

Meat and Poultry Processing Grant Guidelines

July 22, 2020

Purpose

The Missouri General Assembly appropriated \$20 million in federal funds to support Missouri meat processors, available under section 601(a) of the Social Security Act, as added by 5001 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”). The Missouri Department of Agriculture (“Department”) will administer the Meat and Poultry Processing Grant Program.

The Meat and Poultry Processing Grant was created to support Missouri meat and poultry processing facilities, with fewer than 200 employees, to address supply chain disruptions and mitigate health and environmental impacts as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Projects should aim to improve food supply resilience through increasing livestock or poultry slaughter, expanding meat or poultry processing capacity, or promoting worker safety. Grants may reimburse workforce assistance, equipment, capital improvements and other eligible costs incurred from March 1, 2020 through November 15, 2020.

Funding will be available for federally inspected, state inspected, and custom exempt slaughter and processing facilities. Both existing facilities and new facilities that will soon be in operation are eligible to apply. All facilities must provide proof of their federal grant of inspection, state grant of inspection, or application of state grant of exemption, no later than November 30, 2020.

Reimbursement Grant Program Parameters

1. The grant program is statewide.
2. Each eligible meat and/or processing facility or prospective facility is limited to one application.
3. A total of \$20 million in grant funding is available. The Department reserves the right to modify grant awards if total eligible applicant reimbursable expenses exceed the appropriated \$20 million program cap.
4. The maximum reimbursement grant amount will be determined by the Applicant’s demonstrated Level of eligibility achieved no later than November 30, 2020. Applicants may apply for a Level which they do not currently qualify for, but must demonstrate qualifications for the higher Level no later than November 30, 2020. The three Levels are intended to incentivize facilities to increase livestock or poultry slaughter and processing and to become an inspected or exempted facility in the near term. Increased Missouri meat and poultry slaughter and processing facility capacity will add resilience to food supply chain disruptions and mitigate health and environmental impacts as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Level 1 – Maximum \$200,000 Reimbursement Grant

- Federal or state inspected meat and/or poultry slaughter and processing facility
- Facility must conduct livestock or poultry slaughter
- Applications will be accepted from prospective facilities that are not yet inspected or that do not yet conduct slaughter. However, no funds will be disbursed until proof of a grant of inspection for slaughter is provided to the Department.

Level 2 – Maximum \$100,000 Reimbursement Grant

- Federal or state inspected meat and/or poultry processing facility
- Facility does not conduct livestock or poultry slaughter, but does provide further processing under inspection
- Applications will be accepted from prospective facilities that are not yet inspected. However, no funds will be disbursed until proof of a grant of inspection is provided to the Department.

Level 3 – Maximum \$20,000 Reimbursement Grant

- Custom exempt meat processing and/or slaughter facility
 - Applications will be accepted from prospective facilities that do not have a grant of exemption yet. However, no funds will be disbursed until proof of a grant of exemption is provided to the Department.
5. Reimbursable costs shall be incurred from March 1, 2020 through November 15, 2020 and must improve food supply resilience during the COVID-19 public health emergency.
 6. The Department will review proposals for eligibility, demonstrated need in response to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, and project impact. Projects should aim to improve food supply resilience through increasing livestock or poultry slaughter, expanding meat or poultry processing capacity, or promoting worker safety.
 7. Upon notification of award, applicant must enter into a program agreement with the Department outlining program details, requirements, and state and federal terms and conditions; and execute a company certification.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must meet the following requirements to be eligible for a grant award:

1. The applicant must be an existing meat and/or processing facility or a prospective facility that will have a federal grant of inspection, state grant of inspection, or application of state grant of exemption no later than November 30, 2020.
2. The applicant must be a meat and/or poultry processing facility located in Missouri;
3. The applicant must be a meat and/or poultry processing facility with fewer than 200 employees;
4. The applicant must be registered to do business in Missouri and in Good Standing with the Secretary of State, if applicable;
5. The applicant must complete and submit Form 943 to obtain a tax clearance certificate (valid for 90 days) from the Missouri Department of Revenue for each owner and the business. Form 943 is available at <http://dor.mo.gov/forms/943.pdf>;
6. The applicant must not employ illegal workers and must provide proof of enrollment in E-Verify; and
7. Prior to award reimbursement, the applicant must register as a vendor with the State of Missouri through the [MissouriBUYS](#) web portal.

