



**Program Guidelines for the Greater Appalachian
Sheep and Goat Improvement Initiative Program
For Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Franklin, Grayson, Henry,
Patrick and Wythe Counties**

**Update: August 23, 2017 – Bedford, Campbell, Halifax,
Appomattox and Pittsylvania Counties added to this
cost-share program**

**UPDATE: August 16, 2018 – PLEASE BE AWARE THIS
GRANT IS COMING TO THE END OF THE FUNDING
DEADLINE. ALL APPROVALS FOR STARTING A
PROJECT SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN
ASAP. ALL APPROVED PROJECTS WILL NEED TO BE
COMPLETED BY DECEMBER 1ST TO ALLOW TIME TO
SUBMIT PAPERWORK FOR PAYMENT. ANY PROJECT
AND PAPERWORK COMPLETED AFTER DECEMBER
1ST, 2018 MAY NOT BE REIMBURSED.**

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective the Greater Appalachian Sheep and Goat Improvement Initiative is to provide assistance to producers to enhance and enable net farm income and profit by providing funding to reduce predation by improving fencing and housing, increase profit by helping purchase equipment necessary to produce saleable products, and help youth enter into the business.

Eligibility Requirements for Participating Producers

REVISED FEBRUARY 2017 – PLEASE BE ADVISED ONLY YOUTH AGES 16-18 CAN USE COST-SHARE MONEY TO PURCHASE SHEEP AND GOATS.

Please Read the Entire Grant

1. Applicant, (age 16 or older) if landowner, must be a Tobacco Commission Region **resident**.
2. Applicant, (age 16 or older) if Renter/Lessor, must be a Tobacco Commission region resident and have a 5 year lease agreement for property located in one of the participating 8 counties beginning the date of his/her grant approval.
3. Applicant, if youth (16-18), must have a parent/adult co-signer on application who will be responsible for applicant and program. Co-signer will have a mandatory obligation to attend educational programs and work on business plan with youth.
4. Applicant must attend mandatory educational program by Virginia Cooperative Extension agents or approved program.
5. Applicant must complete business plan prior to receiving funds. (A business plan template can be requested or use the online free Farm Business Plan builder at <http://www.agplan.umn.edu/>).
6. Applicant must maintain and have insurance (structures and equipment) for 5 years from date of completion. Must show proof of insurance on necessary structures and equipment. (A letter from insurance company showing coverage).
7. Applicant must file an annual report with local Virginia Cooperative Extension agents for a five year period beginning the next physical fiscal year after completing the program project.
8. During the five year period, applicant must attend one approved educational program each year. Attendance to programs will be recorded.
9. Applicant, looking to sell milk, cheese products or products for human consumption, must be compliant with Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs (VDACS), Milk Inspectors, complete all requirements and guidelines in accordance to State and Federal regulations.

Failure to comply with the eligibility requirements during the term of the grant period may disqualify the applicant and/or require reimbursement of awarded grant funds.

FUNDING TERMS: Funds will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis after applicants have completed educational grant requirements (construction of business plan and attendance at one education program). **Applications will be collected on a specific day in each county.** Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

The allocation for grant funds will be as follows:

Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission grant funds will be dedicated to serve at least 10 producers from each of the 8 Counties awarded money from the Greater Appalachian Sheep and Goat Improvement Initiative. Announcement of the cost-share

funding will become public February 2016, allowing applicants 4 months to attend at minimum one mandatory educational training and complete a farm business plan. Applications will be collected July 1st, 2016. Counties will have a set time on July 1st, 2016 when applications will be accepted. All producers wanting to participate in the program will need to attend a mandatory informational meeting. **Producers will have 180 days (6 months) to complete project after they receive the dated approval letter from VCE. One 30 day extension will be granted if written request is received within 20 days before the end of the 180 day time-frame end date.** Project extensions will need to be reviewed by oversight committee through a time sensitive meeting.

UPDATE as of August 23, 2017 – Four additional counties will be added to the original eight counties – the following counties will be added : Bedford, Campbell, Halifax, and Pittsylvania.

