



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
**AGRICULTURE &  
LAND STEWARDSHIP**

# Funding Farm Growth Through Grants

**Practical Farmers of Iowa Annual Conference**

Jan. 10, 2025 | Des Moines, Iowa

Beth Romer, Choose Iowa Program Director



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
**AGRICULTURE &  
LAND STEWARDSHIP**

# Grants and Choose Iowa

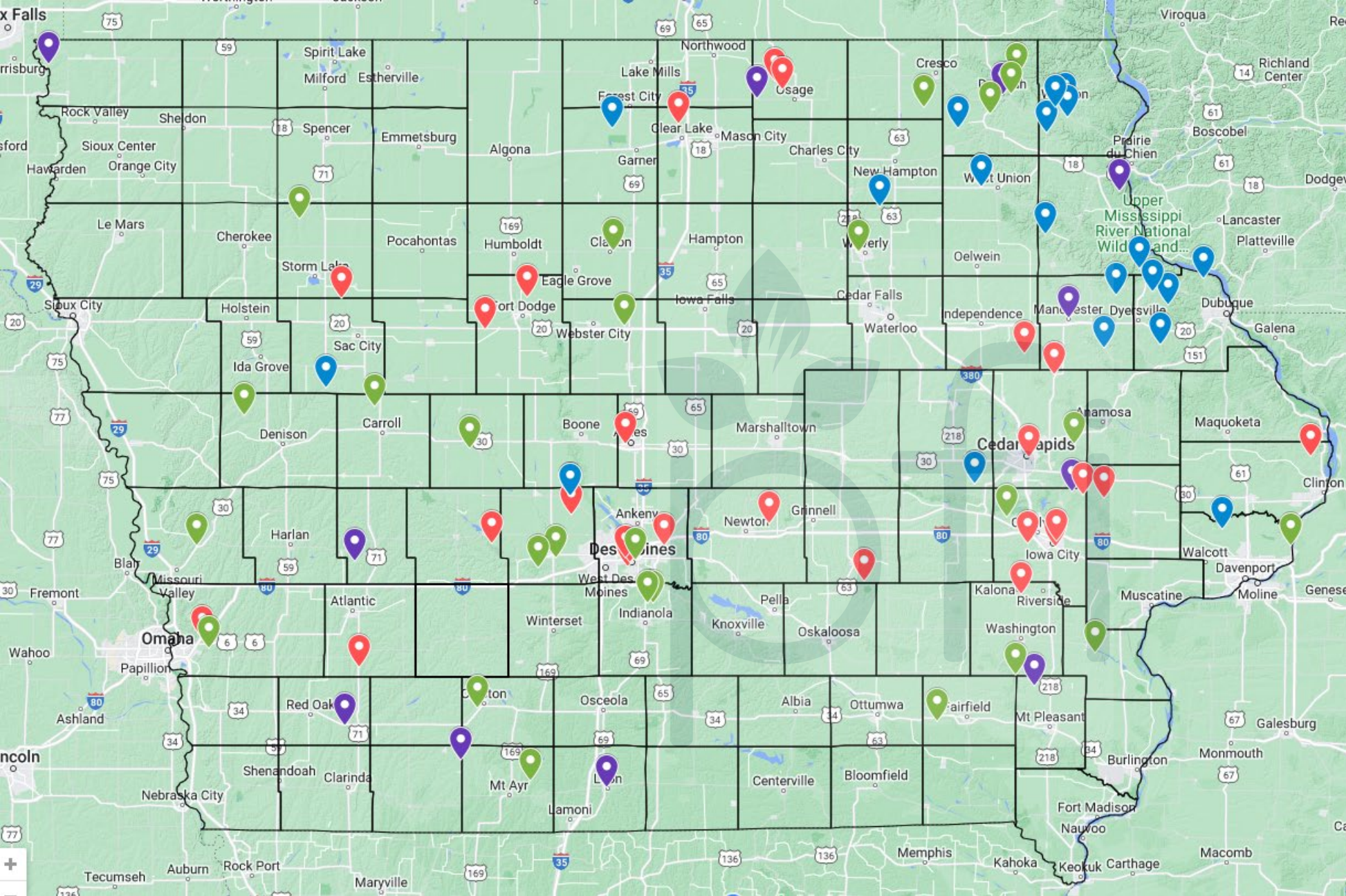
- Choose Iowa Grants
  - Value-Added
  - Dairy Innovation
  - Butchery Innovation – new!
  - Food Purchasing Pilot Program – new!
- USDA Grants administered by IDALS
  - Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG)
  - Local Food For Schools (LFS)






**CHOOSE  
IOWA**  <sup>TM</sup>

**Grants**





-  2022 Value-Added Recipients
-  2023 Value-Added Recipients
-  2024 Value-Added Recipients
-  2024 Dairy Innovation Recipients

# Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant

- \$463,000 available in funding
- Increase sales of Iowa agricultural products by increasing production capacity or expanding market access for value-added projects
- Unique: Individual orgs can also apply
- ≤\$25,000 award amount
- Cost-share, 1:1 match
- Reimbursement after project completion

