

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Do I need to live in AgChoice Farm Credit's territory to be eligible?**

Yes. AgChoice's territory includes 52 counties in central, western and northern Pennsylvania and four counties in West Virginia.

Full list of counties by state:

- Pennsylvania: Adams, Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Bradford, Butler, Cambria, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Crawford, Cumberland, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lawrence, Lycoming, Luzerne, McKean, Mercer, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Potter, Snyder, Somerset, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Westmoreland, Wyoming, York
- West Virginia: Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio

### **How do I know if I qualify as a 'startup' farm business?**

For purposes of AgChoice's grant, we are considering startup farm businesses to be those that have started their operation within the last two years or plan to start within the next two years. We are strictly adhering to this definition.

If you are a beginning farmer returning to a family operation, you must be starting a new venture or enterprise to be considered a startup farmer.

Startup farmers may be full- or part-time farmers.

### **How many grants will be awarded?**

AgChoice will award 10 \$10,000 startup grants in 2021.

### **What do I need to submit to be considered for the grant?**

The three main components of the grant application are:

- Submitting the [application](#).
- Submitting your business plan – You are welcome to use [AgChoice's business plan template](#) or another format. Please make sure that your business plan is well thought out. The only requirement is that your business plan must contain financials or projections for your startup farm business so that we know you've given consideration to the financial aspect of the operation.
- Completion of the Ag Biz Basics program – Once you submit your [application](#), AgChoice will send you a coupon code to enroll in Ag Biz Basics at no cost. You will simply need to have Ag Biz Basics fully completed by the August 31 grant deadline.

Grants will be selected on these three criteria, in addition to eligibility requirements of farming in AgChoice Farm Credit's territory and being a startup farmer.

### **What's involved with Ag Biz Basics?**

[Ag Biz Basics](#) is the online learning series that AgChoice requires as part of the grant application. The program includes four modules that each take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete.

Ag Biz Basics is FREE to grant applicants. Upon receiving [your completed application](#), AgChoice will share a coupon code for you to use when registering for AgBiz Basics to enroll at no cost. You will simply need to have Ag Biz Basics fully completed by the August 31 grant deadline. AgChoice will track completions in cooperation with Farm Credit University which offers the course.

Ag Biz Basics contains four learning modules:

1. Side by Side with your Lender – Financial Documentation, Planning & Goal Setting
2. Do You Cash Flow? Cash Flow Planning – putting your production plan in numbers
3. What are You Worth Financially? Business and Personal Balance Sheets
4. Did You Make a Profit? Income Statement

The course also includes a case study involving entrepreneurs operating a startup agribusiness who are applying for a loan with Farm Credit. In addition, there is a workbook with application exercises.

### **How do I pay for Ag Biz Basics?**

Upon receiving your [completed grant application](#), AgChoice will share a coupon code for you to use when registering for AgBiz Basics to enroll at no cost. You will simply need to have Ag Biz Basics fully completed by the August 31 grant deadline. AgChoice will track completions in cooperation with Farm Credit University which offers the course.

### **Since I previously completed AgBiz Masters, do I still need to complete Ag Biz Basics?**

No, if you fully graduated from the two-year AgBiz Masters program, the Ag Biz Basics requirement is waived for your grant application. However, if you only partially completed AgBiz Masters, you are required to complete Ag Biz Basics to be eligible for the grant.

### **If I don't currently have a business plan, what resources are available to help?**

AgChoice has a [business plan template](#) that you may use. You may use another business plan format if you prefer.

Other resources to help you include:

- Your local [Small Business Development Center](#)
- [SBDC Ag Center of Excellence](#)
- [Penn State Extension](#)

### **Are there any restrictions for use of the grant funds?**

Grant funds must be used for agriculture purposes to support your farm business within two years of receiving the grant. Fund use examples include tractors, equipment, livestock and farm operating expenses. You may also use funds for startup services including business planning, legal fees or other startup costs.

Award winners will be required to complete a grant acceptance agreement upon receiving the grant, indicating that they will use the funds appropriately.

**Are the grant funds taxable?**

Grant funds may be taxable. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

**Who do I contact if I have additional questions?**

Contact AgChoice Knowledge Center Director Raechel Sattazahn at [rsattazahn@agchoice.com](mailto:rsattazahn@agchoice.com) or 800-349-3568 ext. 6016.