 2 part-time jobs as 1 full-time job and count 3 seasonal jobs as 1 full-time job. If part-time and/or seasonal jobs add up to a fraction, round up to the next

Navigating the Merit Evaluation Process

Navigating the Merit Evaluation Process

Step 1: Follow the instructions as provided in the Merit Evaluation section of the Grant Application Portal and complete all Merit Evaluation questions with clear, detailed responses.

Table of Contents

- Application Contacts
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Product
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue
- Merit Evaluation**
- Additional Documents
- Application Preview

Merit Evaluation

The Agency will rank and select applications for funding based on the scores for each proposal Merit Evaluation criterion. All Applicants must provide the requested information, and you may also summarize relevant portions of Feasibility Studies, Business and/or Marketing Plans, or other third-party sources, to support your projects expectations. For each criterion, you must demonstrate how the Project has merit and provide rationale for the likelihood of success. Responses that do not address all aspects of the criterion in a meaningful way, or that do not convey relevant Project information will receive lower scores. Please view the Agency's annual notification for a detailed breakdown of the scoring in the Merit Evaluation section.

Merit Evaluation Criterion 1 - Nature of the Proposed Venture

For the following sections you should reference Project-specific Feasibility Studies, Business and/or Marketing Plans, third-party data or previous business experience producing or marketing the Value-Added Agricultural Product or similar product, or experience in similar markets.

Applicants must describe the technological feasibility, operational efficiency, profitability, and economic sustainability of the Project. Applications that demonstrate a high likelihood of success in these areas will receive higher points. In response to this criterion, Working Capital Grant Applicants must provide accurate and factual information for the Project that demonstrates a viable Project ready to be implemented upon award.

Technological Feasibility (Up to 10 points)

* Describe the technological feasibility of the Project (i.e. is the product currently being manufactured somewhere, what is the size constraint, is product in test phase versus full capacity, is recipe formulated, existing versus new technology, etc.). Include discussion of the value-added process; the Applicant's expectations for sufficient Agricultural Commodity as well as the value to be added to the Agricultural Commodity through the value-added process; potential markets and distribution channels; Applicant's experience in marketing the proposed or similar product; and any other relevant information that supports the feasibility of the Project.

(i.e. is the product currently being manufactured somewhere, what is the size constraint, is product in test phase versus full capacity, is recipe formulated, existing versus new technology, etc.)

Navigating the Merit Evaluation Process

Step 2: Ensure all elements of each question are addressed. For each criterion, you must demonstrate how the Project has merit and provide rationale for the likelihood of success. Responses that do not address all aspects of the criterion in a meaningful way, or that do not convey relevant Project information will receive lower scores. Please view the Agency's annual notification for a detailed breakdown of the scoring in the Merit Evaluation section.

Entity Details

Application Details

Applicant Type

Value-Added Agricultural Product

Work Plan & Budget

Matching Funds

Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue

Merit Evaluation

Additional Documents

Application Preview

sources, to support your projects expectations. For each criterion, you must demonstrate how the Project has merit and provide rationale for the likelihood of success. Responses that do not address all aspects of the criterion in a meaningful way, or that do not convey relevant Project information will receive lower scores. Please view the Agency's annual notification for a detailed breakdown of the scoring in the Merit Evaluation section.

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(i.e. is the product currently being manufactured somewhere, what is the size constraint, is product in test phase versus full capacity, is recipe formulated, existing versus new technology, etc.)

Navigating the Merit Evaluation Process

Step 3: Apply for priority points where eligible.

Note: *Grayed-out options indicate areas where you are ineligible for the priority point category due to previous answer in the Grant Application Portal.*

As an example, Harvesters are not eligible for Reserved Funds or Priority Points for a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, Veteran Farmer or Rancher, Operator of Small or Medium Sized Farms or Ranches structured as a Family Farm, or Farmer or Rancher Cooperative because Harvester operations do not meet the definitions for a Farm or Ranch.

Merit Evaluation Criterion 6 - Priority Point Consideration

Priority Points (Up to 5 points)

Eligible Applicants may apply for priority points if their applications: propose Projects that create or increase opportunities for Beginning Ranchers, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, Veteran Farmers or Ranchers, or Operators of Small- or Medium-sized Farms are structured as a Family Farm; or propose Mid-Tier Value Chain Projects; or are a Farmer or Rancher Cooperative.

Applicants that demonstrate that they meet the eligibility requirements for Beginning, Veteran, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmers or Rancher Value Chain priority will automatically be considered for reserved funds. Applicants can only be considered for one priority point category reserved fund category.

Applicants may qualify for 5 priority points in one of the categories listed below. Choose only one category and provide the supporting documents indicated for that single category to demonstrate eligibility.

Please note: Harvesters are not eligible for Reserved Funds or Priority Points for a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially-Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, Veteran Farmer or Rancher, Operator of Small or Medium Sized Farms or Ranches structured as a Family Farm, or Farmer or Rancher Cooperative because Harvester operations do not meet the definitions for a Farm or Ranch.

* Which Priority Points category are you eligible for? (Select One)

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

* In the table below, please select if the owner is a Beginning Farmer or Rancher. By selecting "Yes", you are certifying that you the owner is a Beginning Farmer or Rancher.

If you are not the only owner of the Applicant entity and you need to add an owner, please return to the Applicant Type page to correct/add additional owners/ownership.

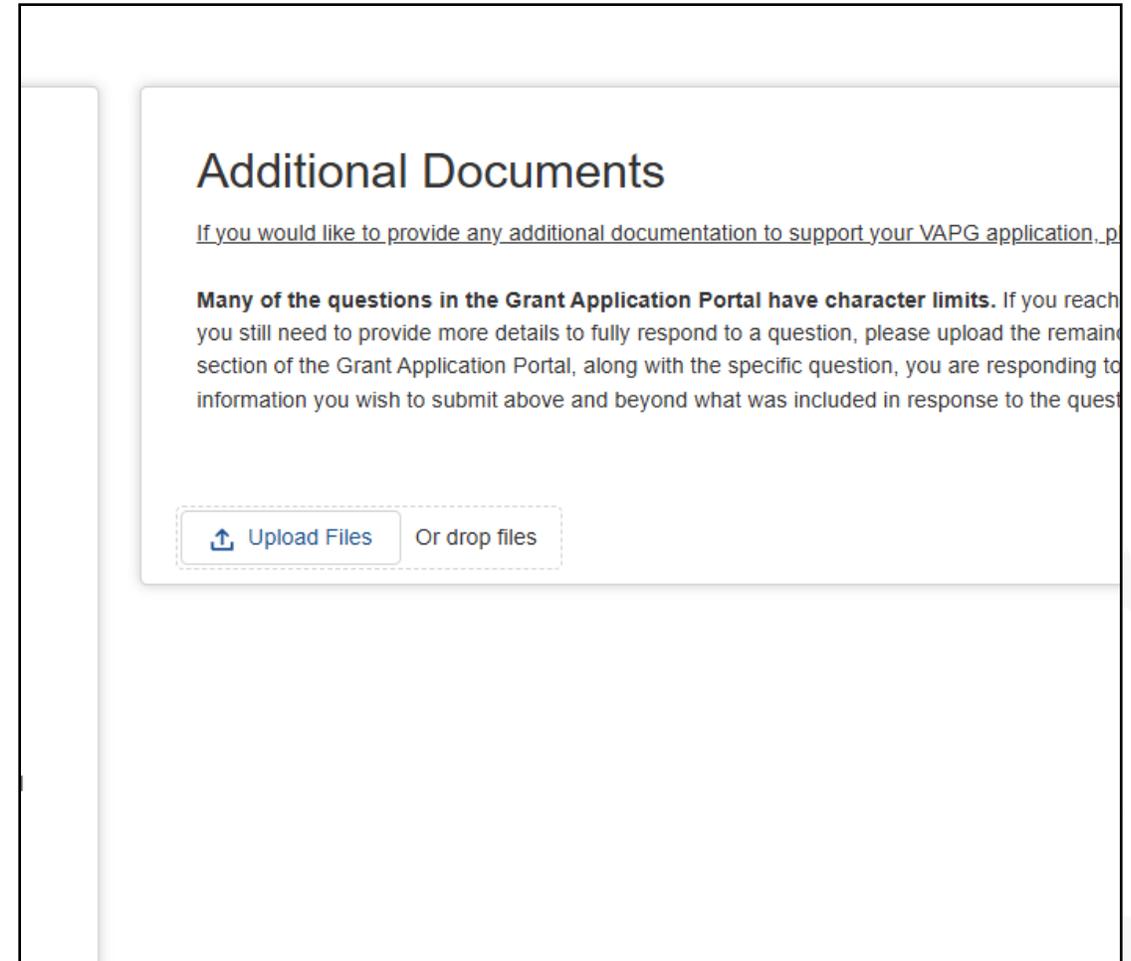
Owner's First Name	Owner's Last Name	% of Ownership	* Is the individual a Beginning Farmer or Rancher
Jill	Farmer	100%	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

