



## **NCDA&CS ADFP Trust Fund**

### **Grant Application Guidelines**

#### **Overview**

##### **Mission**

To fund projects to encourage the preservation of qualifying agricultural, horticultural, and forestlands to foster the growth, development, and sustainability of family farms.

##### **History**

Between the years of 2002 and 2007, North Carolina lost 600,000 acres of farmland according to USDA-NASS; this is equivalent to the average size of one of our counties. In addition, thousands of acres of forestlands have been converted to development. This has put a strain on our county budgets, our local and state economy, and our natural resources, and is a loss to our agricultural heritage. The foundation of North Carolina's #1 industry needs to be protected from unwise and unplanned conversions to other uses.

Today, approximately 90 percent of all North Carolina lands are privately owned. The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that our state's population will expand by 4 million people by 2030. This growth threatens our farm and forestland. Preserving farmland also protects our natural resources, wildlife habitat, and water resources.

#### **Eligibility**

- All applicants must be non-profit conservation organizations or county agencies. (G.S.106-744)
- Farmers, landowners, and others interested in applying must partner with a non-profit conservation organization or county agency in order to participate in an ADFP Trust Fund grant proposal.
- Agricultural Development and Plan grants are limited to requests regarding projects serving the constituents of a Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) or Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD) or the establishment of a VAD, EVAD, or County Farmland Protection Plan.

#### **Funding Purposes**

- To secure agricultural conservation easements on agricultural, horticultural, and forestlands for active production of food, fiber, and other agricultural products. Easements include the following options:
  - Perpetual
  - 50 year term
  - 40 year term
  - 30 year term
  - 20 year term
  - 10 year term



- **Without** a NCDA&CS approved County Farmland Protection Plan (G.S. 106-744(e)), must match a minimum of **30%** of ADFP Trust Fund monies received. (G.S. 106-744(c2)) These monies must be from sources other than the ADFP Trust Fund.
  - Documentation of match will be required in the reporting process.
- [**Note:** List of tiers is available at <http://www.nccommerce.com>]

▪ **Allowable Costs**

- ADFP Trust Fund monies may not be used to reimburse for administrative or personnel costs unless specialized services are needed. Approval of necessary specialized services will be determined by ADFP Trust Fund staff when reviewing applications.
- Travel expenses and other acquisition costs are not reimbursable for easement applications.
- All reimbursement for travel, meals, rentals including meeting facilities, etc. for agricultural development related expenditures shall follow the State of North Carolina reimbursement guidelines. Prudence must be demonstrated by grantee for reimbursement to be granted.
- Allowable and non-allowable costs for reimbursements:

<b>Allowable Costs</b>	<b>Non-allowable Costs</b>
Equipment	Travel (for easements)
Consultant and Specialized Services	Personnel/Administrative Services
Office Supplies	Promotional Materials (unallowable costs include gifts, memorabilia, models, and souvenirs)
Printing and Binding	Stewardship endowment
Promotional Materials ( <i>see exceptions listed in Non-allowable costs</i> )	Appraisal
Site Development	
Construction	
Special Program Supplies	
Survey	
Baseline Documentation Report	
Environmental Assessment/Audit	
Legal Fees	
Closing Costs	
Workshops and Conferences	

▪ **Number of Proposals Allowed**

- Each organization or agency may submit up to 6 proposals per funding cycle which shall be restricted to 2 perpetual easements, 2 term easements, and 2 enterprise programs grant request types.

▪ **Incomplete Applications**

- All information requested in this application is required. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible for funding.

▪ **Evaluation of Applications**

- The ADFP Trust Fund staff evaluates each application. The evaluation includes a review, using a scoring system, of the application and all the documents submitted with it. On-site visits (or interviews) will be conducted for those applications receiving the highest scores.

▪ **Selecting Recipients**

- The ADFP Trust Fund Advisory Committee, a nineteen-member committee, advises the Commissioner of Agriculture who selects the applicants who will receive an ADFP Trust Fund grant.

