



## **DATCP Dairy Processor Grants**

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

**Applications Due: October 13, 2023**

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's (DATCP's) Dairy Processor Grant 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 **\$75,000** and up to two years in duration.

## **APPLICATION AND FUNDING TIMING**

RFP is released	August 1, 2023
Applications due to DATCP	October 13, 2023
Applications scored and selected by review committee	November 17, 2023
Selected applications notified by DATCP	December 1, 2023
Anticipated project start date	January 1, 2024
All projects must conclude no later than	December 31, 2025

## **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 an immediate family member (i.e. 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.

Dairy processors with current, open DATCP Dairy Processor Grants cannot apply for funding to further the same project.

### **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. All travel reimbursements must follow state rate requirements.
- 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 cost less than \$5,000 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 cost more than \$5,000 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.

## **MATCHING FUNDS**

Matching funds are required at 20 percent of the grant request as part of proposal review. Matching funds expensed during the project must be documented in the same manner as proof of reimbursable grant expenses.

## **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 emailed to <mailto:datcpdadgrants@wisconsin.gov> by 5:00 p.m. on October 13, 2023.
- 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. The Department may, upon request, extend the contract to no later than June 30, 2026.

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 reimbursement request form provided by DATCP. To receive reimbursement, grantees must provide assurance that the work has been completed, including submitting receipts and invoices, and clearly outline expenditures.

An amount of 20 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 receipt and approval of the project's final performance report.

## **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 in order 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 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.

## **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.

## **LIABILITY**

DATCP will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal.

## **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 FY24 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 proposal comply with the RFP?</li> </ul>				
<b>2. Statement of need</b>	+	✓	-	35 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the project support at least the program goals 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 project important and timely?</li> <li>• Is the project viable?</li> </ul>				
<b>3. Activities and Outcomes</b>	+	✓	-	25 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the applicant have the necessary management and technical acumen to carry out the proposed project? Is the person(s) involved qualified to carry out the project?</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>• Does the applicant possess the necessary financial capacity to complete the project as proposed, including the capacity to provide the required matching funds?</li> </ul>				
<b>4. Budget</b>	+	✓	-	20 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does each item in the budget relate to the described project?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is each item necessary to achieve the outcome?</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>• How reasonable are costs for each item?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposal adequately identify project expenses including those paid for with grant or loan funds?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the Project Plan and Budget adequate and reasonable? Is the timeline reasonable?</li> </ul>				
<b>5. Extra Points</b>	+	✓	-	10 possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much industry-wide benefit does the project provide?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the project involve a new or innovative process?</li> </ul>				