



Adirondack North Country Association
67 Main Street, Suite 201
Saranac Lake, NY 12983
518 891-6200

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Request for Proposals

Agency: Adirondack North Country Association

Contact: Jon Ignatowski, Manager of Food Systems Business

Phone: (518) 891-6200 ext. 124

Email: jignatowski@adirondack.org

Award Amount: up to \$10,000 through individual awards

Application deadline: Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.

Grant Opportunity for North Country Agricultural Producers

Executive Summary

The Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) is offering up to \$10,000 to eligible North Country agricultural producers for projects that expand markets for American agricultural products, create new markets, improve supply chains, increase access to market infrastructure, and promote long-term economic sustainability. A total of \$390,683 is available, and it is estimated that at least 40 projects will be awarded.

Organizational Background

[Adirondack North Country Association \(ANCA\)](#) is a regional nonprofit and economic hub building shared prosperity across northern New York. Focused on small businesses, climate & energy, local food systems, and welcoming & belonging, ANCA works to ensure the long-term viability of the North Country, empowering individual wellbeing, economic strength, and regional stewardship. ANCA works with individuals, groups, and communities across 14 counties to navigate resources, cultivate networks, generate economic and community solutions, build shared capacity, and shape region-boosting narratives.

Project Overview

ANCA has received funding through the USDA NRCS' Advancing Markets for Producers (AMP) Program to support agricultural producers in the North Country Region. Funds will be allocated to projects that align with one or more of the stated priorities:

- Supporting producers to develop sustained methods for expansion of markets for American agricultural products;
- Creating new markets, improving supply chains, and enabling direct to consumer sales;
- Improving collective resource sharing, access to market infrastructure, and promotion of long-term economic sustainability within the amplification of market expansion.

Agricultural products means agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, and dairy products, livestock and the products thereof, the products of poultry and bee raising, the edible products of forestry, and any and all products raised or produced on farms and processed or manufactured products thereof.

Proposals will be scored, per the rubric below, on the proposals alignment with AMP priorities, viability, anticipated return on investment, and regional impact.

Projects must be completed by December 31, 2026.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be located inside ANCA's 14-county service area, which includes: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Oneida, Oswego, Warren, and Washington.

Eligible applicants must:

- Own, lease or control cultivated fields or pastureland,
- Intend to sell products in 2026, and
- Have recorded gross farm income of less than \$250,000 in 2025.

Beginning farmers are eligible to apply, and proof of farm income is not required.

Joint proposals with multiple applicants will not be considered.

Only the owner(s) of the farm may apply. Only one application per farm may be submitted. In the event of multiple farms having one common owner, only the common owner may apply, and the common owner may only submit one application in total.

Eligible Projects & Expenses

Applicants may apply for a grant of up to \$10,000. The following projects are eligible for funding:

- Alley cropping*
- Composting facilities*
- High tunnels*
- Low tunnels*
- Silvopasture*
- Tree / shrub preparation and planting*
- Marketing assistance
- Market development
- Market expansion
- Supplies or special purpose equipment that result in the creation and expansion of markets

***Consultation is required for these projects prior to application submission. Federal environmental review is necessary for these specific practices. Please contact Jon Ignatowski to schedule a meeting. (All applicants are invited and encouraged to request a consultation to ensure project and cost eligibility before applying.)**

All funds must be used for direct implementation of the project. Funds can be used for the following categories: supplies, materials, technical service fees, contractors, and special purpose equipment with a per-unit cost less than \$10,000.

Special Purpose Equipment is equipment used only for technical activities. Examples could include food processing equipment, tools used for the planting or harvesting of a specific commodity, or other items that are necessary to carry out technical activities. Equipment that serves more than one commodity will generally not be eligible.

A line item budget will be required as part of the application process.

Ineligible expenses

General purpose equipment, buildings, and land, applicant salaries, employee wages and salaries, indirect expenses, expenses related to motor vehicles, grant writing expenses, working capital, workforce housing, office supplies and expenses, and all expenses incurred prior to the grant award.

Equipment that serves more than one commodity will generally not be eligible, nor will special purpose equipment with a per-unit cost of \$10,000 or more.

Matching Funds

Matching funds are not required and will not result in any application scoring benefit. Applicants may not use this grant as match for other grants or loans, nor may other grants or loans be used as match for this one. Applicants may match their own cash-on-hand to these funds, but still must still conform to the eligible cost requirements, including the per-unit cost limit for special purpose equipment. In cases where cash matches are required to commence and/or complete a project, we reserve the right to request proof of cash-on-hand as a condition of the grant agreement process.

Award Requirements

Following award announcement and prior to contract signing, funded producers must comply with the following USDA requirements:

- Establish Farm Records with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) (have farm, tract, and fields numbers in place);
- Complete an AD-2047 (Customer Data Worksheet to facilitate the collection of customer data for Business Partner Record);
- Certify highly erodible land conservation (HEL) and wetland conservation (WC) compliance via Form AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification; and
- Certify that they are not a foreign person or entity.

Award Details

Funds will be paid up front to awarded producers - grant funds cannot be used to reimburse expenses incurred prior to the disbursement of funds. Prior to grant fund disbursement, awarded producers will be required to sign a MOU that commits the awarded producer to using funds as proposed in their application by the stated project deadline, or risk clawback or cancellation of grant funds.

Scope of Work

Awarded producers shall:

- A. Sign an MOU with ANCA that outlines a specific plan for proposed purchases and a scope of work before receiving payment;
- B. Complete work plan with support from ANCA by December 31, 2026;
- C. Complete reporting requirements described in the MOU.

Application Requirements

Please complete the linked application: <https://bit.ly/40sn4fy> Application accommodations are available to applicants who cannot complete the linked application for personal, technology or other reasons. Please reach out to Jon Ignatowski at the contact in the application header for modified instructions.

Proposal Evaluation

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

Compliance	
The applicant owns, <u>leases or controls</u> cultivated fields or pastureland in ANCA's 14-county region <i>Yes, proceed; No, project ineligible.</i>	Yes / No
The applicant will sell products in 2026. <i>Yes, proceed; No, project ineligible.</i>	Yes / No
The applicant recorded less than \$250,000 in farm income in 2025. <i>Yes, proceed; No, project ineligible.</i>	Yes / No
The proposal aligns with one or more of the AMP priorities outlined in <i>Project Overview</i> . <i>Yes, proceed; No, project ineligible.</i>	Yes / No
All proposed costs are eligible as outlined in <i>Eligible Projects and Expenses</i> . <i>Yes, proceed; No, project ineligible.</i>	Yes / No
Criteria	Maximum Points
Alignment with AMP priorities: To what extent does the proposal show a clear alignment with one or more AMP priorities, and demonstrate a focus on expanding existing markets and creating new markets.	50

Project viability: To what extent does the proposal demonstrate viability of implementation, including an assessment about the project cost and applicant’s experience with the proposed activities.	20
Return on investment: To what extent does the proposal demonstrate that costs are well-researched, allocable and reasonable, and that the investment of project funds will yield significant benefits.	20
Regional impact: To what extent does the proposal demonstrate a long-term benefit or benefits for regional markets.	10
Total	100

Proposal Due Date: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.

All applicants will receive a written response to their proposal no later than Friday, May 1, 2026. Depending on the number of responses, we aim to respond earlier. We will not be able to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Additional Information

A program webinar will be held on March 26 at 5pm. To attend the webinar, please register using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/iG3J3lkgTMi8AvuMbAk7Og>

Questions about the program will be accepted between March 18th and March 27th, and answers will be published on the program website. Questions can be directed to Jon Ignatowski at jignatowski@adironack.org.