



# Export Expansion Grant 2025 (Meat/Crop) Request for Proposals (RFP)

**Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. central time on April 9, 2025.**

More information on the Export Expansion Grant materials is available on the DATCP website at: <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/ExportExpansionGrants.aspx>

## Contact Information

Kevin Webb – Contract Specialist  
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
2811 Agriculture Drive  
Madison, WI 53708-8911  
(608) 224-5049  
[DATCPDADGrants@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDADGrants@wisconsin.gov)

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## Program Overview

The Export Expansion Grant is a competitive grant program that is part of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP) Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports. DATCP manages the grant with the objectives to accelerate export growth of Wisconsin meat and crop products through export expansion projects. Successful projects will meet one or more of the following objectives:

- Cultivate new-to-export and emerging-export agribusinesses.
- Build exporting capacity and knowledge of the industry.
- Increase understanding of foreign markets and consumers.
- Make products export ready or develop products for specific export markets.
- Promote Wisconsin products in foreign markets.

## Available Funds

Funds will be distributed through a competitive review process. Individual grants will be awarded in amounts between \$25,000 and \$50,000 with a one-year term. Projects must be completed and all requests for reimbursement and documentation provided to DATCP no later than May 1, 2026. Term extensions will not be available.

Matching funds are required at 20% of the grant award. Matching funds can be cash or in-kind. Matching funds expensed during the project must be documented in the same manner as proof of reimbursable grant expenses.

This is a reimbursement grant. Grant funds will not be advanced; awardees must request reimbursement and provide supporting documentation and proof of payment for eligible costs being claimed.

Funding will be distributed in accordance with the provisions in s. 93.425, Wis. Stats. to benefit agribusinesses in the following product groups: meat, including poultry and fish, and meat products; and crop and crop products. DATCP staff will determine the product category a project will be assigned based on the Harmonized Tariff System code of the majority of products the applicant is currently exporting or plans to export.

DATCP reserves the right to partially fund projects or award the full amount of available funds to a single project.

## Project Timeline

Event	Date
RFP released	March 19, 2025
Applications due to WI DATCP	April 9, 2025
Applications scored and selected by review committee	April 21, 2025
Approval letter and contract issued by WI DATCP	May 5, 2025
Anticipated executed contract	May 16, 2025
Anticipated project start date	May 23, 2025
All projects must conclude, reimbursement requests and documentation submitted	May 1, 2026
Final report on project results and impact deadline	June 1, 2026

## Eligible Applicants

Applicants must satisfy the following criteria to be deemed eligible for funding under the Export Expansion Grant Program. An applicant must:

- Be a not-for-profit organization located in Wisconsin currently serving or demonstrating the ability to serve Wisconsin agribusiness companies.
- Demonstrate the capability to receive, manage and provide reporting on the projects that meet the grant objectives.
- Not be an employee of DATCP or an employee's immediate family member (i.e. parent, sibling, spouse, or child).

Entities that have already received an Export Expansion Grant may apply with a new project.

Examples of eligible applicants are: Wisconsin agribusiness associations; Wisconsin technical colleges and state and private universities; regional, county, and municipal economic development organizations; and others currently serving or demonstrating the ability to serve Wisconsin agribusiness companies. Eligible non-profit organizations may collaborate with other state, regional and national organizations to complete their selected projects.

Wisconsin agribusiness companies are defined as business establishments located in Wisconsin that produce and/or process products made from agricultural sources. Agribusinesses are generally categorized in the 2017 North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) under category numbers:

- 011 — Agriculture, Forestry Fishing and Hunting
- 311 — Food Manufacturing
- 312 — Beverage and Tobacco Manufacturing
- 3161 — Leather Hide Tanning and Finishing
- 321 — Wood Product Manufacturing

Each applicant must designate as a contract signer an individual who has authority to sign a contract with DATCP on its behalf. Employees of DATCP and immediate family members (i.e., parents, siblings, spouses, and children) are not eligible to receive a grant or participate as a project collaborator.

### Eligible Projects

Export expansion projects must meet one or more of the Export Expansion Grant Objectives and demonstrate a benefit to agribusinesses in one or more of the product groups included in 93.425, Wis. Stats. Projects will be selected based on scope, impact and export growth potential for meat, including poultry and fish, and meat products, and crop and crop products. Eligible products are those classified in the Harmonized Tariff System (HTS) chapters 01, 02, 03, 05, 06-24, 35 and 44. Dairy ingredients in an amount of 49.9% or less by weight, classified in the HTS under: 04, 2105, 3501, 170210-170211, 170219, and 350220 are also eligible and will be categorized as either a Meat or Crop product depending on the majority of other food ingredients in the finished product.

