

Growth Through Agriculture

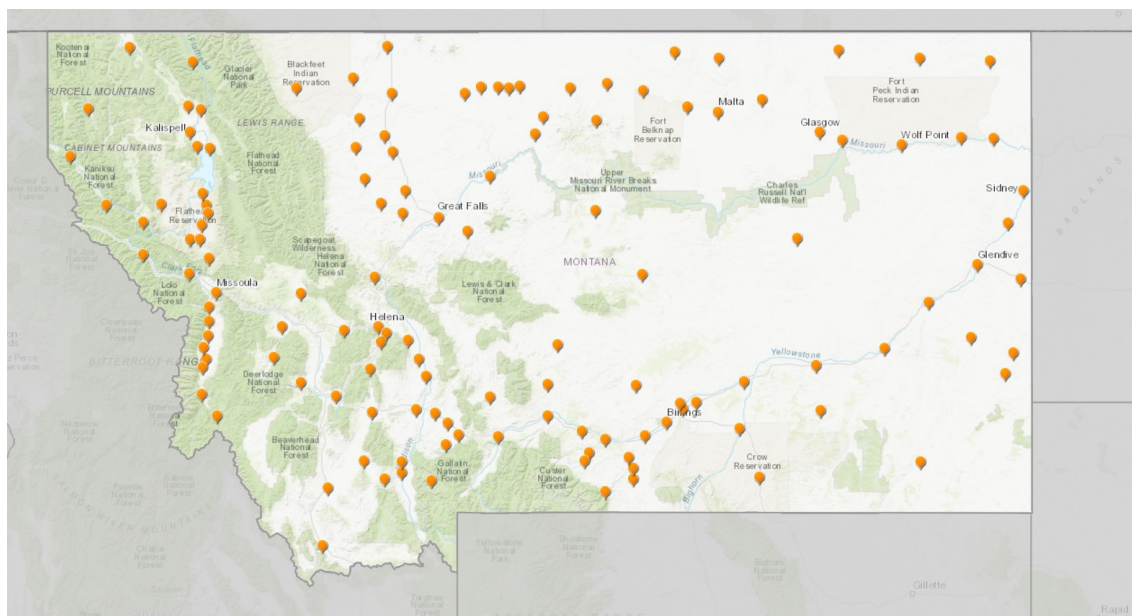


The Growth Through Agriculture Program is a competitive grant and loan program whose mission is to strengthen and diversify Montana's agricultural industry through loans and grants that assist with the development of innovative agricultural business organizational improvements, the commercialization and marketing of new agricultural products in order to keep pace with a transforming agricultural industry, and to create new jobs and expand small business opportunities.

The Agriculture Development Council, a seven member independent body consisting of industry representatives spanning food, agriculture and economic development, reviews applications and selects successful projects for program investment. The program is administered by the Montana Department of Agriculture.

The Program is administered by staff at the Montana Department of Agriculture. Eligible projects should primarily add value to Montana's agricultural products, have prospects for achieving commercial success given the current personnel, experience and resources of the applicant and have the possibility to create and/or retain jobs in Montana. Examples of project activities include, but are not limited to: equipment purchases, advertising and promotion, and consultant services such as engineering costs. A \$1 for \$1 match is required for all types of Growth Through Agriculture projects, including both grants and loans. The maximum award from the program is \$150,000; up to \$50,000 in grant funding and up to \$100,000 in loan funding. Post-award, projects are monitored until close-out for compliance by Montana Department of Agriculture staff.

Projects have been funded in communities all across Montana.



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Growth Through Agriculture FY 20 Awards

Awardee	Project Description	Grant Amount	Loan Amount	Total Award
Ag Processing Solutions Great Falls	Purchase equipment for research and development of specialty de-hulled Montana commodities.	\$5,000		\$5,000
Awesome Acres St. Ignatius	Construction of a certified herb drying facility to enable online and wholesale sales	\$4,857.50		\$4,857.50
Big Sandy Organics Big Sandy	Increase storage space, grow production capabilities with the purchase of a second jacketed steam kettle, and advance its national online marketing.	\$40,000		\$40,000
Big Sky Orchards Bigfork	Expand the processing and packaging of family-grown Montana hops and enable year-round hops availability.	\$40,000		\$40,000
Black Dog Farm Livingston	Construction of on-farm walk-in freezer to allow the storage of more inventory.	\$5,000		\$5,000
Caroline Point Farm Missoula	Expand ecommerce and wholesale markets for Mountain Meadow Bone Broth.	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
County Rail Farm Huson	Purchase of cooler for farm stand.	\$3,750		\$3,750
Cowboy Cricket Farms Bozeman	Purchase of automation and sensor equipment to increase cricket farm production and materials for packaging finished products.	\$15,000		\$15,000
Crawford Distillery Havre	Purchase of distilling equipment that will increase production capability from 50 gallons to 300 gallons.	\$5,362		\$5,362
Crescent Ridge Farm Alberton	Construction of a processing and cold storage facility and expansion of the produce and flower farm.	\$25,250		\$25,250
Crooked Yard Hops Bozeman	Expansion of hops harvesting and packaging line to meet the Montana market demand for hops and hops processing.		\$13,500	\$13,500
Delpine Farms Martinsdale	Purchase equipment to build mobile cold-storage for farm stand.	\$5,000		\$5,000
Dry Hills Distillery Bozeman	Purchase of an electric hammer-mill and an automated bottle labeling system to increase the production of Montana grains and expand co-packaging potential.	\$10,900	\$38,100	\$49,000

