



New England Farmer Microgrants Program 2022 Guidelines

The New England Farmer Microgrants Program (NEFMP) is a small grants program designed to provide direct financial assistance to farmers in the region. The NEFMP can fund the costs of equipment or services associated with:

- 1) Finding or getting onto farmland
- 2) Bringing more farmland into production
- 3) Planning for the future of the farm and/or
- 4) Adopting regenerative agriculture or soil health practices on livestock operations in our Western New England Regenerative Agriculture Project region. ([Click here to learn more](#))

The allowable use of funds for NEFMP is broad, assuring that grants cover items likely not funded through other programs. Grants are intended to leverage other resources (either in-kind from the farmer, or other private and public funds) and make a real difference for farmers to access land, improve land security, or expand production.

Grants will be awarded in amounts between \$500 and \$5,000 per project.

Our Farmer Definition

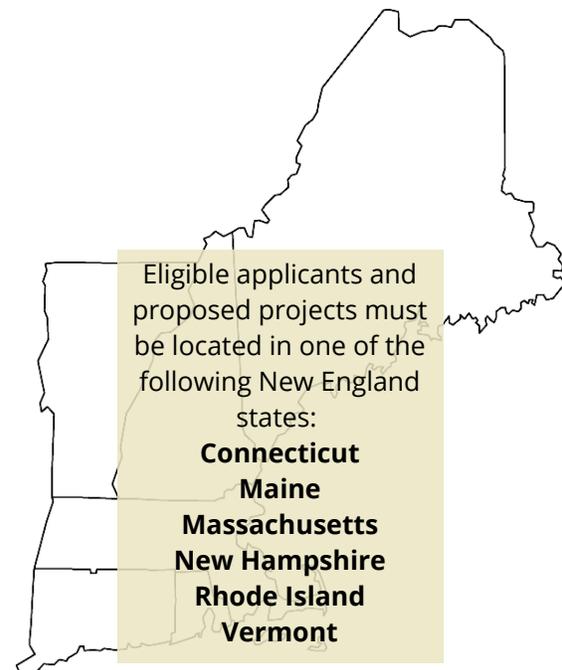
For this program, we define “farmer” as an individual, group, or organization who are intentionally cultivating annual or perennial crops or animals for harvest. We understand farming practices vary widely across New England and across communities. This grant does not support growing or raising products primarily for personal use but is intended to allow production for community use. Applications from farmers that prioritize community-driven food security efforts are strongly encouraged.

While agriculture in New England is broad, our intent is to work with terrestrial, soils-based agricultural production. It is not our intention with this funding opportunity to address aquaculture, forestry, or equine operations.

A project may involve one or more of the following: an individual farmer, a farm family, a group of farmers with a cooperative business, or a non-profit entity.

NEFMP will prioritize the following in 2022:

- Black, Indigenous, and Farmers of Color
- Livestock (inclusive of meat, dairy, egg & fiber production) farmers adopting regenerative agriculture and soil health practices, especially in Western New England (due to project funding, roughly 80% of grants will fit this category)
- Farmers representing
 - A diverse geographic range across New England
 - A diverse range of farm operations (e.g., urban, rural, vegetable, livestock, dairy, large/medium/small, etc.)
 - A diverse range of backgrounds, races, and gender identities



ELIGIBLE PROJECTS (include, but are not limited to):

Soil Health and Regenerative Agriculture

As part of the Western New England Regenerative Agriculture Project, **80% of this year's funding** will be for projects that improve the resiliency of livestock operations through improved soil health or other regenerative agriculture practices. [Click here to see the eligible counties.](#)

Some examples of eligible projects:

- Equipment to facilitate reduced tillage
- Purchase of new equipment such as no-till seed drills or modification of current equipment for reduced or no-till practices.
- Cover crop seed
- Purchase of biochar or other soil amendments

- Fencing – purchase of livestock fencing to establish rotational grazing paddocks, or create animal exclusions areas to protect sensitive habitat or wetlands.
- Pollinator habitat development / establishment – purchase and installation of pollinator plants and creation of habitat.
- Riparian buffer or wind break development/establishment to reduce surface erosion and nutrient and sediment loading of surface waters
- Pasture re-seeding / initial biomass/forage planting for pasture establishment

- Nutrient management planning
- Soil Health management planning
- Well or pipeline infrastructure to improve livestock water access
- Waterers
- Roof runoff structures
- Composting equipment
- Heavy use area development
- Mowing/haying equipment
- Other infrastructure practices that improve soil health, water quality, and pollinator habitat for livestock operations.