Finalizing Your Application in the Review and Submit Section

Finalizing Your Application in the Review and Submit Section

Step 1: You may upload any additional documentation that supports your VAPG application submission.

Note: *If you reached a **character limit** for any of the questions throughout the Grant Application Portal and you feel that you still need to provide more details to fully respond to a question, please upload the remainder of your response on the **'Additional Documents'** page.*



The screenshot shows a web interface for uploading additional documents. At the top, the heading "Additional Documents" is displayed. Below it, a link reads "If you would like to provide any additional documentation to support your VAPG application, please click here." A paragraph of text explains that many questions have character limits and that users should upload the remainder of their responses if they reach these limits. At the bottom of the section, there is a button labeled "Upload Files" with an upward arrow icon, followed by the text "Or drop files" next to a dashed rectangular drop zone.

Finalizing Your Application in the Review and Submit Section

Step 2: Review each section of the application for accuracy and completeness and print the application for your records, if needed.

The screenshot displays the 'Application Preview' interface. On the left is a 'Table of Contents' with a vertical list of sections, each preceded by a blue circle icon. The sections are: Application Contacts, Entity Details, Application Details, Applicant Type, Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, and Application Preview. The 'Application Preview' section is currently selected and highlighted in blue. The main content area on the right is titled 'Application Preview' and contains a red warning message: 'This page is not editable. If you wish to edit the application, please navigate to the corresponding page using the Table of Contents.' Below this is a dropdown menu for 'Application Contacts' which is expanded to show 'Application Contacts' and 'Authorized Representative'. The 'Authorized Representative' section includes a detailed paragraph explaining the role and requirements of the authorized representative, and a form with fields for 'First Name' (Winston), 'Last Name' (Clay), and 'Organization' (Clay Farms Add WP Expense 202410111). At the top right of the preview area are two buttons: 'Expand Application Steps' and 'Print Preview'.

Finalizing Your Application in the Review and Submit Section

Step 3: Submit the application for final certification.

The screenshot displays a web application interface for reviewing and submitting an application. On the left, a sidebar menu lists various sections: Value-Added Agricultural Product, Work Plan & Budget, Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, Application Preview, and Review & Submit. Below the menu, there is a section for 'Application Resources' with links to a user guide and a video tutorial. The main content area shows a progress list with eight items, each marked as 'Completed' with a green checkmark. At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'Back' and 'Submit', with the 'Submit' button highlighted by a green border.

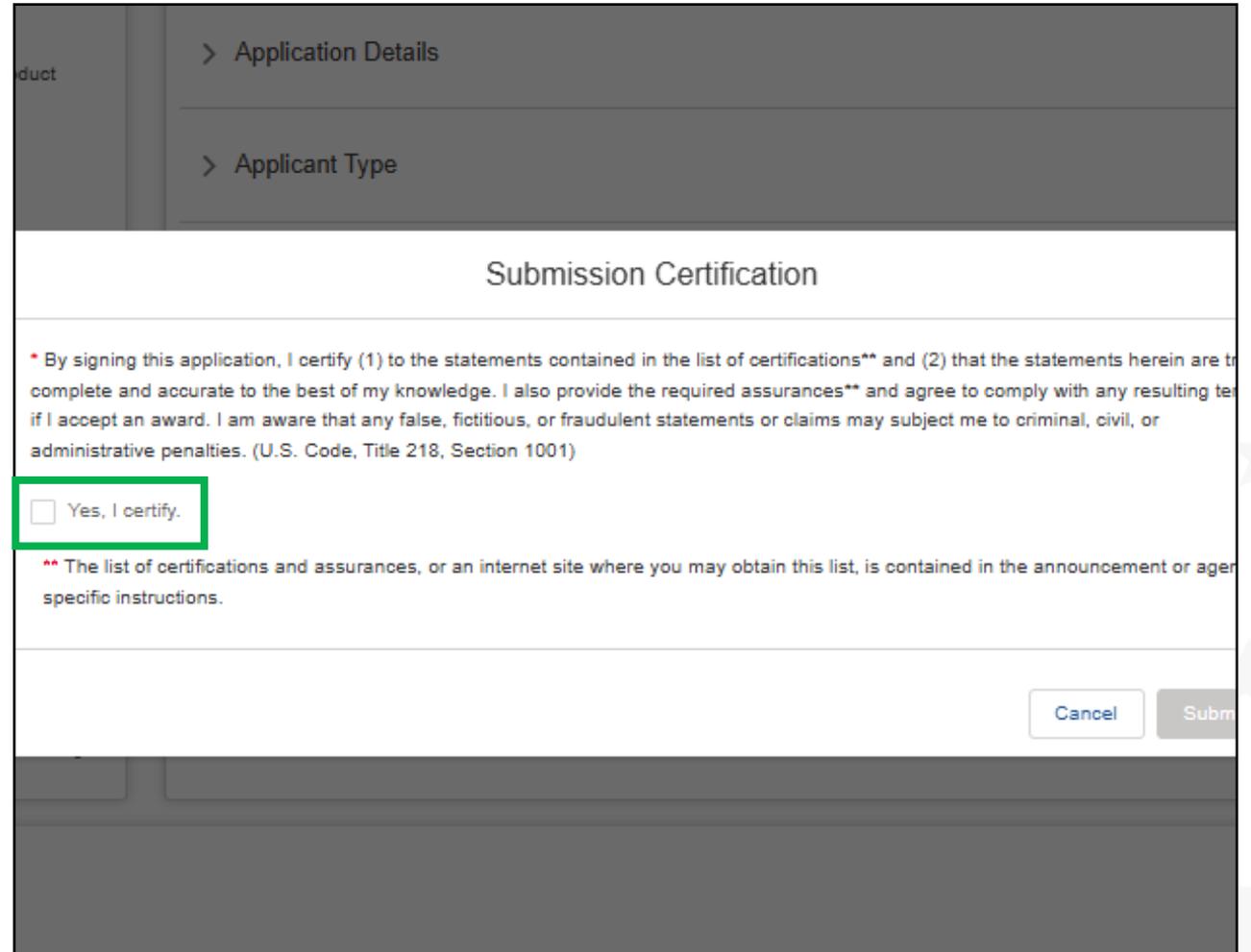
> Application Details	✓ Completed
> Applicant Type	✓ Completed
> Value-Added Agricultural Product	✓ Completed
> Work Plan & Budget	✓ Completed
> Matching Funds	✓ Completed
> Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue	✓ Completed
> Merit Evaluation	✓ Completed

Back Submit

Finalizing Your Application in the Review and Submit Section

Step 4: Provide the final Submission Certification and Submit your application.

