



South Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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Funding Available to Help with Organic Certification

COLUMBIA – South Carolina farmers and food processors who want to pursue organic certification may qualify for reimbursement through a grant administered by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture.

“Organic certification can help agribusinesses find new customers and expand to new markets, and we’re happy to be able to help,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers.

The Organic Certification Cost Share Program will reimburse producers and handlers of agricultural products up to 50 percent of the operation’s total allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$500 per certification scope: crops, livestock, wild crops, and handling (i.e., processing). The deadline to apply for reimbursement for the current fiscal year is December 18, 2020.

“This program is a big help in offsetting the expenses of becoming a USDA certified organic producer and the yearly inspections required to maintain the organic certification,” said organic beef farmer Leland Gibson of Gibson Organic Farms. “I try to encourage many farmers to get their farms transitioned into organic production, and one common response is that farmers hesitate to get organic certification because of the cost. My response is to mention the Organic Cost Share program.”

SCDA also has three other cost share reimbursement programs available as projects of the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, including one that offsets the cost of installing an affordable Cool Bot cold storage unit; and two that support businesses through the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Audit process.

To apply for reimbursement programs through SCDA, visit agriculture.sc.gov/grants.

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