- **ADFP Trust Fund on the Web**
  - An electronic copy of the application is available through the ADFP Trust Fund website at [www.ncadfp.org](http://www.ncadfp.org). You may also request a hard copy be sent to you.
  
- **Funding Period**
  - The grant contract period for Agricultural Development and Agricultural Plans begins July 1, 2010 and ends June 30, 2011.
  - The grant contract period for agricultural conservation easements begins July 1, 2010 and ends June 30, 2012.
  
- **Questions about Filling Out the Application**
  - If you have questions about filling out this application, please contact the ADFP Trust Fund office by email at [ncadfp@ncagr.gov](mailto:ncadfp@ncagr.gov).
  
- **Application Deadline**
  - **One unbound complete application suitable for photocopying must be delivered no later than 5:00 PM on December 4, 2009. All applications must be sent by Fedex, UPS, Certified Mail, or hand delivered to:**
    - **NCDA&CS**
    - **NC ADFP Trust Fund**
    - **2 W. Edenton Street**
    - **Raleigh, NC 27601**

- **Definitions**

- **Agricultural Conservation Easement** – a negative easement in gross restricting residential, commercial, and industrial development of land for the purpose of maintaining its agricultural production capability (G.S. 106-744(b)).
- **Beginning Farmer** – A farmer who has not operated a farm or who has operated a farm for not more than 10 years and who will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm (G.S. 143-215.74(b)(9)(a)).  
**Limited Resource Farmer** - A farmer with direct and indirect annual gross farm sales that do not exceed one hundred fifty five thousand two hundred dollars (\$155,200) in each of the previous two years and with an adjusted household income in each of the previous two years that is at or below the greater of the county median household income, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, or two times the national poverty level based on the federal poverty guidelines established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and revised each April 1 (G.S. 143-215.74(b)(9)(b)).
- **Countywide Farmland Protection Plan** – A plan that satisfies all of the following requirements:
  - (1) The countywide farmland protection plan shall contain a list and description of existing agricultural activity in the county.
  - (2) The countywide farmland protection plan shall contain a list of existing challenges to continued family farming in the county.
  - (3) The countywide farmland protection plan shall contain a list of opportunities for maintaining or enhancing small, family-owned farms and the local agricultural economy.
  - (4) The countywide farmland protection plan shall describe how the county plans to maintain a viable agricultural community and shall address farmland preservation tools, such as agricultural economic development, including farm diversification and marketing assistance; other kinds of agricultural technical assistance, such as farm infrastructure financing, farmland purchasing, linking with younger farmers, and estate planning; the desirability and feasibility of donating agricultural conservation easements, and entering into voluntary agricultural districts.
  - (5) The countywide farmland protection plan shall contain a schedule for implementing the plan and an identification of possible funding sources for the long-term support of the plan. (G.S. 106-744(e))
- **Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD)** – In order for farmland to qualify for inclusion in a voluntary agricultural district or an enhanced voluntary agricultural district under Article 61 of Chapter 106 of the North Carolina General Statutes, it must be real property that:
  - (1) Is participating in the farm present-use-value taxation program established by G.S. 105-277.2 through 105-277.7 or is otherwise determined by the county to meet all the qualifications of this program set forth in G.S. 105-277.3;
  - (2) Repealed by Session Laws 2005-390, s. 11 effective September 13, 2005.
  - (3) Is managed in accordance with the Soil Conservation Service defined erosion control practices that are addressed to highly erodible land; and
  - (4) Is the subject of a conservation agreement, as defined in G.S. 121-35, between the county and the owner of such land that prohibits nonfarm use or development of such land for a period of at least 10 years, except for the creation of not more than three lots that meet applicable county zoning and subdivision regulations. (1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 1025, s. 1; 2005-390, ss. 3, 11.) (G.S. 106-737)
- **Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD)** – A district established by a county or a city by ordinance under Part 3 of Article 61 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes (G.S. 143-215.74(b)(9)(a1)).

For additional resources, go to <http://www.ncadfp.org>.