*Note: Membership not necessary to apply for the Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant*

# Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant: Projects MUST

- Increase sales of Iowa agricultural products by increasing production capacity or expanding market access for value-added projects
- Not be in progress until a grant is awarded
- Be completed in 12 months or less
- Be conducted in Iowa



# Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant

## Timeline:

- Dec. 2, 2024: Application period opened
- Jan. 31, 2025 **at noon**: Application period closes
- March 2025: Recipients contacted, agreements finalized
- April 2025: Recipients announced

## Helpful tips:

- Grant guidelines:
  - Eligible vs. ineligible expenses
  - Scoring criteria, application questions
- Budget worksheet

## Apply online:

[www.Chooselowa.com](http://www.Chooselowa.com)

# Choose Iowa Dairy Innovation Grant

- \$750,000 in funding
- Max of \$100,000 per grant awardee
  - Producer must be able to provide a 1:1 match for the grant
    - Additional points awarded for more than required match amount
    - In-kind contributions not accepted
- On-farm dairy processing equipment, labor-reducing technology or BOTH

*Note: Membership not necessary to apply for the Choose Iowa Dairy Innovation Grant*



# Choose Iowa Dairy Innovation Grant

## Timing:

- October 2024: Application period opened
- November 27 **at noon**: Application deadline
- Dec./Jan. 2025: Applications scored by committee
- March 2025: Awardees announced

## Helpful tips:

- Grant guidelines, scoring criteria
- Budget worksheet

## Apply online:

[www.ChooseIowa.com](http://www.ChooseIowa.com)

# Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant

- ***NEW! Will be announced in January 2025***
- \$250,000 in funding
- Max of \$100,000 per grant awardee, no minimum amount
  - Processor must be able to provide a 1:1 match for the grant
    - *In-kind contributions not accepted*
- Butchery and meat processing equipment

*Note: Membership not necessary to apply for the Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant*

# Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant

## Timing:

- January 2025: Pre-application review with CIRAS begins
- February 2025: Application period opens
- 3<sup>rd</sup> week Feb. 2025: pre-application review closes
- March 31, 2025 **at noon**: Application deadline
- April 2025: Applications scored by committee
- May 2025: Awardees announced

Apply online: [www.Chooselowa.com](http://www.Chooselowa.com)

# Choose Iowa Food Purchasing Pilot

- **NEW!**
- \$225,000 allocated to food banks (announced July 2024)
  - 6 food banks + DMARC participating initially
- \$70,000 allocated for Schools (will be announced soon 2025)
  - School pilot application period opens in January
  - \$1,000 per school/building/district
- Purchases eligible from Choose Iowa members only

*Note: Choose Iowa  
Membership REQUIRED*

# Choose Iowa: Distinctions

## BRAND

- Iowa grown, raised or made food, beverages and ag products
- Add logo on qualifying products that meet/exceed min. criteria
- Annual membership dues
- Expanding beyond food to include more Iowa ag products (horticulture, natural fibers)
- Choose Iowa Passport, events:
  - Farm Store Crawl, Farm Open House

## GRANTS

- Value-added agriculture OR Dairy innovation OR Butchery innovation
- Membership NOT required
- Up to \$25,000 (value-added), \$100,000 (dairy, butchery), \$1,000 (schools) or (TBD) food banks



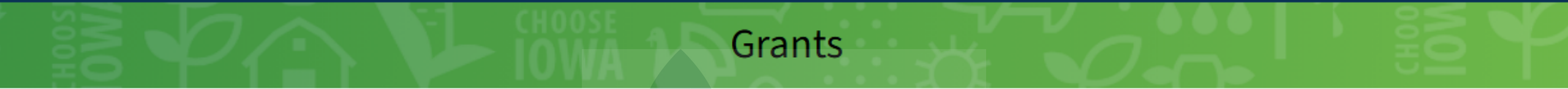


# 1. [ChooseIowa.com](https://www.chooseiowa.com)

Log in

Find Local What's In Season The Brand Membership Grants

Become a Member



## Grants

Choose Iowa offers grants for Value-Added Agriculture, Dairy Innovation, Butchery Innovation, and Food Purchasing Program - School Edition.

The Choose Iowa Grants exist to identify, evaluate and financially support programs and services that add value to agricultural products, enable new technologies and support alternative marketing strategies. These cost-share grants leverage additional private investment and were created to assist Iowa farmers, businesses and non-profits with their efforts to increase or diversify their agricultural product offerings, expand markets and shorten the supply chain.

### Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant

Choose Iowa Value-Added Grants increase sales of Iowa agricultural products by increasing production capacity or expanding market access for value-added projects.

### Office Hours

Have questions about the Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant? We will be hosting two different dates for virtual office hours for answering all your questions about the application, grant process, etc. You do not need to be logged in for the entirety of the office hours – stay as long as you need to get your questions answered.

### Applications accepted:

- Choose Iowa Value-Added Grant is now open for applications. Applications will close January 31, 2025 at Noon CST.