The intent is for agribusiness industry organizations, economic development organizations and academic institutions to develop innovative and impactful projects to provide strategic and long-term growth of Wisconsin agricultural exports and exporters. Project examples include but are not limited to:

- Contract with a marketing agency to promote meat or crop products globally
- Create an Export Accelerator program to evaluate and refine a company's export business model.
- Develop a freight and logistics consolidation hub to improve economies of scale for high-value perishable products.
- Conduct consumer taste preference or segmentation studies in key opportunity markets.
- Create and deliver an export compliance, documentation and operations course and certificate at the technical college level focused on food and agricultural products.
- Conduct agribusiness industry specific trade promotion activities such as inbound buyer missions and outbound buyer missions.
- Deploy a marketing and promotion campaign targeted to foreign buyers demonstrating sustainability efforts and animal welfare programs undertaken by Wisconsin producers.

## Budget and Expense Detail

### Eligible Expenses

- Travel expenses associated with a trade promotion activity for organization staff, contractors or inbound international buyers, including:
  - Airfare in accordance with Wisconsin in-state rates (fares above coach/economy or equivalent shall not be reimbursable)
  - Lodging in accordance with Wisconsin domestic rates or United States State Department international per diem rates, though exceptions may be made for prevailing trade show and conference rates, with prior approval, in writing, by DATCP.
    - Nightly in-state hotel rates must not exceed \$103.00 for Milwaukee, Waukesha and Racine counties, or \$98.00 for all other counties.
  - Ground transportation, including mileage for staff travel reimbursed at the Wisconsin State rate (\$0.51/mile) and bus rental for inbound buyer groups.
  - Hosted meals at the Wisconsin state rates in the U.S. and U.S. State Department Per Diem rates overseas.
  - Venue and audio-visual equipment rental.
- Marketing material production and publication costs.
- Event promotion costs.
- Purchased research and reports on foreign markets, industries and buyers.
- Subscriptions to international data tools and reporting and research services.
- Fees for contractors with experience in food and agricultural product export compliance, international business development, marketing, export logistics, market intelligence, product and packaging development for foreign markets.
- Translation, interpretation and localization services.
- Food and agricultural products, packaging materials and supplies for product development.
- Advertising and promotion related to the grant project.
- Other expenses not listed will be reviewed by DATCP staff for eligibility.

### Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include:

- Real estate purchases.
- Repayment of loans or mortgages.
- Capital equipment expenses.
- Rent or contract payments for time periods extending beyond the term of the grant contract.
- Administrative or overhead costs that are not direct costs of the grant project.

- Advertising expenses other than those related to promotion of the grant project.
- Legal fees.
- Lobbying, fundraising or other political activity.
- Any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.
- Travel costs not in accordance with Wisconsin travel rules and rates.
- Alcoholic Beverages.

#### Budget Clarification

- Refer to the state's [Pocket Travel Guide](#) for basic travel reimbursement limits. Travel must be directly related to project related activities.
- Expenses (both requested and matched) must directly result in anticipated measurable outcomes and incurred within the project term dates.
- A single budget item may be completely funded by the grant, completely contribute toward the match requirement, or be partially funded by the grant and partially contribute toward match.
- The budget justification should fully describe all project expenses, both requested and matched. The justification should also explain how each expense is necessary and how it will achieve project goals.
- For salary and subcontractor/consultant expenses, applicants must identify who will perform the work, what work will be done, and the hourly rate. The hourly rate can include wages and fringe benefits.
- Itemized supporting materials and proof of payment is required for all reimbursements and matching contributions.

#### Matching Funds

Matching funds contributed to the project must total at least 20% of awarded funds. Matching funds can be cash or in-kind and must also be eligible project expenses within the grant term. Items not included in the budget are not eligible for match.

#### Application Submission

The application form is located on the DATCP website at:

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/ExportExpansionGrants.aspx>

**Applications must be emailed to [DATCPDADGrants@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDADGrants@Wisconsin.gov). Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on April 9, 2025.**

If you do not have computer access to download and complete the application, contact Kevin Webb – Contract Specialist – 608-224-5049.