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Growth Through Agriculture FY 20 Awards (continued)

Awardee	Project Description	Grant Amount	Loan Amount	Total Award
Farmented Foods Kalispell	Business expansion and larger-scale processing and fermentation equipment purchases, consultant services, advertising and promotion.	\$14,052		\$14,052
Farver Farms Scobey	Subscription to annual subscription to “Range Me” virtual marketing platform	\$1,399		\$1,399
Flathead Lake Cherry Growers Polson	Replacement its cold-storage cooling system with a non-hazardous, freon-based system.	\$50,000		\$50,000
Gally’s Brewing Harlowton	Purchase of a grain mill, enabling the brewery to use more Montana grains in their beers	\$1,625		\$1,625
Glacier Tilth Farm Dixon	Purchase of equipment to expand self-serve farm store	\$1,675		\$1,675
Go Roam Free Hot Springs	Expand the production of grass-fed bison products through improvements to infrastructure and marketing.	\$5,000		\$5,000
Green Ridge Biosolutions Ronan	Purchase a 50kg per hour extraction unit and expand Green Ridge’s capacity to extract Montana-grown hemp ten-fold.	\$45,000		\$45,000
Hamilton Pack Hamilton	Purchase of a vacuum tumbler and new hamburger grinder and mixer to expand product offerings and sell an additional 700 lbs of meat per week.	\$46,000		\$46,000
Hi Country Snack Foods Lincoln	Purchase and installation of packaging equipment for the local jerky operation so it can co-package for other Montana companies.	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000
Kalispell Creamery Kalispell	Establishment of a glass bottle recycling program through purchase of a multi-function bottle washer and a rotary cap feeder and cap chute.		\$28,000	\$28,000
Lifeline Produce Victor	Build and equip a commissary kitchen for prepping and washing ready-to-eat vegetables.	\$16,990		\$16,990
Lowdown Farm Charlo	Purchase of produce packaging equipment to adapt to COVID-19 affected markets.	\$493.49		\$493.49
Lower Valley Farm Kalispell	Help adapt the farm and CSA program during the COVID-19 crisis.	\$4,500		\$4,500

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Growth Through Agriculture FY 20 Awards (continued)

Awardee	Project Description	Grant Amount	Loan Amount	Total Award
Madison Farm to Fork Ennis	Purchase equipment, materials and supplies for potato gardening, beekeeping and food production at Ennis schools for student and community education	\$2,500		\$2,500
Milk River Joint Board of Control Havre	Supplies and materials to replace Drop 2 of the St. Mary Project, helping to provide a continued water supply to the Milk River Basin while preserving the Basin's natural resources.	\$50,000		\$50,000
Montana Branded Westby	Purchase of a walk-in freezer to expand retail beef sales.	\$27,000		\$27,000
Montana CiderWorks Sula	Web development to expand distribution through online sales in response to COVID-19 market losses.	\$5,000		\$5,000
Montana Gluten Free Prairie Manhattan	Upgrade packaging and baking equipment to increase production efficiencies and double production capacity in two years.	\$5,000		\$5,000
Montana Premier Protein Billings	Engineering study, site evaluation consultation, and market analysis for its pulse protein processing facility.	\$50,000		\$50,000
Mountain Meat Shares Arlee	Purchase of a trailer for freezers to allow for an expanded delivery area	\$1,460		\$1,460
Mountain View Growers Kalispell	Creation of e-commerce website which will increase food access through online produce subscriptions	\$4,500		\$4,500
Paradise Permaculture Institute Livingston	Purchase equipment for a produce washing and processing station	\$4,000		\$4,000
Project Meats Billings	Purchase of packaging and processing equipment to accommodate growth at new facility, provide new hire training and acquire a delivery vehicle.	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$150,000
SporeAttic Bozeman	Infrastructure development, startup costs and mushroom cultivation equipment purchases for the commercial mushroom farm.	\$11,290		\$11,290

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Growth Through Agriculture FY 20 Awards (continued)

Awardee	Project Description	Grant	Loan	Total
St. Mary Rehabilitation Group Malta	Repair and replace the most severely failed expansion joints and concrete saddle supports of the St. Mary River Siphon.	\$43,388		\$43,388
Willow Mountain Winery Corvallis	Assist with vineyard expansion, maintenance, and winery production including the development of sparkling wines.	\$25,000		\$25,000

Growth Through Agriculture FY 20 Awards Summary

Total Awards	Total Grant Amount	Total Loan Amount	Total Award Amounts
39	\$670,992	\$239,600	\$910,592

Growth Through Agriculture Program FY20 Metrics*

Increase in number of Full Time Employees	111
Increase in number of Part Time Employees	43
Increase in Gross Annual Sales	\$126,317,188.69
Projected Annual Payroll of New Jobs	\$8,260,633.00
*Numbers based on projections provided by FY20 awardees	

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Growth Through Agriculture Funding at Work

Strick's Ag is a family-owned grain merchandiser located in Chester. In 2017, Strick's Ag was awarded a grant of \$49,488.44 and a loan for \$100,000 for construction and equipment purchases to assist in the expansion of the processing facility.

"Strick's Ag was able to start off the construction of our pulse-processing plant because of the grant and loan from the GTA program, however, the program's assistance stretched farther than just the grant and loan funds. Staff from the Montana Department of Agriculture was instrumental in our ability to meet some of our first customers who placed orders to get our plant operational. Strick's Ag grew from a company of 8 employees before the GTA award, to having 25 full time employees now."

-Jillien Striet, Stricks Ag

