



by *Joni Nelson*



The Kentucky State University (KYSU) Center for the Sustainability of Farms and Families (CSFF) works to develop resources to provide assistance to small-scale farms. In partnership with the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund (KADF) and the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board (KADB), KYSU is able to provide mini grants to small ruminant farmers in Kentucky. This program helps small scale farmers (\$1,000-\$250,000 annual sales) who want to improve their farming operations and who can demonstrate the ability to document their successes.

The maximum funds available per farm, household or business is \$5,000 per application with a lifetime maximum of \$10,000. Applicants may also be eligible for up to \$500 for educational trainings or materials. Educational assistance

has a lifetime limit of \$500. The program offers grants in six categories, including farmer education. Grant funds cannot be used for the following:

- Motorized vehicles such as trucks, tractors, walk-behinds
- Labor costs paid to the applicant or
- Consumables or expendables such as jars, livestock, feed, trees, or plant materials
- Partial funding or equipment greater than \$10,000. Up to \$10,000 on a single piece of equipment requires verified matching funds up to \$5,000

The categories associated with small ruminant are as follows:

### **Value-added products**

This category includes refinement or change of raw agricultural products to a new product of increased market value, such as grains to bread, or milk to cheese, soap, and

lotions. No production-related equipment will be approved under this category.

### **Food-insecure area production**

This category addresses one or more of the following: hydroponics, poultry/eggs, meats, small ruminants (excluding cattle and dairy cattle), or another unique project that will be evaluated on an individual basis. This category can approve some production-related equipment such as feeders, waters, kidding pens, etc. Applicant must produce or sale in one or more of the 77 eligible counties (see application).

Ruminant sales must be into a food-insecure county that enters the food market in Kentucky and not only stockyard sales.



### **Agroforestry**

Agroforestry producers that are interested in better utilizing their forestlands are eligible to apply for this new category, which can provide production-related equipment and non-disposable supplies and materials related to the production, harvesting/collection, processing, storage and packaging of non-timber forest products, including silvopasture ruminant production (excluding cattle or dairy cattle production). Products may also include sap syrup, mushrooms, honey, medicinal herbs, black cohosh, goldenseal, fruits, and nuts.

### **Organic**

This area can provide production-related implements, equipment, and supplies, including broadfork, walk-behind implements, hand tools, etc. Applicant must provide proof of organic status (exempt, transitional or fully certified).

### **Farmer education assistance**

This includes workshops, conferences, online trainings, and reference materials. Allowable costs are lodging, mileage, and registration fees. Educational assistance has a lifetime limit of \$500.

On the application, please:

- Describe plans for improving your business. Please note that your budget plan should overestimate expected expenses.
- Describe who will do the work, when the work will be done, and the expected outcome.

Education assistance applications must be submitted at least 30-90 days in advance of the conference/workshop and you must secure your registration and lodging beforehand. If funded, receipts for your purchases must be submitted with detailed reports of the project results.

Applications are available online at [www.kysu.edu/ssfg](http://www.kysu.edu/ssfg) or you can request an application from:

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- **Kevin Gurtowski** [kevin.gurtowski@kysu.edu](mailto:kevin.gurtowski@kysu.edu) or (606) 568-7406.



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