Note: Only the Authorized Representative can complete the final submission.



The screenshot shows a web application interface for finalizing an application. At the top, there is a navigation menu with two items: "Application Details" and "Applicant Type", both with right-pointing chevrons. Below the navigation is a section titled "Submission Certification". The main content area contains a paragraph of text starting with a red asterisk: "* By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms and conditions if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)". Below this text is a checkbox labeled "Yes, I certify.", which is highlighted with a green rectangular border. At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Submit".

Support



Support

Step 1: Click the "Need Help?" icon in the bottom navigation bar

The screenshot displays a web application interface. On the left, a vertical navigation menu contains several items: Matching Funds, Expansion of Customer Base and Increased Revenue, Merit Evaluation, Additional Documents, **Application Preview** (highlighted with a blue circle), and Review & Submit. Below the menu is a section titled "Application Resources" with two links: "Download the User Guide" and "Watch the Video Tutorial". The main content area on the right contains text explaining that a representative will not be able to start a new application until the previous one is deleted. It also states that the Authorized Representative can add representatives or collaborators through the "Manage Users" option. Below this text is a form with the following fields: First Name (Winston), Last Name (Clay), Organization (Clay Farms Add WP Expense 202410111), Title (Managing Partner), Telephone (402-222-2222), and Email (winston.clay@usda.gov). A section titled "Point of Contact on Matters Involving This Application" follows, with instructions on how to add a contact. At the bottom, a navigation bar contains four buttons: "Need Help?" (highlighted with a green box), "Save Progress & Exit", "Save Page", and "Back".

Support

Step 2: Fill out the required fields and submit the form.

The image shows a web application interface with a 'Need Help?' modal form overlaid on a 'Table of Contents' sidebar. The sidebar lists various application steps, with 'Application Contacts' selected. The modal form contains the following fields:

- Name:** Winston Clay
- *Phone Number:** XXX-XXX-XXXX
- Ext:** XXX
- Email:** you@example.com
- Entity Name:** (empty)
- State where the Agricultural Commodity that is subject of the application is Produced/Harvested?:** South Carolina
- *Subject:** (empty)
- *Reason for Contact:** (empty)

The background shows a 'Table of Contents' sidebar with the following items:

- Application Contacts (selected)
- Entity Details
- Application Details
- Applicant Type
- Value-Added Agricultural Pr...
- Work Plan & Budget
- Matching Funds
- Expansion of Customer Bas...
- Increased Revenue
- Merit Evaluation

Other visible elements include a 'Print Preview' button and a 'Contents.' label.

Support

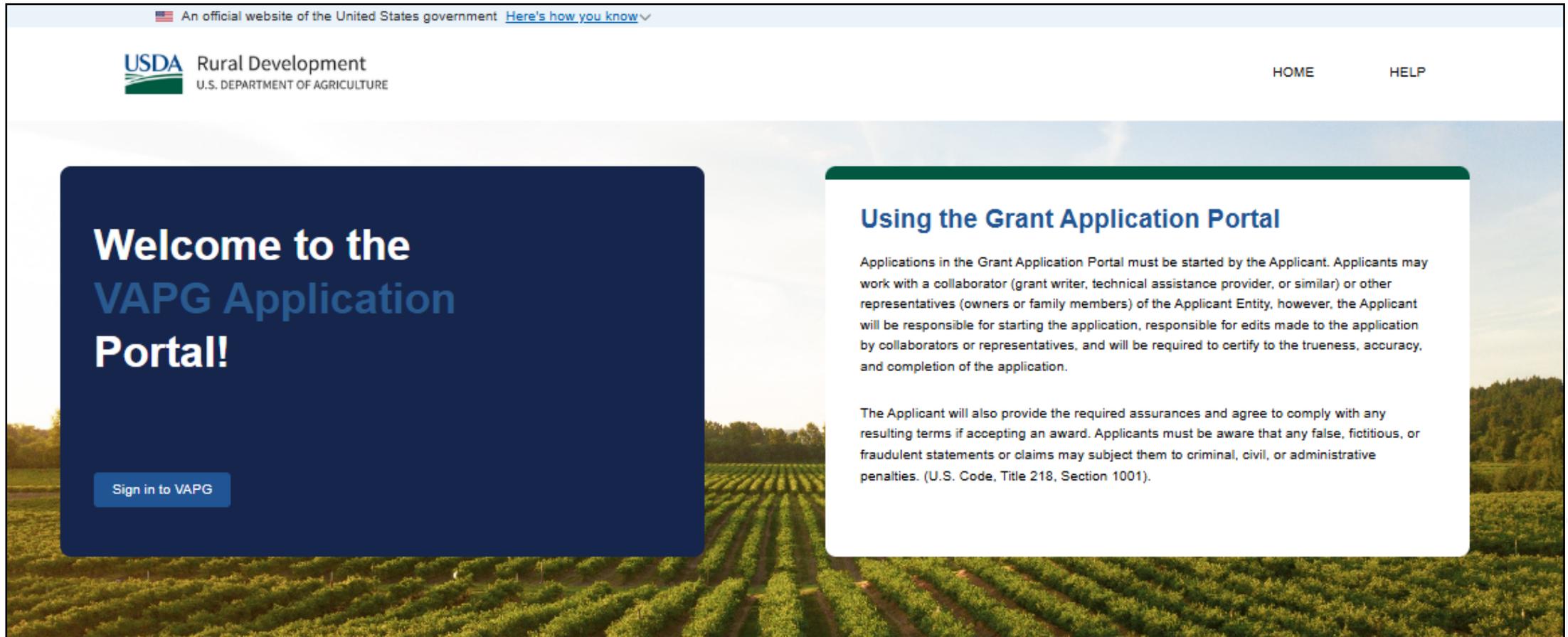
Step 3: Download the User Guide or **Watch the Video Tutorial** available in the Help section for additional visual guidance.