After producers receive their approval letter from VCE (or if you have not received a letter within 3 weeks after handing in application, please contact VCE office in your county.) UPDATED 8.16.18 – PARTICIPANTS WILL ONLY HAVE UNTIL DECEMBER 1ST TO COMPLETE PROJECTS AND TURN IN ALL NECESSARY PAPERWORK AND RECEIPTS. NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE ALLOWED.

Funding Reallocation:

Six months from July 1st, the oversight committee and DOC members will regroup to reallocate remaining funds. During this time, the committee will review waiting list applications. If there are no pending application from a jurisdiction, we reserve the right for the DOC committee to re-allocate those funds to any other jurisdiction that has exhausted their allocated funds and have pending applications.

Producers must understand no money will be paid for cost-share reimbursement until after the project is complete and the DOC committee meets to approve funds disbursement.

Meetings for approving completed projects and applications will occur at least once monthly.

Update: August 23, 2017 – Oversight committee has agreed to open the cost-share to the additional counties. All remaining funding is on a first serve basis, if completed application process correctly.

General Application Requirements

1. All applications shall include the following information or be rendered incomplete and ineligible for submission: Pertains to adults 18 or older and parents of youth applicants ages 16-18.
 - a. Name, address, telephone number, email.
 - b. FSA/USDA farm number/tract number of applicant (if applicant is not the owner, must provide a copy of lease indicating 5-year agreement with application, if applicant does not have a FSA farm number, see below). Providing proof of land acreage amounts.
 - c. FSA aerial map of farm (photocopy, if application does not have a FSA farm number see below).
 - d. Provide a County GIS lot number (if applicant does not have a FSA farm number). Used to provide acreage requirement amount.
 - e. Land acreage requirement of minimum 5 acres.
 - f. Letter supporting proof of insurance.
 - g. Completed IRS W-9 Form.
 - h. Copy of completed Farm Business Plan. A Business Plan template can be provided if requested. An online free Farm Business Plan is also available at <https://www.agplan.umn.edu/>.
 - i. Attendance Verification or Receipt from Approved Educational Program.
 - j. Signed producer verification form acknowledging understanding of grant program requirements and adherence to those requirements. If a producer fails to meet the requirements of this agreement, they will be ineligible for any future funding opportunities through Tobacco Grant programs.
 - k. **UPDATE August 23, 2017 – please if purchasing equipment or using a contractor provide estimate of work completed or equipment being purchased with your application packet.**
 - l. **Labor expenses cannot be over 30% of the total bill.**

2. Cost Share

- a. 33% reimbursement of up to a maximum of \$9,000.00 in eligible expenses.
- b. Maximum reimbursement of \$3,000. Under no circumstances will more than \$3,000 be reimbursed to a producer.

3. Installation and/or purchases authorized through this grant program must be completed within 180 days (6 months) of receipt of approval notice. **UPDATE 8.16.2018 – ALL PROJECTS AND PAPERWORK MUST BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 1, 2018. NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED, WE ARE NEARING THE END OF FUNDING SUPPORT DEADLINE.** Extensions may be granted by the Oversight committee and DOC members. A written extension letter must be received within 20 days of the end of 180 day allowance. Should a producer fail to utilize funds or project is not completed by the authorized reimbursement deadline, the associated funds shall be reallocated to the next available applicant. All parties will be notified of program cancellation, and that any and all purchases made will not be covered by the cost-share program.

4. Site Visit by Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent is required to verify eligibility and for consultation on projects prior to approval. Structures must conform to guidelines established by Virginia Cooperative Extension or Equivalent Extension Service recommendations. **PROJECTS MUST MEET ALL LOCAL AND STATE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.**

5. Producer shall supply a dated and itemized official receipt indicating buyer and seller information to be eligible for payment. The receipt must appear on a formal company invoice format or company letterhead indicating the contractor provided the service and or products. **HAND WRITTEN notes on paper are not acceptable.** All receipts and documentation will be reviewed and approved at the discretion of the oversight committee and DOC members. Copies of all receipts and paperwork will be submitted to the Tobacco Commission for final payment approval. Example if purchasing equipment or products from a home building store, please provide original receipt, purchases made will be reviewed. All receipts will be reviewed and DOC committee makes final say on what receipts and bills are acceptable. Receipts for purchases or services dated before application approval are not allowed. **UPDATE: please provide itemized receipts. If ordering online for items please submit both payment receipt and invoice of items. Do not just hand in credit card payment stub! Please make sure all receipts are legible, receipts that are hard to read will delay payment process or not payment reimbursement for that item.**

6. An annual report from the producer shall be provided to the local Extension Offices and remain on file. The following will be required.

