



Meat Education and Training Grants

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

01/15/2025

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Executive Summary

In 2024, the Minnesota Legislature provided funding through the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) program to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) for a second round of Meat Education and Training (MEAT) Grants. These grants will help secondary schools establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery programs. The MDA anticipates releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) in February 2025 and making awards by May 2025. This grant process will build off a prior round of these grants offered in Fiscal Year 2023. A second report to the legislature, due on November 1, 2025, will provide further detail on the awards.

Background

During the 2024 session, the legislature appropriated \$225,000 in Fiscal Year 2024 from the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) program for grants to secondary and technical education programs for the purpose of offering instruction in meat cutting and butchery. The appropriation language allows the commissioner to award up to \$75,000 per grant recipient and prioritizes grants to applicants that are coordinating with meat cutting and butchery programs at Minnesota State Colleges and University system (Minnesota State) and local industry partners.

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

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

A prior round of funding was offered in Fiscal Year 2023. The [Meat Education and Training Grants, Grants for Secondary Career and Technical Education Meat Cutting and Butchery Programs report](#) from November 1, 2023, provides details about the initial round.

This report is submitted in accordance with Laws of Minnesota 2023, First Special Session Chapter 3, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 4, as amended.

By January 15, 2025, the commissioner must report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative 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, 2025, the commissioner must submit an additional report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over agriculture finance and education finance regarding all grants issued under this paragraph by November 1, 2025.

Request for Proposals

The MDA anticipates releasing the RFP by early February 2025 for this program.

Applications will be accepted from public and private school districts in Minnesota that are 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 will be able to request a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$75,000 and may use up to 10% of their grants for faculty training. The MDA anticipates awarding between five and 10 grants, but the final number depends on the size of the awards.

The MDA will prioritize projects that include partnerships with Minnesota State's meat cutting and butchery programs and with local industry and applicants who did not receive grants in the past or received small awards.

Project examples include but are not limited to:

- Purchase of equipment required for a meat cutting program (e.g., refrigeration units, tables, saws, knives, cleaning and sanitizing equipment)
- Contractor costs and materials for installation of approved equipment, including plumbing, drainage, venting, and electrical work
- Facility renovation to accommodate meat cutting
- Purchase of livestock and livestock products for instructional use
- Curriculum development for new or enhanced meat cutting program
- Licensing and permitting costs required for new or enhanced meat cutting program
- Training faculty to teach the fundamentals of meat processing may be included as a project component, but is limited to 10% of the grant funding.

After the application period closes, applications will be reviewed by a panel of MDA staff and community-based reviewers with expertise in education and meat cutting. The MDA anticipates making awards in May 2025 and projects being completed by May 2028.