[For more soil health and regenerative agriculture resources, see our Resources document on the How to Apply page.](#)

Finding or getting onto farmland / Planning for the future of the farm

- Hiring an attorney to develop a farm lease, provide legal representation for a farm transfer or purchase, develop an estate plan to support a farm transfer.
- Hiring a business, financial or estate planning consultant to assist with a farm transfer plan, business plan, or finance/loan plan.
- Paying transaction costs associated with securing land to farm. Such as costs associated with purchasing a farm, negotiating a lease agreement, or developing an agricultural conservation easement (e.g., survey, appraisal, etc.).
- Hiring a service provider to support business planning and other services necessary for farmland access or expansion such as:
 - land search planning
 - property assessment
 - facilitation and coaching
 - crafting agreements
 - land use planning
 - mediation

Bringing more farmland into production

- Paying capital costs* associated with directly bringing more farmland into production. For example:
 - irrigation
 - fencing
 - soil mitigation or improvements that would allow for increased production capacity
- Purchasing implements such as a brush hog, tillage equipment, walk behind tractor that would allow the farmer to open new land for production.

Note: Infrastructure that directly increases production or brings more land into production (such as hoop houses, irrigation, drainage systems, fencing, etc.) will be considered. Less direct improvements (such as cold storage facilities, washrooms, packhouses, farm stands, and storage sheds, etc.) will not be considered.

*For projects that involve on-the-ground improvements to farmland, control of the land (ownership, a lease, license, or other written agreement) for a reasonable time period will be required. If tenure is less than 5 years, please be prepared to demonstrate in the application how the tenure is sufficient in relationship to the improvements being made.

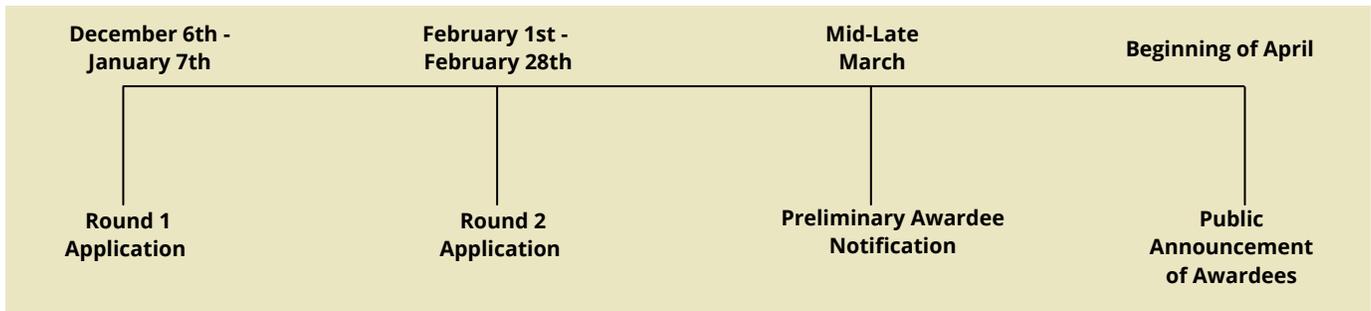


“ As a beginning farmer of colour in New England, it is encouraging to have the financial support. Start up costs are high and 2021 was especially challenging due to covid. It was a relief to have ability to invest in infrastructure without the hardship. With the support we received, we were able to install new fencing. Now, I am ready to buy the first batch of goat's this spring. Without the funding it would have taken years to save the amount.

Anthony Munene, Two Mountain Farm, NH

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2022 AWARD PROCESS & TIMELINE



We welcome applications submitted by service provider staff or advisors in collaboration with the farmer applicant.

