



## **2025 DATCP Dairy Processor Grant**

### **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

**Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on January 17, 2025.**

**Contact Information:**

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Dairy Processor Grant materials are available on the DATCP website

[https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Growing\\_WI/DairyDevelopment.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Growing_WI/DairyDevelopment.aspx)

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Dairy Processor Grant (DPG) strives to promote the growth of Wisconsin's dairy industry through grants to persons operating dairy processing plants, as defined by Wis. Stat. § 97.20(1)(h). The Dairy Processor Grant is available to processors for projects that are designed to do any of the following:

- Increase production, profitability, processing, marketing, or distribution of Wisconsin dairy products.
- Increase capital investment in the dairy industry.
- Apply new technologies related to dairy production.
- Improve the competitiveness of the Wisconsin dairy industry.
- Make more efficient use of farmland and other agricultural resources for dairy production.
- Create or retain jobs in the dairy industry.

The program is created by Wis. Stat. § 93.40(1)(g) and is funded by Wis. Stat. §§ 20.115(4)(dm).

## **AVAILABLE FUNDS**

Funds will be distributed through a competitive review process. Grants will be awarded for projects up to **\$50,000.00** and up to two years in duration.

## **APPLICATION AND FUNDING TIMING**

RFP is released	December 2, 2024
Applications due to DATCP	January 17, 2025
Applications scored and selected by review committee	February 3, 2025
Selected applications notified by DATCP	February 17, 2025
Anticipated project start date	April 1, 2025
All projects must conclude no later than	April 1, 2027

## **PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY**

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

- Operate a licensed dairy processing plant engaged in pasteurizing or manufacturing dairy products, or processing dairy products into other dairy products, for sale or distribution that is located in Wisconsin.
- Have a project that will make operational improvements, improve profitability, and/or involve a new process or innovation.
- Have no outstanding state penalties or violations and be in good standing with Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions.
- Not be DATCP employee or a parent, sibling, spouse, or child of a DATCP employee.

## **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

The DATCP Dairy Processor Grant is designed to provide access to services and resources for proposed dairy processing plant projects that enhance or develop the current business, solve an existing problem or concern at the plant, improve production or profitability, and/or help the

processor innovate. Focal areas for the grant are highlighted below. Projects could include multiple aspects from the following areas:

- Dairy plant modernization and expansion efforts to provide assistance with professional services costs related to siting, engineering, design, or layout of new facilities or production lines.
- Food safety: consulting services to help pass a food safety audit or certificate needed to meet a customer driven market requirement.
- Training of plant staff on food safety requirements, new technology, etc.
- Assistance for related professional services and consultants: developing new processes, wastewater treatment or handling, new uses for whey, or other product or process innovations.
- Efforts to improve/enhance staff retention, training, supervisory skills, and knowledge.
- Other dairy processing projects may be considered.

Preference may be given to applicants who do not have an open grant with DATCP's Division of Agricultural Development (DAD) as of the close of the application period. DATCP DAD grant programs include Dairy Processor Grant, Meat Processor Infrastructure Grant, Specialty Crop Block Grant, Buy Local Buy Wisconsin, and the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Grant.

### **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Eligible project expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Operating expenses directly related to the grant project, including expenses for salaries and wages, contract and consulting services, and travel expenses for mileage. Mileage reimbursement must follow state travel guidelines. The state mileage rate for use of a vehicle is \$0.51/mile.
- Training costs to improve employee skills. For example: food safety, skills for operating new technology, or managerial training.
- Equipment rental.
- The purchase of supplies, meaning items that have a per-unit acquisition cost of less than \$10,000.00 and the full value of which is ordinarily depreciable within one year.

### **INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Ineligible expenses include:

- Real estate purchases.
- Repayment of loans or mortgages.
- Rent or contract payments for time periods extending beyond the term of the grant contract.
- Equipment purchases, meaning items that have a per-unit acquisition cost of \$10,000.00 or more and the full value of which depreciates over more than one year.
- Administrative or overhead costs not directly related to the grant project.
- Advertising expenses.
- 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.
- Airfare, hotel, meals and other per diems.

## **MATCHING FUNDS**

Matching funds are required at 20 percent of the grant request (e.g., \$50,000.00 grant request would require \$10,000.00 minimum in matching funds for a total project budget of \$60,000.00). Matching funds must also be eligible project expenses. Items not included in the submitted budget are not eligible for match.

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS**

- The application form is located on the DATCP website at [https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Growing\\_WI/DairyDevelopment.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Growing_WI/DairyDevelopment.aspx)
- Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. January 17, 2025. Emailed applications should be sent to [DATCPDADGrants@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDADGrants@wisconsin.gov). Mailed applications should be sent to 2811 Agriculture Dr, Madison, WI 53708.
- If you do not have computer access to download and complete the application, contact Brian Williams at 608-590-7239.

## **PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA**

This is a competitive grant process. Each application will be reviewed by a committee and will receive a rating based on scoring criteria outlined on the last page entitled: *Application Scoring Criteria* section of this document. The rating score will determine the proposals to be funded.

**Preference** may be given for proposals that demonstrate an industry-wide benefit, involve a new process, or show innovation.

DATCP may require additional information and/or a plant visit to review the proposed project.

