



MARBIDCO

## *“Promoting Innovation in Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Business”*

### **Instructions for the 2024 Maryland Value-Added Producer Matching Grant**

#### **Program Description**

The Maryland Value-Added Producer Matching Grant Program (MVAPMG) was established to make grants available to those pursuing support from the U. S. Department of Agriculture Value-Added Producer Grants Program (USDA/VAPG). MARBIDCO was created with a mission to assist Maryland’s farm, forestry, and seafood businesses with achieving profitability and sustainability, promoting rural entrepreneurship, and nurturing emerging food and fiber markets. **MARBIDCO will make grants available to eligible applicants to provide up to 15% of the matching funds requirement under the USDA VAPG.** These funds will be required to be used for planning or working capital purposes in accordance with USDA regulations. Eligible purposes include determining appropriate marketing techniques and creating business plans or paying operating expenses before a business has sufficient cash flow from operations.

Eligible applicants must be an independent producer, agricultural producer group, farmer or ranch cooperative, or majority-controlled producer-based business venture (all defined terms under federal regulations). In addition, applicants must be making a product that is “value-added”.

- A product that is Value-Added is described as follows by USDA-VAPG: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2019-title7-vol15/xml/CFR-2019-title7-vol15-sec4284-902.xml>
- USDA Value-Added Producer Grant application, fact sheet and more information: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/value-added-producer-grants>
- USDA “What does this program do?”: [https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fact-sheet/508\\_RD\\_FS\\_RBS\\_VAPG.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fact-sheet/508_RD_FS_RBS_VAPG.pdf)

A value-added agricultural product is any Agricultural Commodity produced in the U.S., that meets the requirements specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this definition below:

- (1) The Agricultural Commodity must meet one of the following five value-added methodologies:
  - (i) Has undergone a Change in Physical State;
  - (ii) Was Produced in a Manner that Enhances the Value of the Agricultural Commodity;
  - (iii) Is Physically Segregated in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of the Agricultural Commodity;
  - (iv) Is a source of Farm- or Ranch-based Renewable Energy, including E-85 fuel; or
  - (v) Is aggregated and marketed as a Locally Produced Agricultural Food Product.
- (2) As a result of the Change in Physical State or the manner in which the Agricultural Commodity was produced, marketed, or segregated:
  - (i) The customer base for the Agricultural Commodity is expanded and
  - (ii) A greater portion of the revenue derived from the marketing, processing, or physical segregation of the Agricultural Commodity is available to the producer of the commodity.

Under the USDA VAPG all applications will be screened for eligibility. **The federal grant application submission deadline is April 16, 2024, for paper applications (Applications are permitted via Grants.gov and must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on April 11, 2024.)** Once the application has been determined to be eligible the application will be competitively rated in a nationwide competition. Projects or ventures must be determined to be economically viable and sustainable. The applications will then be screened for technical feasibility of the value-added activity, the overall ability to operate efficiently, improvement to the rural economy, qualifications of personnel performing the proposed task and a demonstrated track record of performing similar activities, and a plan of work that incorporates the appropriate tasks to meet the stated objective. The USDA VAPG applications with the highest ratings will be funded first.

Applicants seeking to receive MARBIDCO matching funds for the USDA VAPG must submit an application to MARBIDCO at least two weeks prior to the federal deadline. **The MARBIDCO application deadline is 4:00 p.m. on April 1, 2024.**

Applications received in the mail with a **March 29, 2024 postmark** will also be accepted. Applicants must attach a completed copy of their federal application form as part of the application submission including all required attachments. All MVAPMG applicants meeting the MARBIDCO requirements will receive a commitment letter of matching funds to be included with their federal applications. The MVAPMG commitment amount cannot exceed 15% of the required non-federal match, and it may be for a lesser amount depending on the quantity of MVAPMG applications that are received and the pool of available MARBIDCO funds. MVAPMG monetary awards will only be provided to those applicants that are actually successful in obtaining USDA VAPG awards.