- a. Name and address information where the project was completed.
- b. Written proof and verification producer attended mandatory annual educational program.
- c. Updated business plan
- d. Annual number of animals
- e. Annual number of product sold (meat, cheese, animals, milk, artisan products, wool, etc.)
- f. Annual profit numbers
- g. Affirmation that grant structure is still in place, is being maintained, and is insured
- h. Applicant shall grant access to property where grant project completed to Extension Agent, Grant Staff, DOC, and Tobacco Commission staff.

ALL FUNDS AWARDED UNDER THIS GRANT PROGRAM ARE SUBJECT TO FEDERAL INCOME TAX AND ARE TO BE REPORTED ON PRODUCER'S FEDERAL INCOME TAX RETURN.

A 1099 SHOWING PRODUCER GRANT AWARD WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE IRS and to the producer from the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District.

COST-SHARE BUY-IN ELIGIBILITY PROGRAMS

Herd Size Requirements for each cost-share buy-in Eligibility Programs:

PLEASE BE ADVISED ONLY YOUTH AGES 16-18 CAN USE COST-SHARE MONEY TO PURCHASE SHEEP AND GOATS.

****ALL Producers must keep complete and accurate records of number of animals born, sold, and or death. Veterinarian death certificate or pictures to help support death are encouraged.**

All Applicants must have a minimum of 5 acres of land to apply for this grant. Applicants will be required to provide a copy of one of the following to verify land amounts:

- 1. Most recent tax assessment bill showing land amounts**
- 2. GIS lot numbers to verify land acreage amounts.**
- 3. FSA/USDA farm tract numbers.**
- 4. Applicants can lease land but most show proof of lease agreement lasting the entire length of the grant lifespan (5 years).**

Please be aware of the number of animals producers need to grow towards. Adequate acreage is required to correct manage and grow the herd size and be a profitable business.

OPTION 1:

1). New Sheep and Goat Producers (improving facilities and handling equipment to increase profit through future expansion of herd).

- a. Within the 1st year producers in the category must purchase 10 breeding age does/ewe (1 ram can be substituted for a breeding age doe/ewe, exception is goat producers using artificial insemination) or 15 kids/lambs.
- b. Within the 2nd year producers must be showing increase in herd size and business profit potential.
- c. By the end 4th year producers in this category must show expansion of the herd to increase the herd size to 25 breeding age does/ewe or kids/lambs (or a mix to get up to 25 animals). Record all live-births, mortality and morbidity, culling due to sterility/reproductively deficient.

Failure to comply with the guidelines and eligibility requirements during the term of the grant period may disqualify the applicant and require reimbursement of awarded grant funds.

OPTION 2:

PLEASE BE ADVISED ONLY YOUTH AGES 16-18 CAN USE COST-SHARE MONEY TO PURCHASE SHEEP AND GOATS.

2). Existing Sheep and Goat Producers (improving facilities and handling equipment to increase profit through future expansion of herd).

- a. Producers in this category must have an existing herd size of minimum of 15 breeding age does/ewe. Complete and detailed records of previous 3 years of sales of live animals can be used to help support herd size.
- b. During the 5 year grant life-span producers must demonstrate a 15% increase in marketable product (i.e. number of live lambs either by expansion of flock/herd or by selling more from given number of does/ewes due to reduced lamb losses, greater reproductive efficiency, less predator losses due to facility improvements; and/or, by more pounds sold/animals marketed through better care and handling).
- c. Producers will be required to provide all necessary documentation to show 15% increase in marketable product. Please retain complete, detailed records.

Failure to comply with the guidelines and eligibility requirements during the term of the grant period may disqualify the applicant and require reimbursement of awarded grant funds.

