

RURAL GRANT INFORMATION WEBINAR

March 24, 2009

10:00 AM to Noon

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers several grant programs to help entrepreneurs develop value-added food and fiber businesses. To learn about these programs, farmers and others can attend a free educational workshop on March 24 at 10:00 AM and offered by the Michigan State University (MSU) Product Center and the Michigan office of USDA Rural Development. The program will be conducted as a webinar. Please see "[How to Connect](#)" below for information about how to connect directly if you have high speed internet access or for the location in your area.

Participants can learn about various USDA grant programs for value-added production and alternative energy. Presenters from the Product Center will discuss the meaning of value-added production and explain how they can help grant writers navigate the process.

Rural business specialists from the USDA's Rural Development program will discuss eligibility criteria, the application and evaluation process, matching funds and other requirements. They will also discuss resources available to those developing grant proposals.

Although details of this year's USDA Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program have not been announced, it is expected to be similar to prior years. It has been open to independent producers, farmer or rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures to fund one of the following two activities: planning activities needed to establish a viable value-added marketing opportunity for an agricultural product (e.g., conduct a feasibility study, develop a business plan, develop a marketing plan); or acquire working capital to operate a value-added business venture that will allow producers to better compete in domestic and international markets.

The Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Program, through USDA-Rural Development, offers grants, guaranteed loans, and combination grant/guaranteed loans to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements in rural areas.

For questions about the program, call Tom Kalchik at (517) 432-8752. (If you are connecting directly and encounter problems during the webinar, call him on his cell phone at (517) 256-7968)

AGENDA

10:00 AM	Welcome The Granting Process What is “Value Added?”	Tom Kalchik Associate Director, MSU Product Center
10:20 AM	Value Added Grant Program	Bobbie Morrison Rural Development Specialist USDA
	Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Guaranteed Loan and Grant Program	Traci Smith Program Director USDA
11:30 AM	Questions	
Noon	Adjourn	

How to Connect

The session will be conducted as a webinar using the internet and a conference call. You may [participate directly](#) from your home or office if you have high speed internet and a telephone, or you may attend at one of the host [locations](#) around the State that is listed below. Either way, you will be able to view the information being presented, hear the presenters’ discussion, and ask questions of the specialists that will be providing the information.

To participate directly, you must have high speed internet service and a telephone. Shortly before 10:00 AM on Tuesday, March 24, connect to the conference call as follows:

Call in number is (712) 580-7700
Select option 2 (create or enter a call)
Enter access code 1598521#

Next, connect to the webinar as follows:

Open Internet Explorer as your web browser
To join the meeting, go to <http://breeze.msu.edu/msuproductcenter/>. Use “guest” (without the quotation marks) as your NetID and leave the Password field empty.

If you have never attended a Connect Pro meeting before, you should test your connection in advance of the webinar by going to http://breeze.msu.edu/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm. If your system fails this test, you should plan to go to one of the locations listed below.

For questions about connecting or problems with your connection during the webinar, please call Tom Kalchik at (517) 256-7968

LOCATIONS

<p>Delta County MSU Extension Office 2840 College Avenue Escanaba, MI 49829 Contact: Warren Schauer Phone: 906-786-3032 E-mail: schauer@msu.edu</p>	<p>Cheboygan County MSU Extension Office 870 S Main Cheboygan, MI 49721 Contact: B.J. Bartlett Phone: (231) 627-8815 E-mail: bartle14@msu.edu</p>
<p>Presque Isle County MSU Extension Presque Isle County Courthouse Commissioners Room 151 E. Huron Avenue Rogers City, MI 49779 Host: John P. Pullis Phone: (989) 734-2168 E-mail: pullisj@msu.edu</p>	<p>Traverse City Michigan Works Conference Room 1209 South Garfield Avenue - Suite C Traverse City, MI 49685 Contact: Jim Bardenhagen Phone: (231) 271-3199 E-mail: jbardenhagen@centurytel.net</p>
<p>Missaukee County MSU Extension Office 6180 W. Sanborn Road Lake City, MI 49651 Contact: David Stroud Phone: (231) 839-4657 E-mail: stroudd@msu.edu</p>	<p>Ogemaw County MSU Extension Office 205 S Eighth West Branch, MI 48661 Contact: Fred Hinkley Phone: (989) 345-0692 E-mail: hinkley@msu.edu</p>
<p>Iosco County MSU Extension Office Iosco County Annex Building 420 W. Lake Street Tawas City, MI 48764 Contact: Bill Carpenter Phone: (989) 362-3449 E-mail: carpent9@msu.edu</p>	<p>The Starting Block 1535 Industrial Park Dr Hart, MI 49420 Contact: Ron Steiner Phone: (231) 873-1432 x223 E-mail: steine33@msu.edu</p>
<p>Isabella County MSU Extension Office County Building 200 N. main Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 Contact: Paul Gross Phone: (989) 772-0911 x220 E-mail: grossp@msu.edu</p>	<p>Tuscola County MSU Extension Office 362 Green Street Caro, MI 48723-1998 Contact: Dennis Stein Phone: (989) 672-3870 E-mail: steind@msu.edu</p>

<p>Kent County MSU Extension Office 775 Ball Ave NE Grand Rapids, MI 49503 Contact: Kendra Wills Phone: (616) 336-2028 E-mail: Kendra.Wills@kentcountymi.gov</p>	<p>Van Buren Technology Center Distance Learning Center 250 South Street Lawrence, MI 49064 Contact: Mark Thomas Phone: (269) 384-8061 E-mail: mthomas@msu.edu</p>
<p>Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center 1791 Hillandale Road Benton Harbor, MI 49022 Contact: Ron Goldy Phone: (269) 944-1477 x207 E-Mail: goldy@msu.edu</p>	<p>Macomb County MSU Extension Office Verkuilen Building 21885 Cunham Road Clinton Township, MI 48036 Contact: Hannah Stevens Phone: (586) 469-6440 E-mail: stevensh@msu.edu</p>
<p>NOVI Energy 39500 Orchard Hill Place Dr., Ste 110 Novi, MI 48375 Contact: Ms. Jo Ruiz Phone: (248) 735-6684 E-mail: jruiz@novienergy.com</p>	