



2026

Meat Processor Infrastructure Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on February 23, 2026.

More information on the Meat Processor Infrastructure Grant is available on the DATCP website at
<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/MeatProcessorInfrastructureGrants.aspx>.

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RFP Contents

Program Overview	2
Available Funds	2
Timeline	2
Eligible Applicants	2
Eligible Projects	3
Budget and Expenses Detail	3
Submissions	4
Review Process and Evaluation Criteria	4
Grant Recipient Requirements	5

Program Overview

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP) Meat Processor Infrastructure Grant (MPIG) Program strives to grow Wisconsin's meat industry and improve the long-term viability of the livestock sector through services to meat processing facilities. Meat Processor Infrastructure Grants are available to licensed processors to facilitate changes and expansion to grow harvest capacity and/or increase product throughput.

The Meat Processor Infrastructure Grant Program is authorized by s. 93.68(2), Wis. Stats. Funding for the program is from the appropriation in s. 20.115 (4) (f), Wis. Stats.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) details all the information needed to apply. Please read through the evaluation criteria when preparing your application.

Available Funds

Funds will be distributed through a competitive review process. Grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$50,000 and for two years in duration. 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.

Matching funds are required at 100 percent of the grant award. Matching funds expensed during the project must be documented in the same manner as proof of reimbursable grant expenses.

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

Timeline

Event	Date
RFP is released	January 12, 2026
Applications due to DATCP	February 23, 2026 (11:59 pm) – Central Time
Applications scored and selected by review committee	March 13, 2026
Selected applications notified by DATCP	Late March 2026
Anticipated project start date	June 1, 2026
Project end date (all projects must conclude no later than)	May 31, 2028

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must satisfy the following criteria to be deemed eligible for funding under this program.

- Operate a DATCP or United States Department of Agriculture-licensed meat processing facility located in Wisconsin and be engaged in livestock harvesting or further meat processing.
 - A meat processing facility is defined in s. 93.68(1), Wis. Stats., as “a plant or premises where animals are slaughtered for human consumption, or where meat or meat products

are processed.”

- Note: Rendering plants are not eligible for this program.
- Have a project that will increase harvest capacity or the amount of meat product production that will increase harvest capacity upstream in the supply chain.
 - Priority may be given to projects that directly increase harvest capacity.
- Have no outstanding state or federal penalties or violations
- Be in good standing with Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, DATCP and USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service.

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.

Each applicant must designate as a single authorized contract signer who is an individual with the authority to sign a contract with DATCP on the applicant’s behalf. Each applicant must also designate a project coordinator who will be the primary point of contact for communications and reporting for the grant. Each applicant, including co-applicants, must demonstrate a proven ability to carry out all elements of the proposed project. Preference will be given to projects whose lead person or entity has a proven track record of grant management and/or a long-standing track record of strong fiscal experience and capability. Employees of DATCP and their immediate family members (i.e., parents, siblings, spouses, and children) cannot financially benefit from or participate in grant funded projects.

Eligible Projects

The Meat Processor Infrastructure Grant program is designed to provide access to services and resources for proposed meat processing facility projects that grow or develop the current business’s harvest or throughput capacity, improve production or profitability, and/or help the processor address capacity and/or production bottlenecks and challenges. Projects could include multiple aspects from the following areas:

- Increasing the facility’s harvest capacity by 20 percent or more per year.
- Increasing meat or meat product production that shows a benefit to harvest capacity within the supply chain.
- Increasing the facility’s efficiency.
- Improving the competitive position of the Wisconsin meat sector.
- Creating employment in the Wisconsin meat sector.

Budget and Expenses Detail

Eligible Expenses (including but are not limited to):

- Operating expenses and professional services costs directly related to the grant project, including expenses for:
 - Facility expansion,
 - Engineering,
 - Architectural design,
 - Construction,
 - Food safety advisory services,

- Equipment and,
- Equipment installation.

Ineligible Expenses (including but are not limited to):

- Real estate purchases.
- Repayment of loans or mortgages.
- 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.
- Legal fees.
- Lobbying, fundraising, or other political activity.
- Travel costs, lodging, meals or per diems.
- Any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any work performed outside of the contract period.