OPTION 3:

PLEASE BE ADVISED ONLY YOUTH AGES 16-18 CAN USE COST-SHARE MONEY TO PURCHASE SHEEP AND GOATS.

3). Value-Added Processing Equipment (existing producers)

- a. Producers applying for value-added processing equipment (i.e. bulk tanks, processors, pasteurize or equipment associated in the making and production of meat or dairy products for sale).
- b. Producers in this category must have a herd size of minimum 25 of breeding age does/ewes.
- c. Producers purchasing equipment for producing sellable products for human consumption must work with a USDA certified Milk Inspector through VDACS and Extension agent.

- d. Producers purchasing equipment for producing sellable products for human consumption will need to become a Grade A or Grade B manufacturer of products.

Failure to comply with the guidelines and eligibility requirements during the term of the grant period may disqualify the applicant and require reimbursement of awarded grant funds.

OPTION 4:

4). Youth ages 16 – 18 enrolled in 4H club or FFA (or equivalent that meets VCE agent's qualifications).

PLEASE BE ADVISED ONLY YOUTH AGES 16-18 CAN USE COST-SHARE MONEY TO PURCHASE SHEEP AND GOATS.

- a. Youth in this category can apply for the cost-share program with a parent or legal guardian co-signer. The guardian will be 100% responsible with the youth for the life-time of the program. The guardian must attend educational programs and prepare a business plan with the youth.
- b. Youth would follow the guidelines under the buy-in category producer, new, existing, or value-added.
- c. Youth must enroll in a youth 4H livestock club in their county and be active member.
- d. Youth will work closely with a mentor (4H leader, FFA advisor, or experienced producer) during the program.
- e. Youth will be required to submit yearly record keeping books.
- f. This is a unique opportunity for youth to start their own business and herd. Youth have the potential with 4H and FFA to show animals, apply for scholarships, and compete at State and National levels to earn money for their good work.

Failure to comply with the guidelines and eligibility requirements during the term of the grant period may disqualify the applicant and require reimbursement of awarded grant funds.

General Program Guidelines on Eligible Program Components

Eligible Program Components

The following provides a list of eligible products/purchases that the cost-share will cover. If you have a question about the eligibility of a product/purchase you do not see on the list below, PLEASE consult with your extension agent before purchasing. The committee reserves the right to deny payment for purchases made that do not follow the guidelines.

LABOR REQUIREMENTS: PLEASE READ COMPLETELY AND UNDERSTAND

Labor conducted by contractor; reimbursement for labor cannot exceed 30% of total reimbursement. **LABOR PROVIDED BY APPLICANT OR THEIR EMPLOYEES NOT ELIGIBLE.**

EQUIPMENT/MATERIAL PURCHASES:

UPDATE: please provide itemized receipts. If ordering online for items please submit both payment receipt and invoice of items. Do not hand in credit payment stub only.

1) Barns/Shed

- New structures or additions to existing structures.
- New structures or additions must be a minimum of 288 square feet.
- Minimum height 5 feet high clearance for new structures and additions.
- PLEASE CONSIDER HEIGHT OF STRUCTURES IF YOU NEED TO DRIVE IN EQUIPMENT TO CLEAN STRUCTURES OUT.
- Site preparation - site must be well drained; cost of elevated pad for construction is eligible, clearing of land is not eligible.
- Roof - metal, shingles or a polymer coated fabric.
- Flooring - recommended but not required; 4-6 inches of gravel or rubber matting

2) Fencing

- Cross-fencing or parameter fencing
- High tensile electric
- Portable web fencing
- Poles (wooden, metal, fiberglass)

3) Feeder/feed bins

- Feeders Grain/Bunk/Trough/Mineral
- Fence Line Feeder Panels
- Creep Equipment
- Hay Basket
- Round Bale Feeders Chain/Standard/Off Ground/Collapsible
- Hay Saver Inserts
- Waterers. Installation of Wells not eligible.

