



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

Application for the Maryland Urban Agriculture Commercial Lending Incentive Grant Program

Beginning urban farmers face major challenges, but despite these challenges they are perhaps uniquely positioned for niche food business success due to several characteristics. Because beginning urban farmers operate small growing operations and must maximize productivity, they are known to be innovative, thrifty and resourceful. In addition, they are keenly aware of the interaction between their farming operations, the environment, and the community in which they operate. Frequently, urban farmers know how to market and distribute their fresh products locally in an impactful and profitable manner, particularly in retail settings (e.g., farmers markets, sidewalk stands, etc). And some urban farmers do not utilize just one distribution channel, but they optimize their distribution channel mix (both wholesale and retail) to achieve desired business results.

Despite these advantages, the up-front costs of starting a growing operation are typically too great for many beginning urban farmers, and few financing programs are available to help meet their needs, particularly with respect to "equity capital". For many beginning urban farmers, a very small amount of equity capital could make a significant difference in helping these business owners to obtain bank financing (commercial loans) that facilitates business success. With the support of Farm Credit, MARBIDCO's new Maryland Urban Agriculture Commercial Lending Incentive Grant ("MUACLIG") Program is designed to meet this need, by providing an incentive for beginning urban farmers to seek commercial lender financing for the development of their urban agricultural enterprises.

Program Description

The Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation ("MARBIDCO") was created with a mission to assist Maryland's farm, forestry, and seafood businesses with achieving profitability and sustainability, promoting agricultural entrepreneurship, and nurturing emerging food and fiber markets. MARBIDCO has partnered with MidAtlantic Farm Credit to establish and manage a fund to offer grants of between \$1,000 and \$7,500 for projects designed to help beginning urban farmers (defined below) to start or improve their business operations. A total of \$75,000 is available for distribution this year.

Eligible applicants must be Beginning Urban Farmers, which are defined as being farmers (either individuals or incorporated businesses) with the principal operator(s) having:

- limited personal or business financial resources;
- a food/fiber growing operation located in an urban community (i.e., must be geographically located within an incorporated municipality, or within the Baltimore or Washington beltways including the City of Baltimore);
- ten or fewer years of commercial farming experience – either in a for-profit or not-for-profit setting; and
- no previous commercial agriculture loan history.

Eligible business activities include the purchase of:

- agricultural inputs and supplies such as seed, fertilizer, compost, and baskets;
- farm tools and equipment;
- greenhouses, high tunnels, refrigeration, and irrigation systems; and
- hired labor (at no more than 20% of the total eligible project cost).

Commercial lender funds are required to complete the project. Applicants must verify in their application that commercial lender or Farm Service Agency loan proceeds are available to help complete the proposed farming project. Applicants that are awarded grants may not materially deviate from their approved business plans without approval from MARBIDCO and the participating commercial lender.

MUACLIG Grant Terms and Conditions

- Maximum Amount of Grant: \$7,500, but no more than 20% of the project’s total cost. In addition, the grant amount can be no more than 25% of the amount of the approved commercial loan for this project.
- Minimum Amount of Grant: \$1,000. (This means that there must be a approved commercial loan of at least \$4,000.)
- Commercial Lender Participation: Required. A commercial lender must have approved a loan to fund the proposed urban farming project before a grant will be awarded.
- Disbursement of Funds: Funds will be disbursed to approved applicants on a schedule to be determined when the grant is awarded.
- Send Completed Applications to: MARBIDCO Programs
1410 Forest Drive, Suite 21
Annapolis, MD 21403

Application for the 2015 Maryland Urban Agriculture Commercial Lending Incentive Grant

SECTION 1: SPONSORING LENDER INFORMATION

(To be completed by a sponsoring bank or Farm Credit Association representative.)

Loan Officer Name _____ Title _____

Work Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Mobile Telephone _____ Fax Number _____

Lending Institution Name _____

Address _____ City _____

County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

GRANT REQUEST INFORMATION

Total Amount of Project Cost: _____

Total Amount Provided by the Sponsoring Lender: _____

Total Amount Requested from MARBIDCO: _____

Other Funding/Applicant Investment: _____

Lender Terms: _____ **Interest rate to be charged:** _____ (Fixed or Variable)

Use of Funds	Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$

Sources of Equity and/or Matching Funds:

Source	Amount
<i>Borrower</i>	\$
<i>MARBIDCO (Same amount requested above)</i>	\$
<i>Other (Please identify source: _____)</i>	\$
<i>Other (Please identify source: _____)</i>	\$
Total	\$

COLLATERAL (If Applicable)

(List all collateral that the Lender is using for security for the loan and any other lien holders on each item of collateral.)

Collateral	Value	Lien Holders	Lien Amount
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$

LENDER CERTIFICATION

I certify that the above information is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Loan Officer Signature _____ **Date** _____

SECTION 2: GRANT RECIPIANT INFORMATION

Business/Farm Name _____

Business Address _____ County _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Work Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Home Telephone _____ Mobile Phone _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF BUSINESS

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

SECTION 3: 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 a party to any claim or lawsuit? Yes No
- 2. Has the business or any of the top management personnel ever declared bankruptcy? Yes No
- 3. Does the business or any of the management personnel owe any taxes for prior years? Yes No

SECTION 4: PROJECT INFORMATION

A) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE URBAN AG PROJECT

Location of growing operation (neighborhood or community name and site address):

List products to be grown:

Describe growing methods (including a mention of inputs and water availability):

What labor that will be needed and when?

Where will the products be sold?

How has the community been engaged in planning this project?

Do you have any required government licenses and permits?

B) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE LOAN AND GRANT FUNDS WOULD BE USED:

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 5: SIGNATURES

CERTIFICATION

I/We certify all information in this application and the attachments is true and complete to the best of my/our knowledge.

Signature _____ Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Printed Name _____

Date _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Printed Name _____

Date _____ Date _____

SECTION 6: ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENTS CHECKLIST

- 1. Commercial Lender loan commitment letter/agreement and term sheet
- 2. Proposed business and marketing plan (if available)
- 3. Proposed project budget/detailed expenses list
- 4. Two years of Federal income tax returns (if available)

Note: MARBIDCO agrees to hold Recipient's Application in confidence to the extent reasonably permitted by Title 10, Subtitle 6 of the State Government 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.