

# Watershed Agricultural Council

Agriculture ♦ Forestry ♦ Conservation Easements ♦ Economic Initiatives

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## **Pure Catskills Sustainable Agriculture Development Grant Program**

### **SUMMARY**

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) is soliciting proposals from *Pure Catskills* business members to support activities related to development and promotion of locally produced farm and food products. *Pure Catskills* members include farms, retailers, farmer's markets, restaurants and food-related organizations that support the local food system within Delaware, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. Applicants must have a current membership status to be eligible for this funding opportunity. Membership materials are available at [www.purecatskills.com](http://www.purecatskills.com). The sponsorship of these activities will help to advance the WAC's mission to support the economic viability of agriculture and forestry through the protection of water quality and the promotion of land conservation in the New York City Watershed region.

Three business development categories will be considered, including:

1. **Product development:** purchase and installation of equipment and supplies for activities related to adding value to a local farm or food product. For example: wool processing equipment, ingredients required to develop an artisanal cheese recipe.
2. **Marketing:** promotional expenses related to sales of local farm and food products. For example: farm signs, product labels or packaging, webpage development, advertising campaigns.
3. **Outreach and education:** public events and activities that educate the regional community about local farm and food products. Events must be held May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011. For example: seasonal festivals, restaurant or retail events, farm tours.

Approximately \$50,000 in funding is available for the 2010 grant cycle. Funding will be provided on a competitive basis in each available funding category and throughout the *Pure Catskills* region. A maximum of \$5,000 will be available to each applicant. Only one award per business or organization will be considered. Applications must be tailored to one available funding category. A minimum match of 25% of cash or in-kind funding will be required. In-kind funding may include time spent developing a product, acquiring production skills related to product, conducting marketing activities or similar business-related efforts. Outreach and education applicants will be required to meet the insurance requirements as detailed in the attached form, Supplemental Event Information. All funding awarded must be spent within one-year of the grant announcement. Projects and events of diverse scale and scope will be considered; large production volume or event attendance will not make individual applications more apt to receive funding.

Applicants should provide information related to their activities toward adopting a new production method or promoting and developing in-demand local farm or food products. Products considered will reflect the Catskills agricultural community and utilize sustainable, environmentally-focused methods. The most competitive applications will enhance the economic viability of established farm and food businesses or organizations with a history of participating in the *Pure Catskills* campaign. However, applications from new events and businesses or diversifying commodity-based businesses will be considered.

### **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Each applicant must complete the attached Application Questionnaire and the supplemental form associated with the category in which they apply. Please be concise with your responses keeping to a length of less than 350-words each per question.

For product development and marketing applicants, supporting documentation for anticipated expenses will be required. Provide evidence that efforts have been made to identify reasonable prices from vendors and/or consultants. Demonstrate the basic elements of the total funding requested for proposed purchases, professional services or employee time. Where possible, attach supporting documentation such as business plans, price quotes or marketing materials.

For outreach and education applicants, the insurance requirements detailed in the attached form must be met a minimum of two weeks prior to the date of the proposed event. A minimum of three *Pure Catskills* businesses must be represented at each funded event. The event must educate the public about local food and/or agriculture. Where possible, attach supporting documentation for the event such as promotional items from past events or vendor registration forms.

### **-REPORTING REQUIREMENTS-**

Each grant recipient will be required to provide a brief, informal summary of the activities completed with the funding provided to assist in outreach about the program through:

- One 350-word essay on one or more of the following topics:
    - Your experience developing a new product, marketing campaign or community event
    - Your approach to production on the farm, successful event planning or sourcing for a retail or restaurant business
  - One photograph related to the essay from the grantee's business or the event organized
- OR -
- Collaboration in hosting a workshop or tour related to the development of a new product or enhancement of a current production method as a result of funding provided through this program

These materials will be used in *Pure Catskills* outreach materials including [www.purecatskills.com](http://www.purecatskills.com) and quarterly newsletters.

- AND -

For product development and marketing applicants, documentation must be provided detailing the actual expenses funded through the grant, including receipts for purchases, photograph of equipment or samples of marketing materials. This final submission shall also detail the actual match provided.

### EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

For product development and marketing applicants:

CRITERIA	POINTS
Clarity and completeness of application submitted including application questionnaire.	0 – 30
Appropriateness of the planned product, marketing strategy or production method to be developed. Preference will be given to direct-marketed and sustainably produced products that are aligned with the <i>Pure Catskills</i> mission.	0 – 40
Demonstrated capacity of applicant and documentation of sound business planning activities.	0 – 20
Budget presentation within application questionnaire	0 – 10

For outreach and education applicants:

CRITERIA	POINTS
Clarity and completeness of application submitted including application questionnaire.	0 – 30
Event appropriateness to the <i>Pure Catskills</i> mission of promoting local foods and agricultural heritage. Participation of a minimum of three <i>Pure Catskills</i> members.	0 – 40
Demonstrated capacity of applicant and documentation of sound event planning activities.	0 – 20
Budget presentation within application questionnaire	0 – 10

**Applications must be post-marked or hand-delivered on or before April 15, 2010.** Faxed or emailed applications will not be considered. Selections will be announced no later than April 23, 2010.

Questions will be accepted until April 5, 2010. Responses to all questions posed will be posted on [www.purecatskills.com](http://www.purecatskills.com) on April 8, 2010. Please contact Challey Comer at [ccomer@nycwatershed.org](mailto:ccomer@nycwatershed.org) or (607) 865-7090.

Mail or hand deliver application materials to:

Challey Comer  
Watershed Agricultural Council  
44 West Street, Suite 1  
Walton, NY 13856

#### SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

<b>March 15, 2010</b>	RFP Release Date
<b>April 15, 2010</b>	Deadline for proposal receipt
<b>April 23, 2010</b>	Notification of funding award
<b>April 30, 2011</b>	Project completion date