4) Handling equipment

- Gates

- Loading Ramps
- Working Circles
- Chutes Fixed/Portable
- Panels Open/Solid
- Lambing/Kidding Pens
- Hutch Shelters
- Lamb Holders
- Trimming Stands
- Lambing Panels
- Turn Tables/Flip Tables/Sheep Chairs
- Head Gates/Head Locks
- Foot Baths
- Scales
- Portable Fencing/Pens
- Transportation Racks Pickup/Trailer (for movement of animals, please consult with extension agent before purchasing to make sure buy correct/approved type).
- Transportation Rack Covers

Purchasing of medical supplies, vaccinations, Veterinarian services and bills, halters, ear tags, is not eligible.

VALUE ADDED EQUIPMENT COST-SHARE

5) Milking parlor equipment

Must be working with State Milk inspector to become certified manufacturer or grade A license.

- Self-Standing Parlor Units
- Pasteurizers
- Milk holding tank
- milking machines
- Piping for milking units
- refrigeration systems
- rubber mats for parlor (comfort)

Youth Applicants:

Ages 16-18 years old will work with co-signer (parent/adult) and local Extension agents to put together a business plan and attend or join a youth educational program (4-H livestock club, summer livestock programs, etc.). The program would be open to individual rural youths age 16 through 18 to finance income-producing, agriculture-

related projects. The project must be of modest size, educational, and initiated, developed, and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H clubs, FFA, or a similar organization. Youth will have to get signed letters of reference from an adult (not related), and a 4-H leader, extension agent, or FFA teacher.

Youth Applicants ages 16-18 can use funds to purchase the following:

1. Barns/sheds
2. Fencing
3. Handling equipment
4. Milking equipment - if becoming a Grade A or B manufacturing business.
5. Animals - sheep or goats

Ineligible Components:

- Cost of Clearing Land
- Labor provided by applicant or their employees (you can build yourself or use your employee but you cannot submit receipts for payment).
- Used Materials are not eligible for cost share but can be used.
- Purchasing of medical supplies or vaccinations
- Paying for Veterinarian services and bills
- Reimbursement for travel or mileage for picking up materials, equipment, etc.
- **UPDATE: Cost-share will not cover cost for feeds, fertilizers, or grass seed.**
- **WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO DENY ANY RECEIPT OR ITEMS ON RECEIPT WE FEEL DOES NOT MEET REQUIREMENTS.**

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL EXTENSION AGENT IF YOU QUESTION THE PURCHASE OF ANY EQUIPMENT OR MATERIALS THAT YOU DO NOT SEE LISTED ON THE ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COMPONENTS LIST. THE APPROVAL COMMITTEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR DENY ANY AND ALL RECEIPTS.



Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

www.ext.vt.edu

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

This initiative is funded by a grant from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission's Agribusiness program.

APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNTIL JULY 1, 2016 –

FRANKLIN COUNTY WILL ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FOR FRANKLIN AND HENRY

COUNTIES ON JULY 1, 2016 FROM 9 AM TO 4 PM.

UPDATE August 23, 2017 – open enrollment ALL PROJECTS AND PAPERWORK MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN BY DECEMBER 1, 2018 TO ENSURE REIMBURSEMENT.

The Greater Appalachian Sheep and Goat Improvement Initiative Grant Producer Self-Certification Form

(Please answer all of the following questions describing your farming operation.)

1. Have you attended one of the Project informational meetings? YES NO

Which Informational Program did you attend?

Franklin/Henry County -

Carrol County –Bland County - Floyd County –Grayson County –Patrick County - Wythe County – Completed in 2016

Bedford County – Date:_____Campbell County – Date_____

Pittsylvania County – Date:_____ Halifax County – Date_____

Please be advised your county may hold a joint meeting with another county to get the information out. Please contact your county to find out dates and locations of meetings.

2. Are you are resident or property owner in one of the participating counties? Which county(s)? _____

3. Have you attended a Certified Educational Program related to sheep and goat production?

If Yes, Name and location. _____

4. Do you have a minimum of 5 acres of land? YES NO

5. Do you currently own any sheep and goats? If, Yes how many breeding age and young stock? _____

I certify that the information provided on this questionnaire is true and correct. I understand that if information that I provided on this questionnaire is found to be incorrect, I forfeit my eligibility to participate in the Greater Appalachian Sheep and Goat Improvement Initiative and will be required to refund any benefit I received.

Applicant Name: _____ Date _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