- Round 1 is an open-call process for initial proposals from farmers, designed to gather enough information for our staff to determine whether the proposed project is in alignment with the program's goals. Round 1 is open from December 6th until January 7th. Estimated time to complete: 30-45 minutes
- Farmers who are selected for Round 2 will be invited to submit a more detailed application, which will require 1) a letter of support from a service provider; 2) a detailed budget of your proposed project; and 3) a short narrative about the proposed project. Estimated time to complete: 45 minutes-1 hour
- Farmers will be notified by mid-late March if they have been selected. Those selected will be required to return a signed Award Letter, and a signed W-9 form, in order to secure their awards. They will also be asked to supply some photos of themselves and their farm, and quote about their project for AFT's promotional use.
- Once preliminary awardees have submitted their documentation, they will be officially notified of their Awardee status. Awardees will be listed on AFT's NEFMP website and an official press release will go out. Awardees will also be invited to share their stories and participate in press opportunities about their projects.

“ Had it not been for AFT helping me in 2020, I would not have come this far. The future of my farm is secured and a new generation will take over. I am confident that Autumn Hills will have the future it deserves. Thank you, AFT, for providing me with funds to get me started on this journey. It's a bittersweet one, for sure, but I know my farm is in good hands.

Ann Harris, Autumn Hills Orchard, MA

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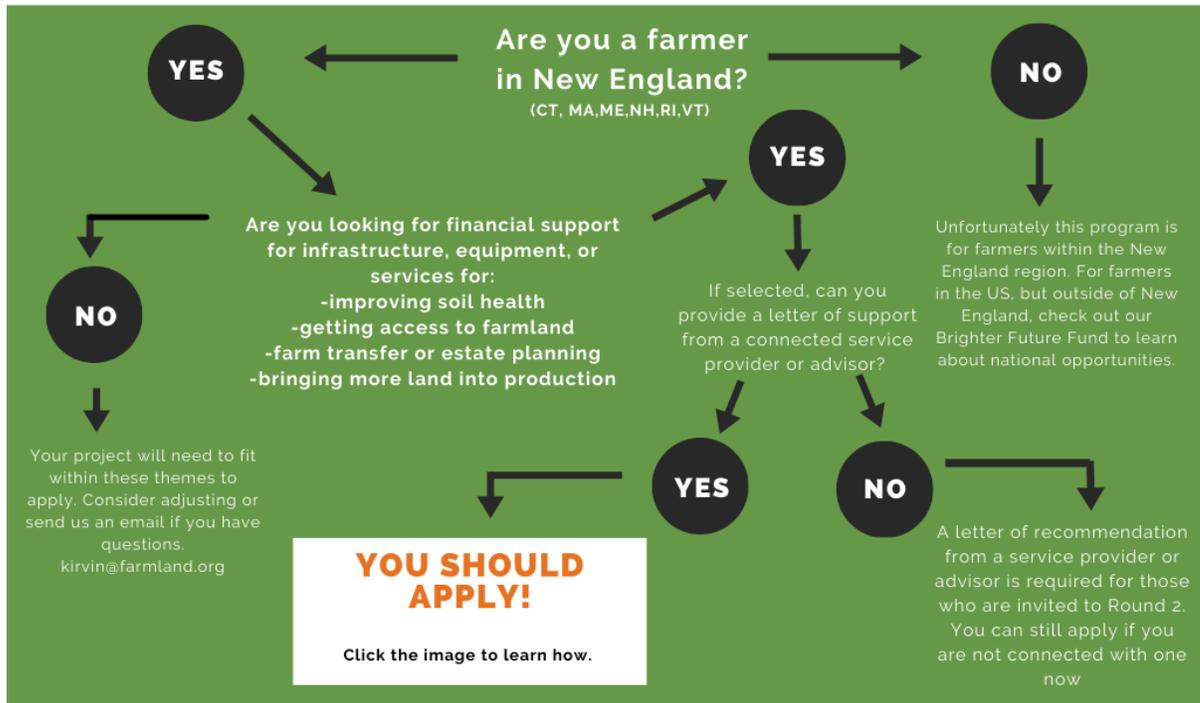


Not sure if you qualify? Use these questions to help determine if you should apply!



NEW ENGLAND FARMER MICROGRANTS PROGRAM

Are you interested in applying for the 2022 NEFMP funds but unsure if you qualify?
Use these questions to help you decide!



Visit farmland.org/new-england-farmer-microgrants-program-how-to-apply/ to learn more.

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT:

Contact Kristen Irvin, New England Program Coordinator at kirvin@farmland.org