Refer to the Evaluation Criteria below when completing applications. If you have any questions, please contact [DATCPDADGrants@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDADGrants@Wisconsin.gov).

Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered for funding. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) encourages submitting proposals early to ensure it is received prior to the deadline. Incomplete proposals with unanswered questions or missing letters of commitment may not be considered for funding.

Applications must include the following:

1. Legal name of the organization, title and name of contract signer, and name of project coordinator.
2. Contact phone number and email address.
3. Grant Request and estimated total cost of the project.
4. Project start and end date.
5. How the project focus will accelerate export growth of Meat or Crops through the export expansion projects.
6. A project summary including why the project is important to your organization, steps/actions/processes that will take place, and results/changes that will happen as a result of the project.
7. A description of how your project will meet one of the following objectives:
  - a. Cultivate new-to-export and emerging-export agribusinesses.
  - b. Build exporting capacity and knowledge of the industry.
  - c. Increase understanding of foreign markets and consumers.
  - d. Make products export-ready or develop products for specific export markets.
  - e. Promote Wisconsin products in foreign markets.
8. A description of how your project will benefit the Wisconsin agribusiness export expansion efforts.
9. A description of your work plan including the major steps/activities needed to complete your project, who is responsible for the step/activity, and the timeline for each step/activity.
10. An estimated total project budget, providing the grant amount, matching funds, and total amount for each of the following expense categories:
  - a. Salaries - position, number of hours and hourly rate.
  - b. Services/Subcontractors, including translation, interpretation and localization services – organization or individual name, number of hours and hourly rate.
  - c. Travel – destination, method and rate.
  - d. Market information, data subscriptions, purchased research, reports –name of report or service.
  - e. Promotion, marketing, publication expenses – item description.
  - f. Supplies and materials – item description, number of units, and unit cost.
  - g. Miscellaneous Expenses – item description.
  - h. The budget must also list total sums for the grant amount, matching funds, and the entire project.

## Application Review

This is a competitive grant process. Each application must include sufficient information to allow the reviewers to evaluate the proposal. Each application will be reviewed by a committee comprising DATCP staff, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation staff, and food and agriculture export professionals. Applications will receive a rating based on the application scoring criteria below with a maximum scoring being 100 points. The rating score will determine the proposals to be funded.

**Preference may be given for proposals that:**

- Demonstrate multiple benefits to agribusiness exporters or the broader industry.
- Show collaboration between multiple organizations.
- Offer an innovative approach to grow Wisconsin agricultural product exports.

DATCP may require additional information and/or an establishment visit to review the proposed project.

**Evaluation Criteria**

1. Grant Application (maximum 10 points)
  - a. Is the project viable, well organized, thought out, and explained in a way that makes sense and sounds like it can be carried out successfully?
2. Statement of Need (maximum 35 points)
  - a. How well does the project support the program objectives of:
    - i. Increase understanding of international buyers
    - ii. Gain foreign market insights
    - iii. Develop or enhance a Wisconsin brand identity for food and agricultural products
    - iv. Attract and develop new exporters
    - v. Improve export operations and logistics
    - vi. Make products export ready
  - b. How well does the Project Summary elaborate how the project will accomplish one or more of the program objectives?
  - c. Is the project important and timely? Does the project have support from agribusinesses?
3. Activities and Outcomes (maximum 25 points)
  - a. Does the project make sense? Do the activities fit the project intent and objectives?
  - b. Has the applicant developed measurable outcomes for their project and do the outcomes fit the project activities and show that the project met the need or purpose?
  - c. Does the applicant have the experience, capacity, qualifications, and finances (including matching funds) to carry out the project as proposed?
  - d. How well do activities result in at least one positive outcome of the grant:
    - i. Increase understanding of international buyers and markets



- ii. Develop or enhance a Wisconsin Brand Identity in foreign markets
  - iii. Attract and develop new exports
  - iv. Improve operations and logistics
  - v. Make products export ready
- 4. Budget (maximum 20 points)
  - a. Is the budget adequate for the project plan?
  - b. How well does each item in the budget relate to the described project?
  - c. Is each item necessary to achieve the outcome?
  - d. Is total amount justifiable for the return on investment?
  - e. How reasonable are costs for each item?
- 5. Extra Point (maximum 10 points)
  - a. Does the project:
    - i. Demonstrate multiple benefits to agribusiness exporters
    - ii. Show collaboration between multiple organizations
    - iii. Offer an innovative approach to grow Wisconsin agricultural product exports

## Grant Recipient Requirements

### Contracts

DATCP will develop a contract for each funded project. No funding commitment is final, and no project may begin incurring expenses until the contract is signed by the grant recipient and DATCP. An appendix completed by the grantee and approved by DATCP finalizing the details of the work plan, timeline, budget, and implementation plan will be included in the contract.

