



Meat Education and Training Grants

Grants for Secondary Career and Technical Education
Meat Cutting and Butchery Programs

11/01/2023

Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing and Development Division
625 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55155
Phone: 651-201-6648
Ashley.Bress@state.mn.us
www.mda.state.mn.us

This report cost approximately \$500 to prepare, including staff time, printing, and mailing expenses (MINN. STAT. 3.197).

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille, or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Executive Summary

In 2022, the Legislature provided funding to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to award funds to secondary schools to establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery programs. The MDA released a request for proposals (RFP) in December 2022 with applications due in March 2023. Awards were made in April 2023. This legislative report outlines the process and the awards that were made.

Background

During the 2022 session, the Legislature appropriated \$350,000 for grants to secondary and technical education programs for the purpose of offering instruction in meat cutting and butchery. The appropriation language allowed the commissioner of agriculture to award up to \$70,000 per grant recipient and prioritize grants to applicants that coordinate with meat cutting and butchery programs at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Minnesota State) and local industry partners.

Grants were to be used for the costs of, including but not limited to:

1. Equipment required for a meat cutting program;
2. Facility renovation to accommodate meat cutting; and
3. Training faculty to teach the fundamentals of meat processing (limited to 10% of grant funding).

This report is submitted in accordance with Laws of Minnesota 2021, First Special Session Chapter 3, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 5, as amended.

By January 15, 2023, the commissioner must report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees with jurisdiction over agriculture finance and education finance by listing the grants made under this paragraph by county and noting the number and amount of grant requests not fulfilled. The report may include additional information as determined by the commissioner, including but not limited to information regarding the outcomes produced by these grants. If additional grants are awarded under this paragraph that were not covered in the report due by January 15, 2023, the commissioner must submit an additional report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees with jurisdiction over agriculture finance and education finance regarding all grants issued under this paragraph by November 1, 2023.

Request for Proposals

Branded as the Meat Education and Training (MEAT) Grant, the MDA released an RFP on December 8, 2022; applications were due on March 9, 2023.

Applications were accepted from public and private school districts in Minnesota that were seeking to establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery programs for secondary students (defined as grades 6 through 12, unless otherwise indicated by the school district).

Eligible applicants could request a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$70,000 and could use up to 10% of their grants for faculty training. We anticipated awarding between five and 10 grants, dependent on the size of the grant awards.

We prioritized projects that included partnerships with Minnesota State’s meat cutting and butchery programs and with local industry. Priority was also given to projects that would serve secondary students from communities of color, Native American Tribal communities, or socio-economically disadvantaged communities, as well as those that would prioritize sourcing products from emerging farmers (including farmers of color; American Indian or Alaskan Native farmers; women; veterans; farmers with disabilities; young farmers; beginning farmers; LGBTQ+ farmers; and urban farmers) for instructional use.

In response to the RFP, we received 16 applications requesting a total of \$710,383.

Applications were reviewed by a panel of MDA staff and community-based reviewers with expertise in education and meat cutting. A total of \$350,000 was awarded to nine school districts. Table 1 contains the list of the grantees and their projects.

Grantees are currently working towards completing their projects. They are expected to consult with MDA Dairy and Meat Inspection Division staff to finalize their projects to ensure compliance with food safety regulations and best practices. We anticipate that enhanced course offerings will be available to students by fall 2024.

Grantees

Table 1: MEAT Grant recipients

School Name	Counties Served	Project Summary
Bertha-Hewitt Schools	Todd, Otter Tail	Renovate an existing space to accommodate a walk-in cooler as well as upgraded sinks to allow for proper cleaning of equipment and ensure proper food and student safety.
Byron High School	Olmsted, Dodge	Build upon current programming by developing and adding a meat processing course with local processing partners.
Lac qui Parle Valley High School	Lac qui Parle, Swift, Chippewa, Big Stone	Build a mobile meat processing trailer and collaborate with Ridgewater College to develop a curriculum for meat processing classes.
Morris Area High School	Stevens, Pope	Expand the current Ag Processing course to further provide hands-on experiences and in-depth learning about meat cutting and processing and provide a culinary experience through FCS classes by preparing the meat in different ways.

School Name	Counties Served	Project Summary
Nicollet Public School	Nicollet	Utilize the National Food Science Safety and Processing Curriculum (CASE) to impact student career readiness in meat science and processing.
ROCORI Public Schools	Stearns	Develop two classes: one focused on meat science and food safety, and the second about further processing, safety, and cultural differences.
Sibley East Public Schools	Sibley, Nicollet	Update an old FACS lab to become a meat cutting lab and develop a pathway in which students will build upon skills every year in grades 8-12, culminating in a work-based capstone.
West Central Area Schools	Grant, Douglas, Pope, Stevens, Otter Tail	Further support the purchase of a meat processing mobile trailer and provide up to 100 hours of hands-on training for one agriculture instructor at a local butcher shop.