The screenshot displays a web application interface. On the left, a vertical progress bar consists of four blue circles connected by a dashed line. The circles are labeled from top to bottom: 'Merit Evaluation', 'Additional Documents', 'Application Preview', and 'Review & Submit'. The 'Application Preview' circle is currently selected and highlighted. Below the progress bar is a section titled 'Application Resources' containing two bullet points: '• [Download the User Guide](#) for step-by-step support.' and '• [Watch the Video Tutorial](#) for a visual walk-through of the system.' The text of these two bullet points is enclosed in a green rectangular box. At the bottom of the interface, there are three buttons: 'Need Help?' (light blue), 'Save Progress & Exit' (light blue), and 'Save Page' (dark blue). On the right side of the interface, there is a sidebar with a search bar and a list of items, including 'Clay', '* Title', 'Mana', '* Tele', '402-', 'Point', 'If the de', 'of the p', '* Cor', 'Wins', 'First', and 'Wins'.

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 1: Click the 'Sign in to VAPG' and save the URL for ease of access in the future.



The screenshot shows the USDA Rural Development website. At the top left is the USDA logo with the text "Rural Development" and "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE". To the right are links for "HOME" and "HELP". A banner at the top reads "An official website of the United States government" with a link "Here's how you know". The main content area features a large dark blue box on the left with the text "Welcome to the VAPG Application Portal!" and a "Sign in to VAPG" button. On the right is a white box titled "Using the Grant Application Portal" containing two paragraphs of text. The background is a photograph of a vineyard.

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#)

USDA Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HOME HELP

Welcome to the VAPG Application Portal!

Sign in to VAPG

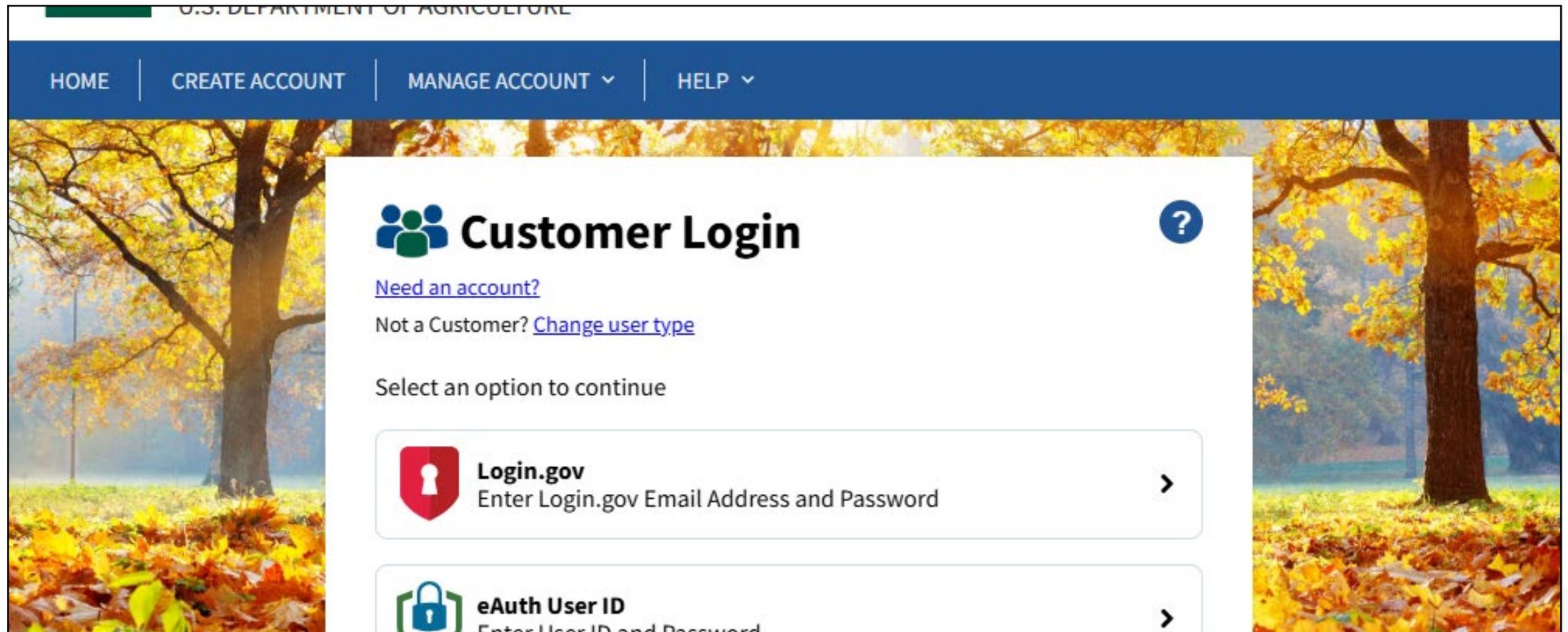
Using the Grant Application Portal

Applications in the Grant Application Portal must be started by the Applicant. Applicants may work with a collaborator (grant writer, technical assistance provider, or similar) or other representatives (owners or family members) of the Applicant Entity, however, the Applicant will be responsible for starting the application, responsible for edits made to the application by collaborators or representatives, and will be required to certify to the trueness, accuracy, and completion of the application.

The Applicant will also provide the required assurances and agree to comply with any resulting terms if accepting an award. Applicants must be aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject them to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001).

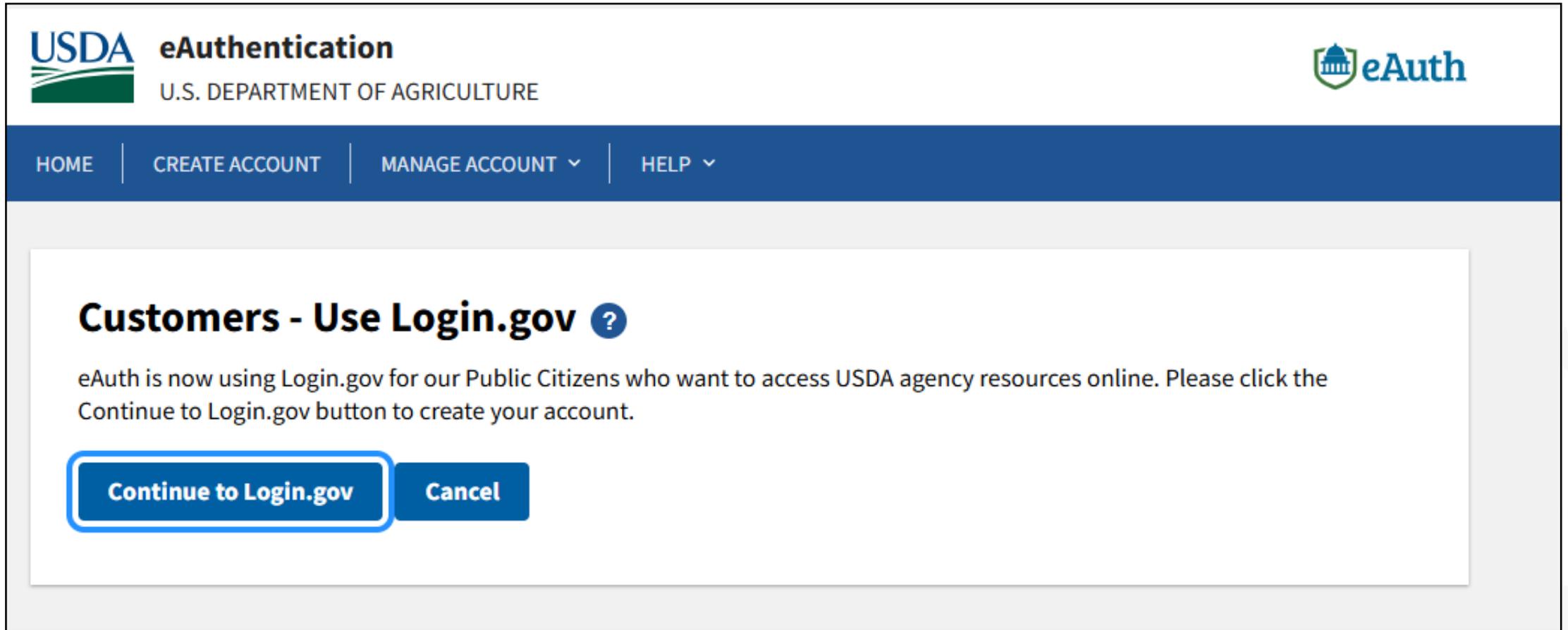
Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 2: Get started setting up your eAuthentication by using the 'Create Account' link.



