



## **SWED AG Grant Fund – FAQ**

### **What is the SWED AG Grant Fund?**

The SWED Ag Grant Fund is capitalized through a partnership between SWED, Wicomico County, PNC Bank and the Maryland Agricultural & Resource Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) through MARBIDCO's Local Government Agriculture & Resource Based Industry Project Cost Share Program. The goal of the program is to help foster growth in Wicomico's emerging agriculture and resource-based industries.

### **Who is eligible for the grant?**

- For profit existing and emerging agricultural and resource-based businesses headquartered and located in Wicomico County, Maryland
- Business must be registered and in Good Standing with the State of MD
- Applicant must be in Good Standing with Wicomico County, Maryland
- Any project co-funded by SWED and MARBIDCO should assist in some fashion Wicomico County's farming, forestry or seafood industries (including agritourism businesses); Businesses that facilitate in the production of foodstuffs or other goods that grow in the soil or water, the packaging, processing, or marketing of such products are generally also eligible
- The applicant is required to make a financial contribution to the project of at least 50% of project costs
- All applications must be submitted by SWED to MARBIDCO. Final approval is at the sole discretion of MARBIDCO.

Minority-owned, women-owned, disabled owned and veteran owned businesses are encouraged to apply.

### **How do I apply for the grant?**

An application, along with FAQ's and a sample grant agreement can be found at [www.swed.org/ag-grant-fund](http://www.swed.org/ag-grant-fund)

### **How is the grant amount determined?**

Targeted grant amounts are \$2,500 or less per applicant, matched by MARBIDCO (subject to change pending volume of applications). The applicant must invest at least 50% of the project cost and MARBIDCO cannot invest more than the local share. The maximum amount of all grants cannot exceed \$25,000.

## **Funding Structure Examples**

- Farmer Smith wants to install a deer fence for \$32,000. SWED and MARBIDCO have agreed to pay \$2,500 each (\$5,000). Farmer Smith pays \$27,000.
- Jones' Mushroom Farm wants to install a small green house for \$10,000. SWED and MARBIDCO have agreed to pay \$2,500 each (\$5,000). Smith's Mushroom Farm pays \$5,000.
- Brown's Flower Co., a commercial grower of flowers, plans to install a walk-in cooler for \$7,900. SWED and MARBIDCO have agreed to pay \$1,975 each (\$3,950). Brown's Flower Co. pays \$3,950.

## **What is the process of grant approval?**

Please contact SWED at 410-749-1251 to discuss the project.

### Application Process

After an initial discussion, an application and W-9 form (<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>) is submitted to SWED at [info@swed.org](mailto:info@swed.org). If it appears to fit within MARBIDCO's program criteria, SWED will submit the application along with a cover letter requesting consideration to MARBIDCO. If approved by MARBIDCO, the applicant will be notified and may begin the project. Upon project completion, the applicant notifies SWED and provides receipts for eligible expenses. SWED will reimburse the applicant for the agreed upon grant amount.

## **How will the grant be paid?**

Once the grant agreement is finalized and all documentation and receipts have been received by SWED (grant funds are on a reimbursement basis), a check will be issued by SWED to the applicant.

## **What are eligible uses of grant funds?**

- Agri-tourism (new or expansion of current initiatives)
- Ag business diversification (new or expansion of current initiatives)
- Deer fencing (specifications determined by MARBIDCO)
- Other uses as determined by MARBIDCO

## **What are ineligible uses of funds?**

- Operating expenses that occur in the ordinary course of operations
- Personal expenses
- Refinancing
- Loan payoffs
- Vehicles
- Other uses as determined by MARBIDCO

**What supporting documents will I be required to upload or provide?**

- A signed W-9 form (can be found here): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>
- A Maryland Department ID Number  
<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>
- A signed grant agreement once application is approved and receipts have been received by SWED

**What does it mean to be in ‘Good Standing’ with the State of Maryland?**

‘Good Standing’ signifies the business is current in providing appropriate documentation to the State of Maryland and is current in various fees and tax payments. More information can be found here: <https://egov.maryland.gov/businessexpress/entitysearch>

**Are grant funds taxable to me or my business?**

Yes. We intend to issue a 1099-G for the amount of grant funds received.

**Can nonprofits apply?**

Only for-profit businesses that are ag or resource-based may apply.

**What industries are excluded in applying for the grant?**

Excluded applicants include businesses engaged in any illegal activity per local, state or federal regulations with federal regulations taking precedent over local and state regulations. In addition, publicly-traded firms are ineligible.

**Can I apply if I own multiple businesses?**

Due to limited funding, only one entity (including related entities) may apply for funds in any given year.

**Are locally owned franchises of national chains eligible?**

Yes, as long as the franchise is locally owned and controlled and meets all other criteria. Note: Publicly traded firms are not eligible.

**Will all eligible applications be funded?**

Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing how many qualified applications will be received. We will do our very best to fund as many eligible applicants as possible.

**Will all approved applications be funded?**

Funds for this program are made available to Salisbury-Wicomico Economic Development from the Maryland Agriculture and Resource Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO), Wicomico County, Maryland and PNC Bank. Should any these entities stop funding the program, if the volume of applications exceeds the amount of funds available and for any other reason in which funds are not available, we will let the applicant know. While funds are very limited, we will make every attempt possible to fund as many applicants as possible.

**Is the information sent confidential?**

The names of the businesses receiving grants, the purpose of the grant and the amount of grant funds are public information.

**What if I have additional questions?**

Please email your questions to [info@swed.org](mailto:info@swed.org) or call 410-749-1251.

**Thank you for your business in Wicomico County.**