



South Carolina DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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FORE IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 22, 2021

SC Agribusinesses Get Business Training, Funding

COLUMBIA – The [Agribusiness Center for Research and Entrepreneurship](#) (ACRE), in partnership with Clemson Cooperative Extension, has closed out their fourth annual Agribusiness Planning Curriculum with a total of seven emerging South Carolina agribusinesses receiving grant funds.

Participants learned about marketing, financial planning, legal requirements, state and federal grant opportunities, and skills to set their agribusinesses up for success. Sixteen entrepreneurs participated in the five two-hour course sessions, created a business plan, and then pitched to a panel of judges. The three judges selected seven of the participants to split \$30,000 in funding, based on their business plan and five-minute pitch.

1. Rebecca Farms is a Certified South Carolina mushroom farm out of Williamsburg County. Owners Jay and Rose Lewis harvest their oyster and shiitake mushrooms at peak freshness and deliver to restaurants in South Carolina.
2. Located in Jasper County is Whippoorwill Farms, owned and operated by Marissa Paykos and her family. They offer butchered chicken, rabbit, and pork, as well as fresh eggs and seasonal produce.
3. Laura Mewbourn's goal is to open a brick-and-mortar store for her agribusiness, Feast & Flora. She offers sustainably grown flowers and produce, as well as artfully designed floral arrangements in and around Charleston County.
4. Lightning Rock Land & Cattle is a woman-, veteran-, and family-owned regenerative cattle ranch in Colleton County.
5. Billue Family Farm is owned by veteran Jason Billue. He hopes to expand his agribusiness in Aiken County by using tower gardens and aeroponics.
6. Danielle Smith, Master Herbalist, is the owner of Carolina Holistic Farm in Lexington County. She focuses on growing herbs naturally and organically.
7. Victory Gardens International is a nonprofit organization in York County with the goal of spearheading community redevelopment in low wealth communities.

Next up on the ACRE agenda is the annual competitive Advanced Program for entrepreneurs seeking mentorship and funding. South Carolina agribusinesses can compete for up to \$25,000 in funding. Applications will open in mid-March 2022.

For more information about ACRE, contact Kyle Player, ACRE Executive Director, 803-734-2324 or kplayer@scda.sc.gov.

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