Creating an eAuthentication Account

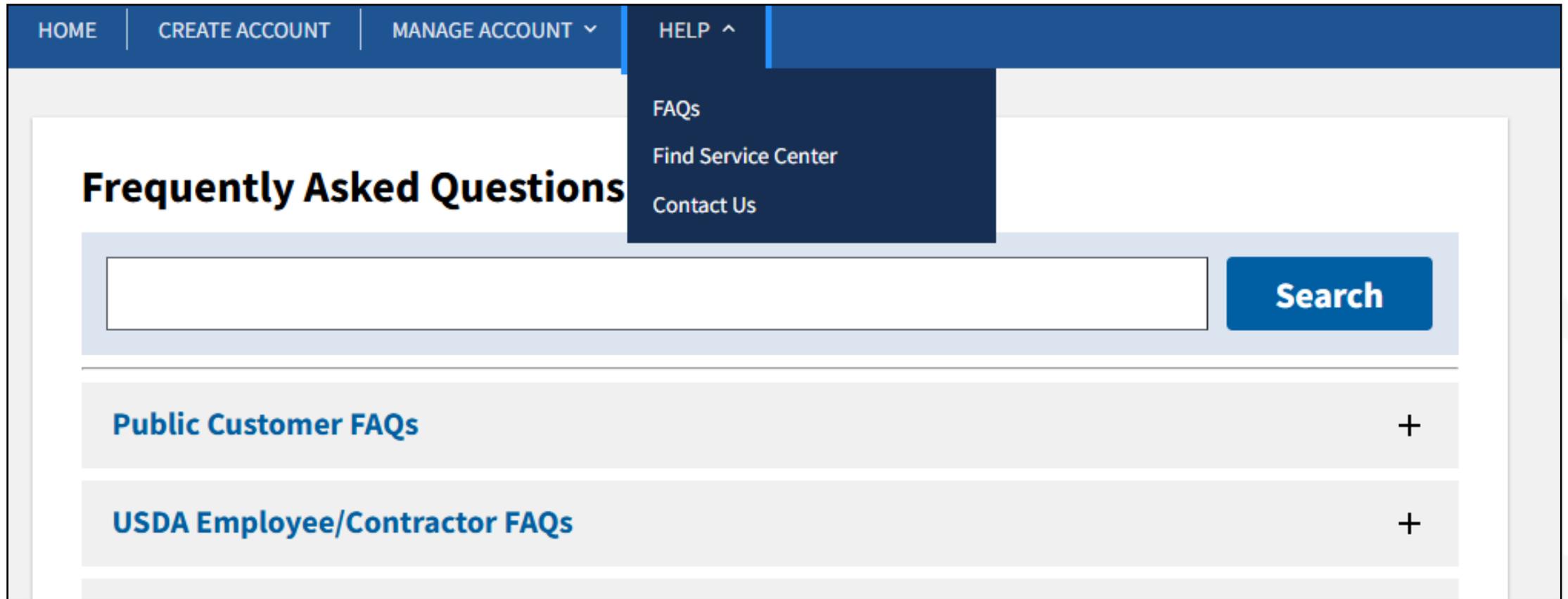
Step 3: The eAuth account creation will guide you through eAuth registration and Login.gov setup.



The screenshot shows the USDA eAuthentication website interface. At the top left is the USDA logo with the text "eAuthentication" and "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE". At the top right is the eAuth logo. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "HOME", "CREATE ACCOUNT", "MANAGE ACCOUNT", and "HELP". The main content area features a message titled "Customers - Use Login.gov" with a question mark icon. The message text reads: "eAuth is now using Login.gov for our Public Citizens who want to access USDA agency resources online. Please click the Continue to Login.gov button to create your account." Below the text are two buttons: "Continue to Login.gov" (highlighted with a blue border) and "Cancel".

Creating an eAuthentication Account

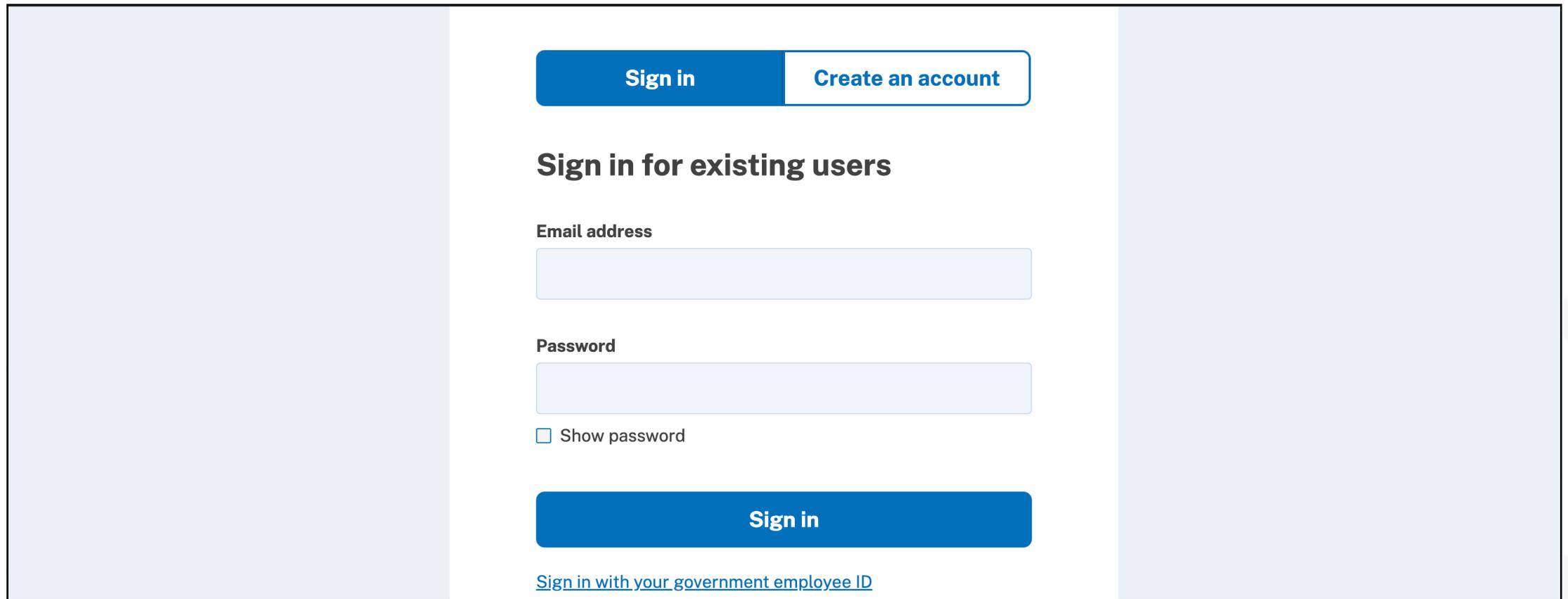
Note: Do you have questions about eAuth or Login.gov? Please visit the 'Help' tab and the 'FAQs' for more information.