Timeline

The Missouri Department of Agriculture will accept applications beginning July 22, 2020 and will receive applications through August 31, 2020.

- July 22, 2020 | Announcement of program, Guidelines and Application made available online
- August 31, 2020 | Last day to submit applications to the Department (grants@mda.mo.gov)
- September 15, 2020 (targeted) | Applicants will be notified of proposal acceptance or denial
- November 15, 2020 | Last day that eligible expenses may be incurred for reimbursement. (Expenses may be incurred from March 1, 2020 – November 15, 2020)
- November 30, 2020 | Date by which all expenditure and reimbursement documentation must be submitted to the Department.

Eligible Activities & Expenses

The Missouri Department of Agriculture (“Department”) will review grant proposals for necessity, reasonability, and eligibility of costs based on U.S. Department of Treasury guidance for CARES Act fund distribution. U.S. Department of the Treasury guidance on eligible costs is updated regularly, therefore eligible costs are subject to change. The Department reserves the right to make changes to, and final determination of, eligible program costs.

Generally, projects should aim to improve food supply resilience through increasing livestock or poultry slaughter, expanding meat or poultry processing capacity, or promoting worker safety as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Grants may reimburse workforce assistance, equipment, capital improvements and other eligible costs incurred from March 1, 2020 through November 15, 2020. Tentative eligible costs have been identified below.

Eligible Costs

- **Capital improvements to expand capacity** (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities)
- **Upgrades to utilities** (including water, electric, heat, refrigeration, freezing, and waste facilities)
- **Livestock intake and storage equipment**
- **Processing and manufacturing equipment** (including cutting equipment, mixers, grinders, sausage stuffers, smokers, curing equipment, pipes, motors, pumps, and valves)
- **Packaging and handling equipment** (including sealing, bagging, boxing, labeling, conveying, and product moving equipment)
- **Warehouse equipment** (including storage and curing racks)
- **Waste treatment/management equipment** (including tanks, blowers, separators, dryers, digesters, and equipment that uses waste to produce energy, fuel, or industrial products)
- **Facility reconfiguration** (including labor and materials for changes necessary to meet social distancing guidelines)
- **Technology that allows increased capacity or business resilience** (including software and hardware related to business functions, logistics, inventory management, plant production controls, temperature monitoring controls, and website design enabling e-commerce)

- **Rental of buildings, facilities, or equipment necessary to expand capacity or facilitate social distancing** (including mobile slaughter units and mobile refrigeration units used exclusively for meat or poultry processing)
- **Costs associated with increased inspections or becoming inspected** (including USDA Inspector Overtime, HACCP consultation)
- **Hazard pay** (for employees in facilities with COVID-19 positive cases)
- **Costs associated with COVID-19 sanitation and worker safety supplies** (PPE, hand sanitizer, employee prescreening equipment, face coverings)
- **Costs associated with employer provided COVID-19 testing**
- **Other business adaptation and diversification activities** (explain how expenses are necessary to expand capacity or promote worker safety)

Ineligible Activities

- Funds cannot be used for meat and/or poultry processing facilities that employ 200 employees or more
- Funds cannot be used for meat and/or poultry processing facilities engaged in illegal activity under federal or state law or regulation
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal, state, or local government funding
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed by insurance
- Land acquisition or lease
- Building construction at new facilities
- Building acquisition
- Wages (non-hazard and non-reconfiguration labor)

Required Documentation

E-Verify MOU

1. In addition to certifying that your organization does not employ illegal aliens, all applicants must: (1) enroll in E-Verify; (2) check the box on the Certification confirming enrollment and participation in E-Verify, and (3) provide supporting documentation. All applicants must complete this form and attach a copy of the E-Verify memorandum to the program application.
2. The E-Verify Program, conducted jointly by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Verification Division and the Social Security Administration (SSA), is designed to provide employment status information to determine the eligibility of applicants for employment. E-Verify requires that participating commercial employers use the automated Verification Information System (VIS) to check the SSA and the USCIS databases to verify the employment authorization of ALL newly hired employees. An employer's participation in E-Verify is currently free. To access the E-Verify website, go to: <https://e-verify.uscis.gov/enroll/>.
3. To access the 'electronically signed MOU' – the following must already be completed:
 - a. Must have successfully enrolled in the E-Verify program,
 - b. Must have successfully completed the tutorial. To retrieve a copy of your electronically signed MOU:
 - c. Wait until you have received a Confirmation email from E-Verify / USCIS that the company is successfully enrolled in the program
 - d. Log back into the Account