**NOTE: The maximum cumulative amount of grant funding a single applicant may receive from all MARBIDCO Core grant incentive programs is \$50,000.**

**MVAPG Conditions**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Maximum Amount of Grant:        | \$11,250 for Planning Grants<br>\$25,000 for Working Capital Grants   |
| MARBIDCO Application Deadline:  | Extended to April 1, 2024, no later than 4:00 p.m., OR<br>March 29, 2024, for a postmarked mail submission  |
| Disbursement of Funds:          | A commitment letter and the USDA “Verification of Third-Party Cash Matching Funds” Form will be provided to qualified applicants approximately seven days in advance of the federal deadline. Funds will only be disbursed to applicants that are actually awarded to 2024 USDA Value-Added Producer Grants |
| Send Completed Applications to: | MARBIDCO Programs, 1410 Forest Drive, Suite 21, Annapolis, MD 21403<br><br>Send electronically to <a href="mailto:scriste@marbidco.org">scriste@marbidco.org</a>  |

**Application for the 2024 Maryland Value-Added Producer Matching Grant**

**SECTION 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Business/Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Grant Requested from USDA (circle one): Planning or Working Capital

Dollar Amount Requested from USDA: \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF BUSINESS**

*(Include details and history of your farm operation and experience of principal business owner(s).)*

**SECTION 2: BUSINESS INFORMATION**

**BUSINESS STRUCTURE**

Year & State Established/Incorporated \_\_\_\_\_

Corporation  Partnership  Proprietorship  LLC (SIC/NAICS Code \_\_\_\_\_)

**EMPLOYMENT DATA**

# of full-time jobs current \_\_\_\_\_ # of NEW full-time jobs projected within 36 months \_\_\_\_\_

# of part-time jobs current \_\_\_\_\_ # of NEW part-time jobs projected within 36 months \_\_\_\_\_

**MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP**

1-Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ % Ownership \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

2- Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ % Ownership \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

3- Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ % Ownership \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

4- Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ % Ownership \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**DECLARATIONS**

*If answering "yes" to any of these questions, please provide an explanation on a separate sheet and attach.*

- 1. Is the business or any of the top management personnel an endorser, guarantor or co-signer for obligations not listed on its/their financial statements?  Yes  No
- 2. Is the business or any of the top management personnel a party to any claim or lawsuit?  Yes  No
- 3. Has the business or any of the top management personnel ever declared bankruptcy?  Yes  No
- 4. Does the business or any of the management personnel owe any taxes for prior years?  Yes  No
- 5. Have any managers or owners received a felony conviction?  Yes  No

**SECTION 3: PROJECT INFORMATION**

**PROJECT TYPE**

*(Check any that may apply.)*

- Value-Added Food Processing
- Agri-Tourism/Rural Recreation
- Primary/Secondary Wood Processing
- Niche Market Production
- Aquaculture/Fishing/Seafood
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**A) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE VALUE-ADDED PROJECT:**

**B) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE MVAPMG GRANT FUNDS WOULD BE USED IF THE APPLICANT IS SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING USDA VAPG FUNDING:**

**C) BEGINNING AND END DATES FOR THE PROPOSED VAPG GRANT PERIOD:**

**OTHER PROJECT ADVISOR(S)** *(If Applicable)*

1-Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Institution/Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1-Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Institution/Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 4: SIGNATURES**

**EQUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITY ACT (15 U.S.C. 1691)**

The Federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibits creditors from discriminating against credit applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status or age (provided that the applicant has the capacity to enter into a binding contract), because all or part of the applicant’s income derives from any public assistance program, or because the applicant has in good faith exercised any right under the Consumer Credit Protection Act. The Federal agency that administers compliance with this law concerning this creditor is the Federal Trade Commission, Equal Credit Opportunity, Washington, D.C. 20580.

**AUTHORITY TO COLLECT PERSONAL INFORMATION**

This information is provided pursuant to Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974). Effect of Non-Disclosure: Omission of an item means your application might not receive full consideration.

**CERTIFICATION**

I/We certify all information in this application and the attachments is true and complete to the best of my/our knowledge and is submitted so the MARBIDCO Loan Review Committee can decide whether to offer financial assistance.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 5: ATTACHMENTS**

**ATTACHMENTS CHECKLIST**

1.  Business plan for the project to receive financing (required for Working Capital applications).
2.  Feasibility study (may be required for Working Capital applications).
3.  Copy of completed USDA Value-Added Producer Grant application.

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**Note:** MARBIDCO agrees to hold Recipient's Application and Financial Reports in confidence to the extent reasonably permitted by Title 4 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Notwithstanding the foregoing, MARBIDCO shall not be obligated to maintain in confidence any information: 1) which was already known to MARBIDCO; or, 2) which is or comes into the public domain through no fault of MARBIDCO; or, 3) which is independently developed by MARBIDCO; or, 4) which comes to MARBIDCO from a third party which is not in violation of any obligation of confidentiality to Applicant or MARBIDCO.

*For more information regarding this grant, reach out to Sierra Criste at [scriste@marbidco.org](mailto:scriste@marbidco.org) or call 410-267-6807.*