The screenshot shows a website navigation bar with the following items: HOME, CREATE ACCOUNT, MANAGE ACCOUNT (with a dropdown arrow), and HELP (with an upward arrow). A dark blue dropdown menu is open under the HELP tab, containing the following links: FAQs, Find Service Center, and Contact Us. Below the navigation bar, the page features a section titled "Frequently Asked Questions". This section includes a search bar with a blue "Search" button. Below the search bar, there are two expandable FAQ categories: "Public Customer FAQs" and "USDA Employee/Contractor FAQs", each with a plus sign (+) on the right side to indicate it can be expanded.

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 4: Once you've selected 'Continue to Login.gov', you'll be directed to the secure.login.gov page where you can 'Create an Account'



Sign in **Create an account**

Sign in for existing users

Email address

Password

Show password

Sign in

[Sign in with your government employee ID](#)

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 5: Create an account for a new user by entering your email address.

Create an account for new users

Enter your email address

Select your email language preference
You will receive emails from Login.gov in the language you choose.

English (default)

Español

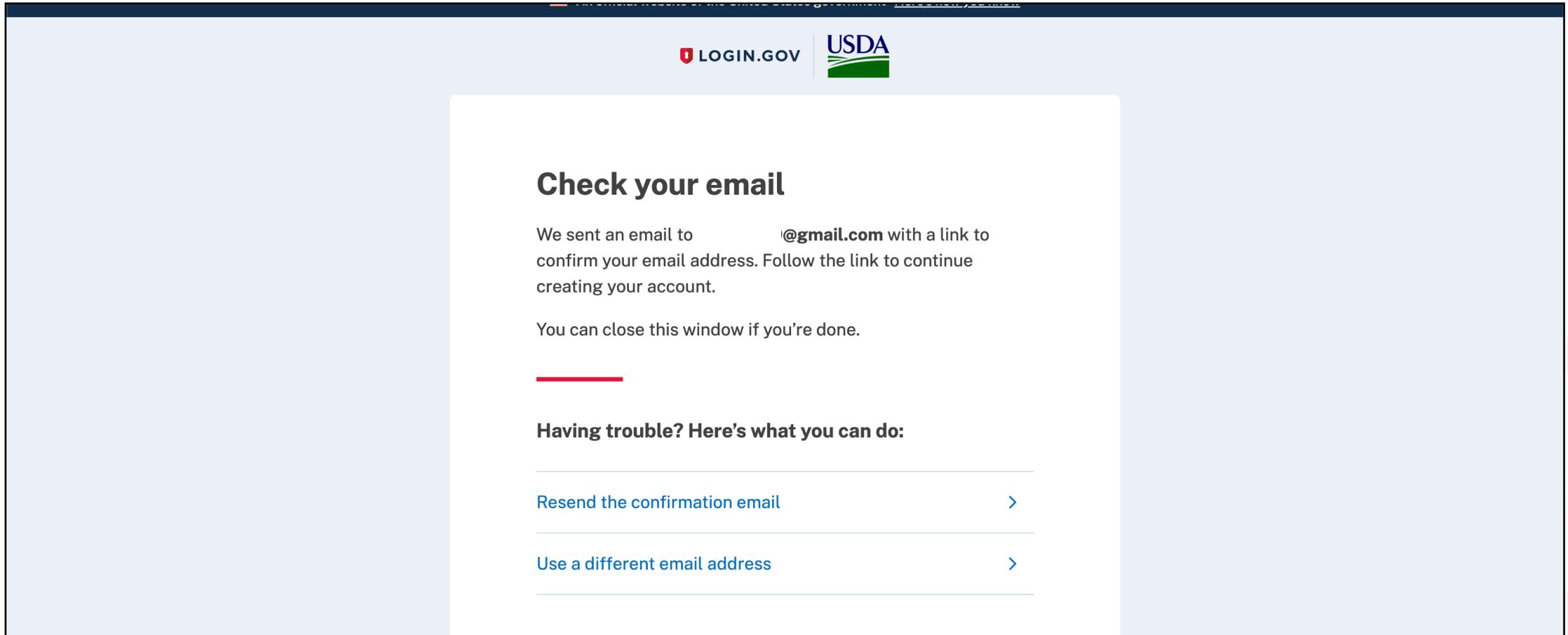
Français

中文 (简体)

I read and accept the Login.gov [Rules of Use](#)

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 6: Follow check your email instructions.



The screenshot shows a web page with the LOGIN.GOV and USDA logos at the top. The main heading is 'Check your email'. Below it, a message states: 'We sent an email to [redacted]@gmail.com with a link to confirm your email address. Follow the link to continue creating your account.' A sub-message says: 'You can close this window if you're done.' A red horizontal line is present. Below that, a section titled 'Having trouble? Here's what you can do:' contains two links: 'Resend the confirmation email' and 'Use a different email address', each with a right-pointing chevron.

LOGIN.GOV **USDA**

Check your email

We sent an email to [redacted]@gmail.com with a link to confirm your email address. Follow the link to continue creating your account.

You can close this window if you're done.

Having trouble? Here's what you can do:

- [Resend the confirmation email](#) >
- [Use a different email address](#) >

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 7: Enter your one-time code.

Enter your one-time code

We sent a text (SMS) with a one-time code to
This code will expire in 10 minutes.

