

Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, MARBIDCO Award Total of \$38,000 to Farm-Based Businesses

The Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) and the Maryland Agricultural And Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) today announced the award of \$38,000 in matching grants to eight farm-based businesses in Anne Arundel County through the Agricultural Business Improvement Grant (ABIG) program.

“We’re very excited to announce the first recipients of our Agricultural Business Improvement Grant program,” said AAEDC President and CEO Amy Gowan. “We were thrilled with both the quantity and quality of applications that we received, and we look forward to watching these businesses grow their operations by carrying out the impactful projects they proposed.”

“MARBIDCO is very pleased that its Local Government Ag/RBI Cost Share Grant Program can work in tandem with AAEDC’s Agricultural Business Improvement Grant Program to improve the operations of five local farm businesses positively,” said MARBIDCO Executive Director Steve McHenry. “By partnering in this three-way cost-sharing arrangement, these small agricultural enterprises will now be able to purchase some much-needed equipment to continue to grow their farm enterprises. We are delighted to work with AAEDC in this effort and thankful for its continuing support of our homegrown commercial food and fiber production industry.”

Reflecting the diversity of the agricultural industry in Anne Arundel County, the grant recipients and funded projects include:

New Roots Farm – \$10,000 to purchase new livestock and electronic livestock recordkeeping software.

En-Tice-Ment Stables – \$10,000 to install new footing and make repairs to the farm’s equestrian riding arena.

Langton Green – \$5,000 to purchase a walk-in refrigerator that will allow the nonprofit to expand produce production for its community-led CSA program.

Pencek Farm and Vineyard – \$5,000 to purchase new trellis systems and wildlife fencing to protect the winery’s new vines.

Maci Childress of Hopkins Family Farm – \$3,000 to purchase new cattle fencing and a grooming chute for 4H project cattle.

Dodon Vineyards – \$2,000 to support a new fowl project for integrated pest management.

Morris Hill Farm – \$3,000 towards the purchase of a new delivery van that will support direct-to-consumer door sales and participation in new farmers' markets.

Back 40 Farm – \$250 to purchase new peach trees for direct-to-consumer sales.

AAEDC received 20 grant applications in ABIG's first year, with projects totaling \$451,570 and funds requested totaling \$139,305.

Each grant application was numerically scored based on its impact on increasing revenue, increasing, or retaining employees, expanding operations, or increasing efficiency, increasing the local-grown food supply, or providing agricultural education opportunities.

AAEDC distributed the program's \$20,000 in funds among the top-ranked projects, which ranged from a project cost of \$500 (Back 40 Farm) to \$44,581 (New Roots Farm) and was able to provide an additional \$18,000 in funding thanks to the generous support of MARBIDCO, which cost-shared qualifying projects.

Launched in December 2023, the ABIG program accepted applications for matching grants of up to \$10,000 to help farm-based businesses in Anne Arundel County grow their operations and generate additional revenue. All grant recipients are required to contribute at least 50% of project costs, as well as provide proof of completion of the project within a year of the grant award.