### Contact

[ChooseIowaGrant@IowaAgriculture.gov](mailto:ChooseIowaGrant@IowaAgriculture.gov)

## 2. How to apply for a Choose Iowa Grant

1. [Create an account](#)
2. [Log into your account](#)
3. Click on the Grants tab
4. Select the grant program



### Prior Recipients

## Office Hours

Have questions about the Choose Iowa Value-Added grant? We will be hosting two different dates for virtual office hours for answering all your questions about the application, grant process, etc. You do not need to be logged in for the entirety of the office hours – stay as long as you need to get your questions answered.

If neither of these time slots work for you, reach out to us at [chooseiowagrants@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:chooseiowagrants@iowaagriculture.gov), and we would be happy to set up something that works for your schedule.

**January 3 from 11am - Noon**

**January 22 from 5pm - 6pm**

## Highlights:

- Maximum awarded up to \$25,000 per grant awardee.
- Applicants must provide a minimum of one-to-one (1:1) financial match from private sources such as cash, financing or other grant funds for total project costs. In-kind contributions are not accepted.
  - Example: An individual applying for a grant of \$5,000 must provide at least \$5,000 from other sources for a project total of \$10,000.
- Grant funds are paid out as a reimbursement after grant project(s) are completed.
- Projects cannot be in progress before a grant is awarded and must be able to be completed in 12 months or less.

	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>
Funds available to award	\$463,000	\$463,000	\$463,000
Total funds requested	\$1,286,217	\$1,130,139	TBD

3. Click on the Grants tab
4. Select the grant program

## Prior Recipients

- [Value-Added Grant Recipients 2022-2023](#)
- [Value-Added Grant Recipients 2023-2024](#)

## Other grants administered by IDALS:

[Dairy Business Builder Grants](#)

[Specialty Crop Block Grants](#)

[Renewable Fuel Infrastructure Program \(RFIP\)](#)

[Iowa Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program \(RFSI\)](#)

## Other Iowa agriculture grant opportunities:

[Brighter Future Fund | American Farmland Trust](#)

[Farmers Market Promotion Program](#)

[Heartland Regional Food Business Center: Business Builder Grants - Information Sheet](#)

[Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation grant resources](#)

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[Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation grant resources](#)

[Iowa State University Extension & Outreach Funding Opportunities for Local Food Producers](#)

[HFFI Local & Regional Healthy Food Financing](#)

[Partnerships Program - America's Healthy Food Financing Initiative](#)

[Practical Farmers of Iowa | Cost-Share Program](#)

[USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Grant Opportunities](#)

[USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grants in Iowa | Agricultural Marketing Resource Center info about VAPG](#)

[USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants](#)

# USDA Grants

Administered through



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# Specialty Crop Block Grant

- What is a Specialty Crop?
  - Fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)
  - Examples and additional information  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>



# Specialty Crop Block Grant

- Who is eligible to apply?
  - Iowa agencies, universities, institutions, and producer, industry, and community-based organizations.
  - Single organizations, and individuals are encouraged to participate as project partners.
  - Applicants must reside, and/or conduct their business in Iowa.
  - Must be a legal entity with a UEI number and have the legal capacity to contract.

# Specialty Crop Block Grant

## IDALS Details:

- Funding around \$350,000 typically
  - (last year \$368,627.98)
- Projects can be up to \$30,000
- ~14 applications approved per year

## Projects include:

- High tunnel
- Shared kitchen
- Green house
- Christmas trees
- Marketing
- Hazelnuts
- Wine
- Perennial grasses
- Food hubs
- Fruits/vegetables
- No-Till
- Farm to School

# Specialty Crop Block Grant

## Learn more:

- [iowaAgriculture.gov > Programs > Specialty Crop Block Grant](https://iowaagriculture.gov/Programs/Specialty-Crop-Block-Grant)
- <https://iowaagriculture.gov/agricultural-diversification-market-development-bureau/specialty-crop-block-grant-program>
- **Amy Gamble, program administrator**  
[Amy.Gamble@IowaAgriculture.gov](mailto:Amy.Gamble@IowaAgriculture.gov)

# Local Food for Schools Grant



Producers able to sell to:

- K-12 schools participating in the National School Lunch Program
- Child Care Institutions participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

- **Questions:**

John Krzton-Presson, program planner

[John.Krzton-Presson@IowaAgriculture.gov](mailto:John.Krzton-Presson@IowaAgriculture.gov)

# Local Food for Schools Grant

## Learn more:

- [IowaAgriculture.gov](https://iowaagriculture.gov) > Within the Department > [Agricultural Diversification & Market Development](#) > [LFS](#)

or

- <https://iowaagriculture.gov/agricultural-diversification-market-development-bureau/local-food-schools>

## Questions:

- **John Krzton-Presson** - [John.Krzton-Presson@IowaAgriculture.gov](mailto:John.Krzton-Presson@IowaAgriculture.gov)



# Questions



**Beth Romer**

*Choose Iowa Program Director, IDALS*

[Beth.Romer@IowaAgriculture.gov](mailto:Beth.Romer@IowaAgriculture.gov)



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**Amy Gamble**

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**John Krzton-Presson**

*LFS Program Administrator, IDALS*

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