One-time code
Example: 123456

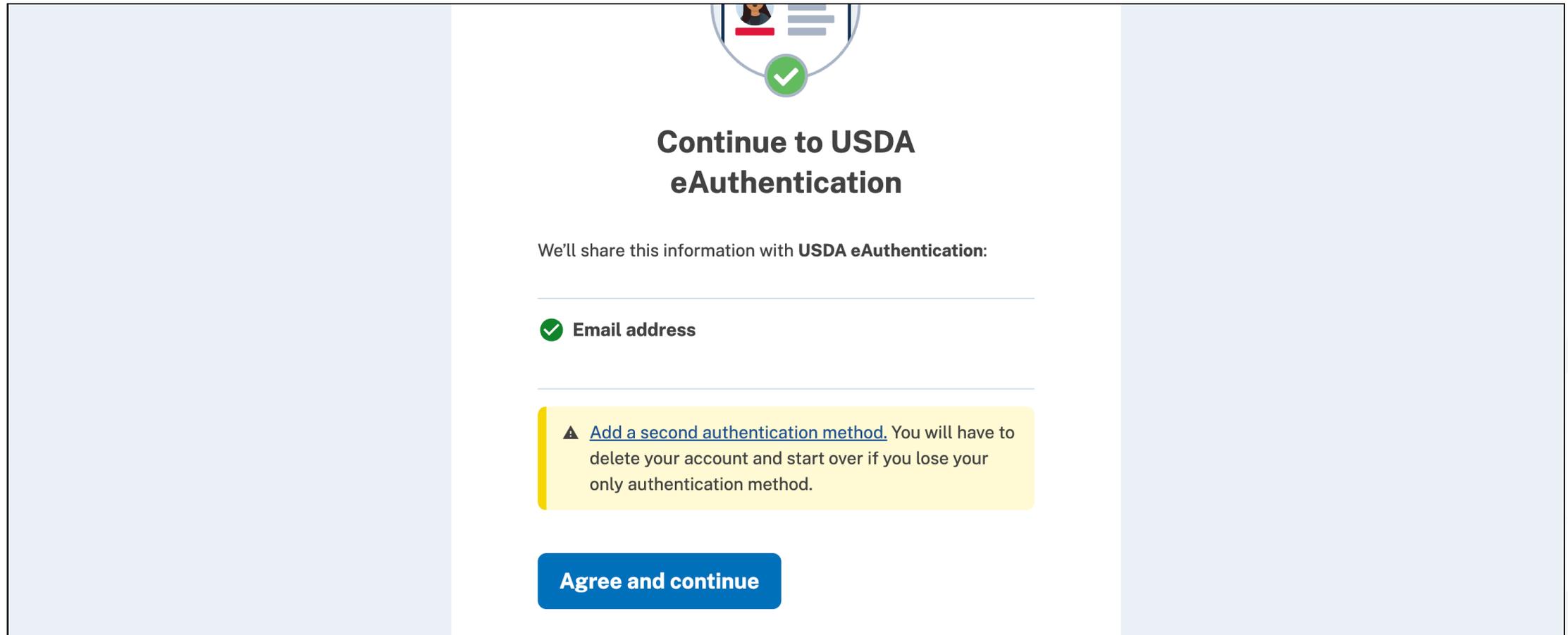
Remember this browser

Submit

[↻ Send another code](#)

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 8: Agree and Continue



The screenshot shows a web interface for creating a USDA eAuthentication account. At the top center, there is a circular icon containing a person silhouette, a list icon, and a green checkmark. Below this icon, the text "Continue to USDA eAuthentication" is displayed in a bold, black font. Underneath, a line of text reads "We'll share this information with USDA eAuthentication:". A horizontal line follows, and below it, a green checkmark icon is followed by the text "Email address". Another horizontal line is present. Below that, a yellow warning box contains a triangle icon, a blue link "Add a second authentication method", and the text "You will have to delete your account and start over if you lose your only authentication method." At the bottom center, there is a blue button with the text "Agree and continue".

Continue to USDA eAuthentication

We'll share this information with **USDA eAuthentication**:

✔ **Email address**

⚠ [Add a second authentication method](#). You will have to delete your account and start over if you lose your only authentication method.

Agree and continue

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 9: Choose your option and continue

 **eAuthentication**
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



HOME | CREATE ACCOUNT | MANAGE ACCOUNT ▾ | HELP ▾

Link with Login.gov

Login.gov must be linked to an eAuth account to use it with USDA applications.

Use an existing eAuth account to link to my Login.gov account.

Continue without linking to an existing eAuth account (*if you don't already have a USDA eAuth account*).

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 10: Enter required user information.

User Information Required

In order to complete setting up your Login.gov account with USDA eAuth, please provide the following information:

First name

Last name

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 11: Follow the instructions to confirm your email address.

 **eAuthentication**
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



HOME | CREATE ACCOUNT | MANAGE ACCOUNT ▾ | HELP ▾

Verify Identity

The application you are accessing requires identity verification. Your account does not currently meet these requirements. Please select the method to verify your identity below.

Verify my identity at Login.gov - Recommended

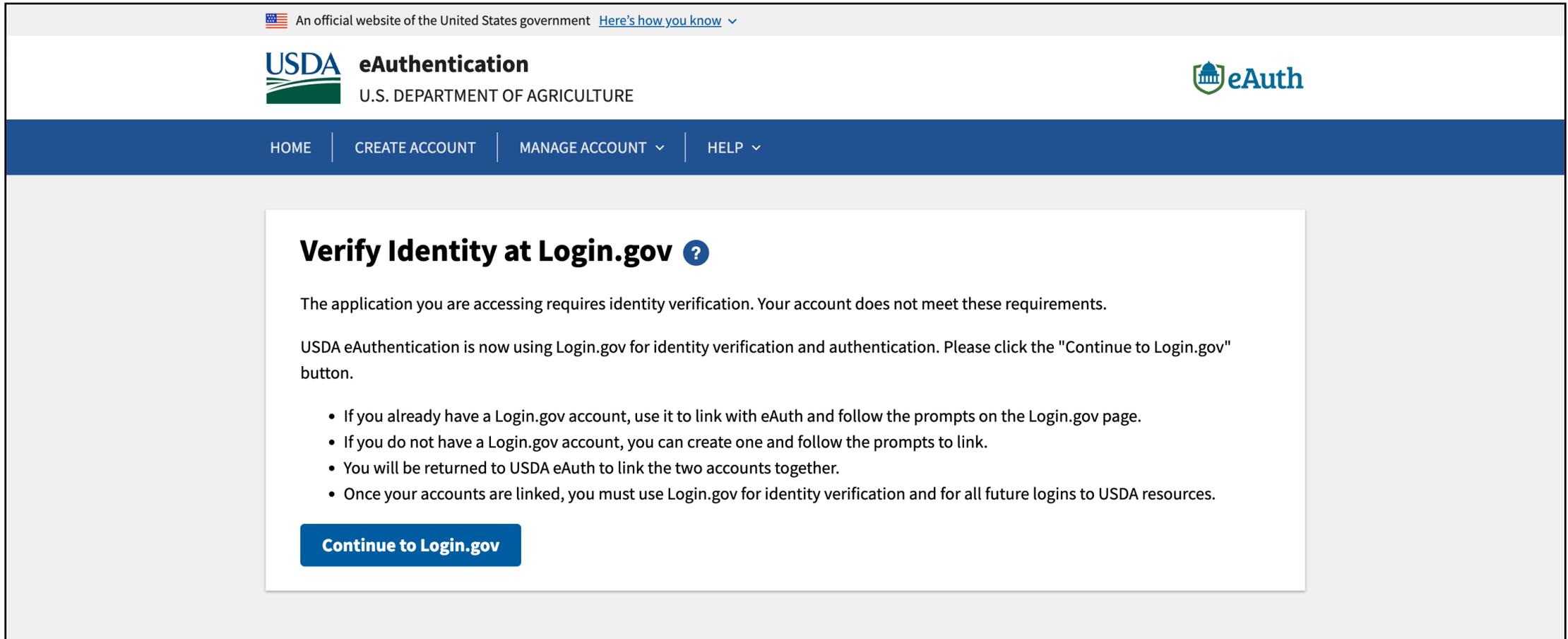
Visit a USDA Service Center for in-person identity verification

[Continue](#)

Quick Links **Other Links**

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 12: Continue to Login.gov.



An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ▾

USDA eAuthentication
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

eAuth

HOME | CREATE ACCOUNT | MANAGE ACCOUNT ▾ | HELP ▾

Verify Identity at Login.gov ?

The application you are accessing requires identity verification. Your account does not meet these requirements.

USDA eAuthentication is now using Login.gov for identity verification and authentication. Please click the "Continue to Login.gov" button.

