



South Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

Media Contact: Eva Moore, 803-734-2196, emoore@scda.sc.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 24, 2022

ACRE Seeks South Carolina Agribusiness Entrepreneurs

Fifth Annual Advanced Entrepreneurship Program Applications are Open

COLUMBIA — Homegrown innovators could get business mentoring and funding through a program aimed at helping South Carolina agribusinesses.

The [Agribusiness Center for Research and Entrepreneurship](#) (ACRE) at the South Carolina Department of Agriculture will accept applications for its 2022 Advanced Entrepreneurship program through April 29, 2022.

Applicants selected will have the opportunity to pitch to a panel of judges in June, competing to be awarded up to \$25,000 for their company or product.

“We’re looking forward to another year of discovering what innovative agribusinesses exist within our state – and helping support them,” says Kyle Player, ACRE’s executive director.

Now in its fifth year, ACRE has so far awarded nearly \$680,000 to 58 entrepreneurs, provided intensive training to 86 businesses, and hosted agricultural workshops for 1,100 South Carolina residents.

Previous awardees have achieved some notable successes with the help of the ACRE program. Milky Way Farm in Starr, South Carolina, received funding that helped them purchase their second robotic milking system, allowing them to increase their milk sales. Twin Creeks Lavender Farm in Williamston was able to purchase a barn that doubles as a retail shop and drying area for their lavender. ACRE also partnered with Project Victory Gardens to host a two-day Boots to Agribiz workshop for servicemen and women transitioning out of the military and into agriculture.

The Advanced Entrepreneurship application requires a business plan and a ready-to-launch prototype or sales history for the applicant’s company or product. Applicants’ businesses must be located in South Carolina. The application also includes a detailed guide to what ACRE is looking for in a business plan.

ACRE has a separate program each fall for beginning innovators who have an agribusiness idea but don’t have experience in business.

For more information, visit acre-sc.com/programs or contact Kyle Player at 803-734-2324 or kplayer@scda.sc.gov.

###