



CENTER FOR  
**Dairy**EXCELLENCE

## For Immediate Release

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### **MARCH 31<sup>st</sup> DEADLINE FOR DAIRY EXCELLENCE GRANTS**

#### *Podcast Episode Highlights Benefits of Low-Cost Improvements*

**Harrisburg, Pa.** – The deadline for dairy producers to apply for the new “Dairy Excellence Grant” is March 31. All applications must be postmarked or submitted electronically by March 31 to be considered for the Dairy Excellence Grant Program, which offers a 50 percent match, up to a maximum matching level of \$5,000, to dairy farms to invest in improvements that enhance dairy farm efficiency or performance. The program is a competitive grant program, which means not all farms applying will receive the grant. Grant applications are being accepted from March 1 – 31, 2021, with selections made and winning applicants notified by April 25.

In the latest episode of Cowside Conversations, Alan Waybright of Mount Rock Dairy in Newville, Cumberland County, shares his thoughts on transitioning to a different facility and investing in low cost improvements to enhance cow comfort and ventilation. Waybright only had a matter of weeks to renovate the farm between when the previous owner dispersed his herd and Waybright brought his herd in. His herd manager, veterinarian and he walked through the facilities beforehand and identified low cost improvements that could be made quickly to enhance the facilities.

“We more than paid for our initial investment within the first year, with deep bedding providing cow comfort for the cows to lay down. We also added a sprinkler circular fan that allowed the cows to take the heat much better during the summer months.”

With so many dairy producers looking to make improvements on their operations, the Dairy Excellence Grant is intended to support enhancements that could make a significant difference in achieving goals around milk production, cow comfort, and profitability. Improvement projects can include anything related to improving dairy farm efficiency, cow comfort, milking facilities, housing facilities, or feeding systems. The project should focus on improving milk production per cow and/or enhancing overall farm profitability and efficiency.

To participate in the Dairy Excellence Grant program, dairy farms must complete an application. A \$100 application fee is required upon submission but will be reimbursed if the application is not accepted. As part of the application process, dairy producers will be required to:

- Know their cost of production
- Be compliant with the National FARM Program or a similar program
- Have a Conservation and Nutrient Management Plan in place

- List two consultants/advisors who work with their farm (nutritionist, accountant, veterinarian, etc.)
- Explain how the improvement will help their overall operation and aid in milk production per cow, efficiency and/or cow comfort

Grant recipients will be notified by April 25, 2021. Expenses/invoices must be submitted by June 30, 2021. To apply, visit [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/dairy-excellence-grants](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/dairy-excellence-grants) to submit your application online or download a printed application. Applications will only be accepted from March 1-31, 2021. Contact Melissa Anderson at [manderson@centerfordairyexcellence.org](mailto:manderson@centerfordairyexcellence.org) or 717-636-0779 for more information.

To access the latest “Cowside Conversations” podcast episode with Alan Waybright, search for “Cowside Conversations” on Spotify, Apple or Amazon Music, or go to [centerfordairyexcellence.org/podcast/](http://centerfordairyexcellence.org/podcast/).

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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](http://centerfordairyexcellence.org).

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**[www.centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org)**