- If you already have a Login.gov account, use it to link with eAuth and follow the prompts on the Login.gov page.
- If you do not have a Login.gov account, you can create one and follow the prompts to link.
- You will be returned to USDA eAuth to link the two accounts together.
- Once your accounts are linked, you must use Login.gov for identity verification and for all future logins to USDA resources.

[Continue to Login.gov](#)

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 13: Continue

Let's verify your identity for USDA eAuthentication

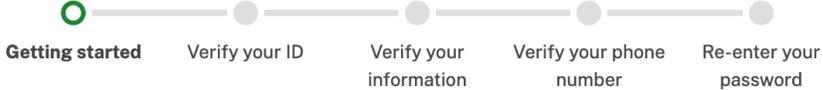
USDA eAuthentication needs to make sure you are you — not someone pretending to be you. [Learn more about verifying your identity](#) 

You'll need to:

- 1 Have a driver's license or state ID**
Other forms of ID are not accepted. We'll check that you are the person on your ID.
- 2 Enter your Social Security number**
You will not need your physical SSN card.
- 3 Match to your phone number**
We match your phone number with your personal information and send a one-time code to your phone.
- 4 Re-enter your Login.gov password**

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 14: Follow instructions and continue



Getting started Verify your ID Verify your information Verify your phone number Re-enter your password

How verifying your identity works

Identity verification happens in two parts:

Verify your identity

We'll ask for your ID, phone number, and other personal information to verify your identity against public records.

Secure your account

We'll encrypt your account when you re-enter your password. Encryption means your data is protected and only you will be able to access or change your information.

By checking this box, you are letting Login.gov ask for, use, keep, and share your personal information. We will use it to verify your identity.

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 15: Get started by selecting how you want to verify your identity, online or in person.

Choose how you want to verify your identity

You have the option to verify your identity online, or in person at a participating Post Office.



Verify your identity online

You'll take photos of your ID to verify your identity fully online. Most users finish this process in one sitting.

This option is better if you have a phone to take photos of your ID.

[Continue online](#)



Verify your identity at a Post

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 16: Complete how would you like to add your ID.

How would you like to add your ID?

We'll collect information about you by reading your state-issued ID.



Recommended

Use your phone to take photos

You won't have to sign in again, and you'll switch back to this computer after you take photos. Your mobile phone must have a camera and a web browser.

Phone number



Send link

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 17: Enter your Social Security Number

Enter your Social Security number

We need your Social Security number to verify your name, date of birth and address. [Learn more about how we protect your sensitive information](#)

Don't have a Social Security number?

You must have a Social Security number to finish verifying your identity. [Exit Login.gov and return to USDA eAuthentication](#)

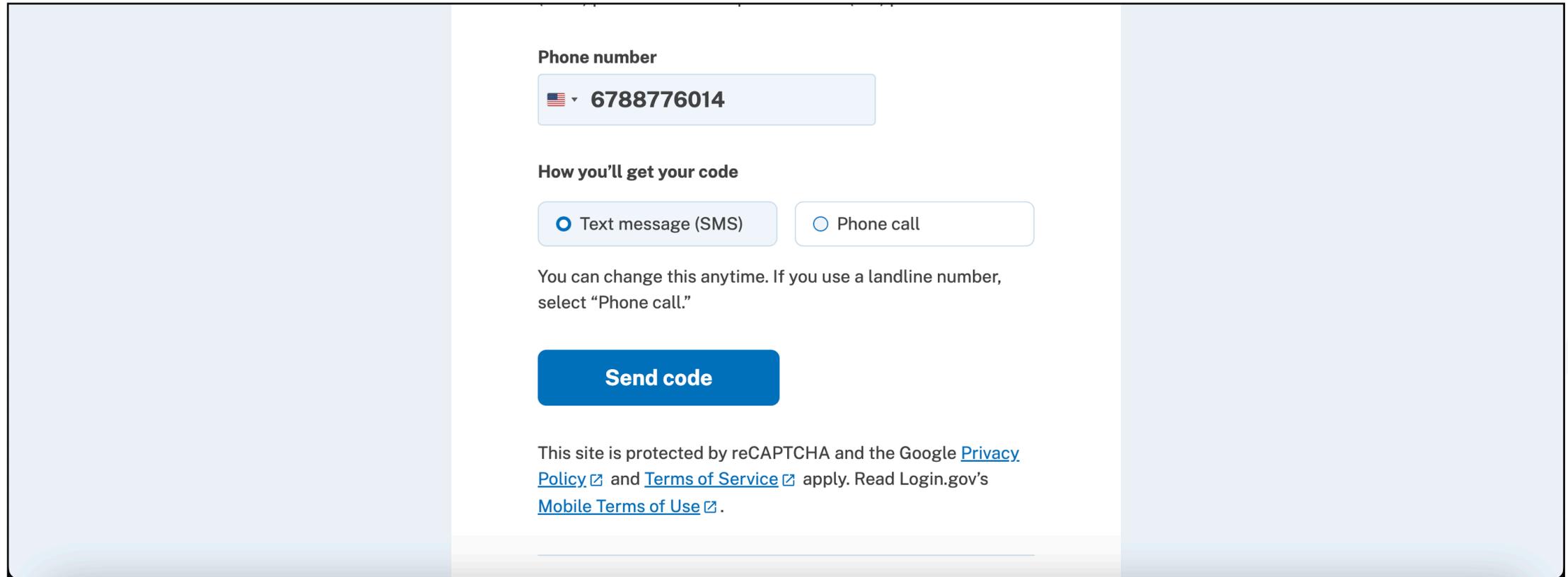
Social Security number
Example: 123-45-6789

Show Social Security number

Continue

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 18: Verify your phone number.



The screenshot shows a verification form with the following elements:

- Phone number:** A dropdown menu showing the United States flag and the number 6788776014.
- How you'll get your code:** Two radio button options: "Text message (SMS)" (selected) and "Phone call".
- Instructions:** A paragraph stating, "You can change this anytime. If you use a landline number, select 'Phone call.'"
- Send code:** A prominent blue button.
- Legal notices:** A paragraph at the bottom stating, "This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply. Read Login.gov's [Mobile Terms of Use](#)."

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 19: Enter your one-time code.

information number password

Enter your one-time code

We sent a text (SMS) with a one-time code to
. This code will expire in 10 minutes.

One-time code
Example: 123ABC

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 20: Re-enter your login.gov password.



✔ We verified your phone number

Re-enter your Login.gov password

Login.gov will encrypt your information with your password. This means that your information is secure and only you will be able to access or change it.

Password

Show password [Forgot password?](#)

Continue

Creating an eAuthentication Account

Step 21: Return to the Grant Application Portal at <https://vapg.rd.usda.gov/> and log in with your Login.gov username and password.



**Welcome to the
VAPG Application
Portal!**

Sign in to VAPG

Using the Grant Application Portal

Applications in the Grant Application Portal must be started by the Applicant. Applicants may work with a collaborator (grant writer, technical assistance provider, or similar) or other representatives (owners or family members) of the Applicant Entity, however, the Applicant will be responsible for starting the application, responsible for edits made to the application by collaborators or representatives, and will be required to certify to the trueness, accuracy, and completion of the application.

The Applicant will also provide the required assurances and agree to comply with any resulting terms if accepting an award. Applicants must be aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject them to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001).

Thank You