Grant contracts must be signed and returned to DATCP within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the contract within 30 days of receipt may result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay is approved, in writing by DATCP. No extensions are available for this Export Expansion Grant round. Amendments are required for project changes or budget category changes of more than 10% of the award total.

### Reporting Requirements

DATCP reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project. Progress reports are due every three months from the contract execution date and will include at a minimum:

- Project status.
- Steps completed in the last three months.
- Actions to be completed in the next three months.
- Any barriers or issues with the project.

An end-of-project summary report will be required. This summary report will include at a minimum:

- Brief description of project intent.
- Summary of project accomplishments and outcomes, including the benefits to the agricultural product groups of meat and meat products, crop and crop products.
- Other insights from project execution and recommendations for future improvements or projects building from the findings and results of the funded project.

In addition to this summary report, DATCP reserves the right to conduct follow-up surveys of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the Export Expansion Grant Program.

Applicants who do not submit reports on time or submit incomplete reports may be required to return all previously disbursed funds to DATCP and may be removed from future funding opportunities.

### Monitoring

Export Expansion program staff will monitor and evaluate each funded project. DATCP reserves the right to audit the applicant relating to the performance of the project during and up to four years after completion of the project. Monitoring may include site visits and review of recipients' financial records related to grant-funded activities. The Department reserves the right to monitor recipients' performance after the project's conclusion or the contract's expiration.

### Payments

This is a reimbursement grant. Payments will be made monthly, following DATCP's receipt of an invoice documenting expenses incurred by the grantee. An amount of 10% of the grant award will be held as a grant final payment. The final payment will be made upon submission of a final invoice and DATCP approval of the written summary report of the project. Invoices must be itemized, include receipts or other proof of payment in United States Dollars in English or with English translation.

### Pre-Award Costs

DATCP will not reimburse any costs incurred for work performed in the preparation of and production of an application or for any work performed prior to the contract's start date, including any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal.

### Budget Adjustments

If a substantial change (10% or greater of a budget category) in the budget is needed during the project period, a written request must be made to DATCP to reallocate budget funds between budget categories. The total budget amount cannot be increased.

## Record Requirements

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all correspondence with DATCP, receipts, invoices, and copies of reports and documents associated with the project. The grantee shall retain all data and other records relating to the acquisition and performance of the Grant Award Agreement for a period of four years after the completion of the contract. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records.

## Public Records Law

Applications submitted will be subject to disclosure under Wisconsin's Public Records Law, Wis. Stat. ch. 19, subch. II. If the grant applicant or recipient wants any information in an application to be deemed a trade secret, the information should be labeled using "trade secret" and the requested status should be noted to DATCP when the application is submitted. DATCP will notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be a trade secret. Such information may be kept confidential by DATCP only as authorized by law (see Wis. Stat. § 19.36(5)).

Contracts, reports, and other documentation are also subject to disclosure under Wisconsin's Public Records Law.

## Vetting

Prior to any award, applicants will be vetted in conjunction with a standard risk assessment. Potential risk factors such as delinquent taxes, pending lawsuits, conflicts of interests, instances of unpaid vendors, instances of uncompleted contracted activities, etc. may prevent awards. Vetting includes but is not limited to research via the United States General Service Administration, State of Wisconsin Ineligible Vendor List, Wisconsin Circuit Court Access, Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, Wisconsin Department of Revenue, and various other Wisconsin departments.

## Other Considerations

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of DATCP. DATCP reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use and authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement. DATCP also reserves the right to:

- Post funded proposals, summary reports and survey findings to the DATCP website.
- Reject any or all proposals received.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and agreement of applicant.
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to potential applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of Wisconsin.

- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants.
- Require a good faith effort on part of the project sponsor to work with DATCP subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results in Wisconsin.
- Withhold any payments when contract terms are not met.
- Partially fund applications.
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.
- Withhold or recoup any payments when contract conditions are not met or if the recipient submits false or misleading information to the department.
- Modify reporting requirements during the course of the project.
- Conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.