



South Carolina  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

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Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

**Media Contact:** Eva Moore, 803-734-2196, [emoore@scca.sc.gov](mailto:emoore@scca.sc.gov)

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## **Agribusiness Entrepreneurs Can Develop Business Plan, Learn New Skills**

COLUMBIA — The [Agribusiness Center for Research and Entrepreneurship](#) (ACRE), in partnership with Clemson Cooperative Extension, is now accepting applications for the third annual curriculum program for agribusiness innovators.

“Over the past three years, our ACRE program has helped dozens of entrepreneurs take their agribusinesses to the next level, boosting innovation and showing the ingenuity of South Carolina agribusiness,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers.

The six-session program offers an overview of business planning and management, including pre-planning, marketing, pricing, cost of production, profitability and financial statements. Participants will also pitch their business plans to an agribusiness panel for the opportunity to be awarded \$5,000 (\$25,000 total in awards).

“The ACRE curriculum program introduces business planning processes and management skills for starting a successful agribusiness,” said Dr. Nathan Smith, Clemson Extension Economist and Agribusiness Program Team Leader.

“The program has been refined for online instruction and help with writing a business plan,” explained Steve Richards, Clemson Extension Associate and lead instructor.

Program applications are due Sept. 28 and can be found at [acre-sc.com](http://acre-sc.com). Qualifying applicants must be South Carolina residents and have an agribusiness idea or product prototype. Individuals selected for the curriculum program must attend virtual class sessions on Oct. 6, Oct. 13, Oct. 20, Nov. 3 and Nov. 10 and the virtual pitch day on Dec. 8. All classes will be taught by Clemson’s Agribusiness Program Team.

“This program is well worth the time and it has directly led to impressive growth for our business and helped us establish some very meaningful relationships in the agribusiness industry,” said Ben Crawford, co-owner of [Woodland Valley Mushrooms](#), who completed the curriculum with business partner Rebecca Goldberg in 2019. “Not only were we awarded a grant through the Curriculum program, but the knowledge we gained there later led to us being awarded a \$30,000 ACRE entrepreneurship grant.”

The agribusiness curriculum program is the second track offered by ACRE’s Entrepreneurship Center. The first track, for established agribusiness entrepreneurs, was completed in June, with seven South Carolina entrepreneurs selected for funding and business development. For more information, contact Kyle Player, ACRE Executive Director, 803-734-2324 or [kplayer@scca.sc.gov](mailto:kplayer@scca.sc.gov); or Nathan Smith, Clemson Agribusiness Program Team Leader, 803-788-5700 or [nathan5@clermson.edu](mailto:nathan5@clermson.edu).

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