## **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.**

The original term of the contract will be for two years. DATCP may, upon request, extend the contract to no later than 03/31/2028.

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 by DATCP.

## **PAYMENTS**

This is a reimbursement grant. Recipients must submit at least two requests for reimbursement every year of the grant and may submit no more than four requests per year. One large reimbursement at the end of your project will not be allowed.

Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on the Request for Reimbursement cover sheet provided by DATCP. To receive reimbursement, grantees must clearly outline costs being claimed, provide supporting documentation and proof of payment (e.g., copies of invoices with

cleared checks, timesheets, etc.). Matching funds must be documented in the same manner as reimbursable expenses.

Ten percent of the grant award will be withheld as a final payment until DATCP receipt and approval of the completed final performance report and receipt of the final reimbursement request.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Each approved grant recipient must submit semi-annual performance reports and one final performance report. DATCP will provide grant recipients with report templates. DATCP reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project.

The semi-annual performance report shall include the following:

1. A brief summary of activities performed and targets or performance goals achieved during the reporting period for each project.
2. A discussion of any unexpected delays or impediments as well as favorable or unusual developments for each project.
3. A quantitative summary illustrating the increase in dairy farms where milk is taken from, projected monetary benefits, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment during the reporting period due to project work.
4. An outline of work to be performed during the next reporting period of each project.
5. An explanation of the grant funds expended to date for the project.

The final performance report shall include the following:

1. A brief description of the original intent of the project, the perceived benefit of the project, and how the issue or problem was approached via the project.
2. A discussion of how the goals of the project were achieved.
3. A quantitative summary illustrating the increase in dairy farms where milk is taken from, projected monetary benefits, new and/or retained jobs, and new investment during the reporting period due to project work.
4. A discussion of results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.
5. Additional information available related to the project, such as publications or websites.
6. A contact person for each project, with telephone number and email address.

In addition to this summary report, DATCP reserves the right to conduct follow-up surveys of funded projects to determine long-term impacts of the Dairy Processor Grant program.

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

## **RECORD REQUIREMENTS**

Grant recipients will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with DATCP, receipts, invoices, and copies of all reports and documents associated with the project. Recipients shall retain all data and other records relating to the acquisition and performance of the grant award 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.

### **MONITORING**

DATCP reserves the right to monitor grant recipients' performance to ensure that work is progressing within the required period and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. 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.

### **PRE-AWARD COSTS**

DATCP will not reimburse any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of an application or any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract. Costs incurred before contract execution cannot be used as matching funds.

### **OPEN RECORDS**

Applications submitted for funding and all related contracts and reports are subject to disclosure under Wisconsin's Public Records Law. If the grant applicant or recipient requests that any information in an application be deemed a trade secret, the document should be labeled "trade secret" and the requested status should be noted to DATCP when the document is submitted. DATCP will notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be trade secret. Such information may be kept confidential by DATCP only as authorized by law. *See Wis. Stat. § 19.36(5).*

### **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 to 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.

**Wisconsin DATCP FY25 Dairy Processor Grant Program  
Application Scoring Criteria**

Evaluation Criteria	How well described?			Points
	+	✓	-	
<b>1. Grant Application</b>	+	✓	-	10 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project well organized, thought out, and explained in a way that makes sense and sounds like it can be carried out successfully?</li> <li>• Does the submitted proposal comply with DATCP’s RFP?</li> <li>• Do the person(s) listed have the qualifications to carry out the project as proposed?</li> </ul>				
<b>2. Statement of need</b>	+	✓	-	35 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the proposed project support at least one of the program objectives of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ increasing production, profitability, processing, marketing, or distribution of Wisconsin dairy products?</li> <li>○ increasing capital investment in the dairy industry?</li> <li>○ applying new technologies or practices related to dairy processing?</li> <li>○ improving competitive position of the Wisconsin dairy industry?</li> <li>○ using farmland and agricultural resources more efficiently for dairy industry?</li> <li>○ creating or retaining employment in the dairy industry?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the Project Summary describe an industry need, opportunity, or innovation?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the proposed project viable, important, and timely?</li> </ul>				
<b>3. Activities and Outcomes</b>	+	✓	-	25 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the activities and outcomes in the proposed project plan adequately explained? Are they reasonable and achievable?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the outcomes fit the project activities and show that the project met the need or purpose?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well do activities result in at least one positive outcome of the grant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Facilitate operational changes to the dairy plant</li> <li>○ Improve profitability of the operation</li> <li>○ Improve technical knowledge capacity of the staff and operation</li> <li>○ Model a new process or innovation</li> <li>○ Demonstrate or test a system to address dairy plant wastewater management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the proposed timeline reasonable to complete all project objectives?</li> </ul>				
<b>4. Budget</b>	+	✓	-	20 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are budget items adequately identified? How well does each item relate to the described project?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is each item necessary to achieve the outcome? How reasonable are costs for each item?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is total amount justifiable for the return on investment?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposed budget adequately identify project expenses, including which expenses would be reimbursed by the grant and which are matching funds?</li> </ul>				

• Does the applicant possess the financial capacity to provide required matching funds and complete the proposed project?				
<b>5. Extra Points</b>	+	✓	-	10 possible
• How much industry-wide benefit does the project provide?				
• Does the project involve a new or innovative process?				