



For Immediate Release

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CLIMATE-SMART GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE TO PA DAIRY PRODUCERS

The Grants Allow Producers to Develop Climate-Smart Plans for Their Operations

Harrisburg, Pa. – Climate-Smart Grants are available to Pennsylvania dairy producers and provide funding for producers to identify and implement climate-smart practices that will benefit their dairy operations. The funding is available through the CARAT project. CARAT stands for climate-smart agriculture that is profitable, regenerative, actionable, and trustworthy (CARAT). The project is conducted by Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) and partners with funding from the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities, an initiative of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

No more than 150 dairy farms will be approved, on a first come, first served basis, through the pre-qualification process to work with a technical service provider to develop climate-smart plans for their operations. From there, 69 dairy farms across three cohorts will be selected for implementation of their plan. Grant applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

“As dairy farmers, manure is our number one source of nutrients for our crops, so I’m always looking to improve that process. The composting I’ve started doing has helped on the solid side. On the liquid side, I’ve been looking into new technology which is where the Climate-Smart Grant came in. It’s an autonomous irrigation machine that follows the way you plant your corn,” said Paul Mason of Mason’s Chrome View in Chester County, Pennsylvania. “The idea is, if I can apply manure in season while my corn is growing, I can apply it at multiple points in slower doses. By being able to do that, I can theoretically be more efficient with my nitrogen use, with more going into my plants and less emissions and volatilization.”

Pennsylvania dairy farms with 35 lactating cows or more or custom dairy heifer facilities with 100 or more dairy heifers that have a 1) Ag E&S or conservation plan and 2) manure management or nutrient management plan in place (two total plans) are eligible to apply for the grants.

“Without this grant, I really wouldn’t be looking at this technology. The grant is making it a reasonable opportunity for me to chase. It’s providing funds to hopefully help me improve my environmental footprint that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive,” Mason added.

Visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/climate-smart-grants to learn more about the grants and submit an application. Pre-qualification for the grant does not guarantee your farm will be approved as one of the final CARAT participants. Farms will be notified whether they have been accepted into the pre-qualification upon review of their application.

Contact Melissa Anderson at manderson@centerfordairyexcellence.org or call 717-788-0296 to learn more about funding levels per farm, what portion of costs the farmer is responsible for, technical service providers and more.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center's mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org.

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