

News

North Carolina Research Campus, Kannapolis

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N.C. MarketReady Announces Spring Cost Share Cycle for Equipment

KANNAPOLIS, N.C. – The North Carolina Value-Added Cost Share (NCVACS) program, administered by N.C. MarketReady, is now accepting applications for the spring funding cycle, Equipment Cost Share. This program is funded by the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission to support the development of value-added agricultural operations, an emerging sector of North Carolina agriculture.

A value-added agricultural product is a raw, agricultural commodity that has been changed in some manner so that it no longer can be returned to its original state. This change results in increased market value, allowing the producer to receive a higher price for these value-added products compared to the original commodity. Chopped lettuce, fruit jams and stone-ground corn meal are a few examples. “The NCVACS guidelines broaden the definition of value-added beyond the traditional scope. It also includes non-standard production methods (such as organic), physical product segregation (keeping genetically modified (GM) corn separate from non-GM corn), generating farm-based renewable energy and some locally produced food products,” said Brittany Whitmire, program coordinator for NCVACS.

The NCVACS program works hand-in-hand with the USDA Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) by reducing the costs associated with professional services and equipment purchases that are not funded by the USDA grant. The spring cost share cycle allows value-added producers to apply for equipment cost share funding. Applicants can seek to purchase new or used equipment with cost share funding. Equipment cost share awards will vary from 25 to 50 percent of the total cost of the equipment, up to a maximum of \$25,000.

“There are very few places where farmers can find financial assistance to purchase the specialized equipment they need to add a value-added enterprise,” said Blake Brown, Hugh C. Kiger Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics and member of the N.C. MarketReady team. “The N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and N.C. State University provide an opportunity for such assistance through the equipment cost share program of the North Carolina Value-Added Cost Share Program. We think this is an important contribution to help farms improve their viability by adding new

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enterprises profitably.”

Applications for NCVACS Equipment, spring 2010, are now available online at www.ncmarketready.org. Applications are due by March 30, 2010. Guidelines and a list of frequently asked questions can be found on the Web site. Award recipients will be notified by June 1, 2010.

For more information about NCVACS and VAPG, please visit www.ncmarketready.org and click on “Value-Added Cost Share” on the left menu bar.

N.C. MarketReady, formerly known as the Program for Value-Added & Alternative Agriculture, is a program of N.C. Cooperative Extension, which is an educational outreach of N.C. State University and N.C. A&T State University. N.C. MarketReady’s multidisciplinary team builds partnerships and educational resources to help North Carolina agriculture be more profitable. N.C. MarketReady is a partner of the Plants for Human Health Institute at the N.C. Research Campus in Kannapolis. Learn more at www.ncmarketready.org or www.ces.ncsu.edu.

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