- e. Click on “Edit Company Profile” in the left menu
 - f. Scroll about halfway down and click on the green “View MOU” button. (Make sure all pop-up blockers have been disabled – the electronically signed version pop-ups in a separate screen)
 - g. ONLY the Program Administrator can access the electronically signed MOU
4. For additional assistance, contact E-Verify using the toll free Help line number, 888-464-4218.

MissouriBUYS

1. The State of Missouri has implemented a secure, web-based statewide eProcurement system, MissouriBUYS. **The applicant is not required to register in MissouriBUYS prior to application, but must be registered in order to receive funds from the State.**
2. As a recipient who will be reimbursed by the State, you will be required to register your business with the Office of Administration through MissouriBUYS. The vendor registration portal is available on the MissouriBUYS website at <https://missouribuys.mo.gov>.
3. Clicking on the ‘register’ link will allow you to get a username and password. There are links to informational documents and a training video if you need help with the process. Prior to starting registration, please make sure you have the following information available:
 - Organization’s Taxpayer ID Number (TIN)
 - Business Type (Corporation, LLC, Sole Proprietorship, etc.)
 - Email Address
 - ACH-EFT Payment Information
 - Internal Revenue Service W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and
 - Certification

Grant Participation Process

1. Submit a grant proposal, including supporting documentation as indicated on the application submission checklist (Section 4 of the application) on or before August 31, 2020.
2. The Department receives and reviews applications.
3. Applicant awards will be determined at the discretion of the Department based on the applicant’s eligibility, eligible costs, and overall availability of program funds.
4. Applicant receives written approval or denial from the Department once review process is complete (targeted date is September 15, 2020).
5. Upon notification of award, applicant must enter into a program agreement with the Department outlining program details, requirements, and state and federal terms and conditions; and execute a company certification.
6. Applicant submits Reimbursement Form and supporting documentation to access the funds no later than November 30, 2020. The Reimbursement Form may be submitted one time per applicant.
 - a. Supporting documentation includes, but is not limited to: final report detailing the activities and project goals completed, detailed listing of expenses, all paid invoices/detailed receipts/proof of payment, photograph(s) of the completed project, and proof of inspection status (federal grant of inspection, state grant of inspection, or application of state grant of exemption).
7. Applicant receives reimbursement for eligible expenses from the Department.

Grant Application Instructions

1. Grant applications must be emailed to grants@mda.mo.gov
2. The document must have the following naming convention:
 - a. Applicant Name- MeatProcessorGrant—2020
3. Approved applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with MDA and register in MissouriBUYS prior to November 15, 2020.

Additional Requirements and Information

1. The Department reserves the right to inspect and audit the project site for as long as one year following the final payment received by the Applicant.
2. If project costs exceed the budget included with the application, grantees will be required to finish the proposed project without an increase in the grant award.
3. Applicants who commit fraud or misrepresentation, or who do not adequately document or retain sufficient documentation, shall be subject to state and federal civil and criminal recourse to the extent permitted by law.
4. The applicant must retain records relating to the grant for a period of at least five years from the date of the final reimbursement payment received by the applicant for this grant. The applicant must agree that such records will be submitted to the Department or its designees or representatives upon request or upon audit of the completed project by the Department, the State Auditor's Office, the U.S. Treasury, or other authorized state or federal authorities.
5. In awarding funds under this program, the Department may coordinate with the Missouri Office of Administration and other agencies or entities that the Department deems necessary.

Questions?

For questions related to the application process, contact:

Missouri Department of Agriculture
Division of Agriculture Business Development
(573) 751-4762
grants@mda.mo.gov