Matching Funds

Matching funds are required at 100 percent of the grant request (e.g., \$25,000.00 grant request would require \$25,000.00 minimum in matching funds for a total project budget of \$50,000.00). Matching funds must also be eligible project expenses. Items not included in the submitted budget are not eligible for match.

Submissions

Applications will be received via submission of the online application form. Application information and links to the online application form are located on the DATCP MPIG website at:

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

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. central time on February 23, 2026.

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. Paper applications are available upon request. All application and supporting materials must be received by DATCP by the deadline.

If you have any questions, please contact DATCPdadgrants@wisconsin.gov.

Review Process and Evaluation Criteria

This is a competitive grant. Each complete and on-time application will be reviewed by a committee and will receive a rating based on scoring criteria outlined in the Evaluation Criteria, with the maximum score being 100. The rating score will determine the proposals to be funded. Preference may be given for proposals that demonstrate an industry-wide benefit and/or increase animal harvest benefitting multiple Wisconsin producers/farmers.

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

Evaluation Criteria

Grant Application (up to 10 points)

- Does the submitted proposal comply with DATCP's request for proposals?
- Is the project well organized, thought out, and explained in a way that makes sense and sounds like it can be carried out successfully?
- Do the person(s) listed have the qualifications to carry out the project as proposed?

Statement of need (up to 35 points)

- How well does the proposed project support the program objectives of:
 - Increased slaughter capacity of 20%
 - Increased meat processing throughput
 - Increased efficiency in processing facility
 - Improves competitive position of the WI meat sector
 - Creates employment in the meat sector
- How well does the Project Summary describe an increase in harvest or processing capacity?
- Is the proposed project viable, important, and timely?

Activities and Outcomes (up to 25 points)

- Does the project make sense? Do the activities fit the project purpose?
- Do the outcomes fit the project activities and show that the project met the need or purpose?
- How well do activities result in at least one positive outcome of the grant:
 - Facilitate operational changes to the establishment that increases overall capacity
 - Expands animal holding capacity, harvest capacity and processing capacity

Budget (up to 20 points)

- How well does each item in the budget relate to the described project?
- Is each item necessary to achieve the outcome? How reasonable are costs for each item?
- Is total amount justifiable for the return on investment?
- Does the applicant have the financial capacity to provide required matching funds and complete the proposed project?

Extra Points (up to 10 points)

- How much industry-wide benefit does the project provide?

Grant Recipient Requirements

Contracts

DATCP will develop a contract for each funded project, which will be signed by DATCP and the recipient.

No funding commitment is final, and no project may begin incurring expenses until the contract is signed by the grant recipient and DATCP. To be included with the contract, the grantee may be asked to provide additional information to finalize the details of the work plan, timeline, budget, and implementation plan beyond the grant application information.

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.

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. Cost incurred during the performance period but prior to a fully executed contract may be eligible for reimbursement on a case-by-case basis. DATCP cannot guarantee payment of any eligible costs prior to a fully executed contract, any cost or activity will be completed at the risk of the recipient organization.

Monitoring

MPIG program staff will monitor and evaluate each funded project. 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.

Payments

This is a reimbursement grant. Payments will be made following DATCP's receipt of an invoice documenting expenses incurred by the grantee. 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.

An amount of 10 percent 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 a written summary report of the project. Invoices must include receipts or other proof of payment.

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.

Reporting Requirements

Each approved grant recipient must submit semi-annual performance reports (each December and June) 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. Reports shall include the following.

Semi-Annual Performance Reports:

1. Project status.
2. Steps completed in the last 6 months.
3. Actions to be completed in the next 6 months.
4. Any barriers or issues with the project.

Final Performance Report:

1. Brief description of project intent.
2. Summary of project accomplishments and outcomes, including the increase in harvest capacity or in meat-product production that increased harvest capacity in the supply chain, and efficiencies gained.

3. Other insights from project execution.

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.

In addition, DATCP reserves the right to conduct follow-up surveys of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the program.

DATCP reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project.

Record Requirements

The grantee 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. 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.

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).

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 adjusted.

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, and instances of uncompleted contracted activities may prevent awards. Vetting includes but is not limited to research via the United States General Service Administration, the State of Wisconsin Ineligible Vendor List, Wisconsin Circuit Court Access, DATCP, the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, the 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 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.
- 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.
- Share program report data and success stories with USDA and on DATCP websites and social media channels.
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.
- Conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.