



## Agenda Item Summary

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**File #:** 24-00685

**Agenda Date:** [Publish Date]

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**Agenda Item Name:**

**Approve 2024 Small Farmer Grant Awards**

**Presenter:**

Sean McLendon, Economic Development & Food System Manager 352 548 3765  
Cindy Sanders, PhD, Director UF/IFAS Alachua County Extension 352 955 2402

**Description:**

Request approval of the 2024 Small Farmer Grants to the highest scoring applications.

**Recommended Action:**

Approve award of grant funds to all applications scoring 38.3 points and above.

**Prior Board Motions:**

At the Board's November 14, 2023 meeting, Commissioner Prizzia moved to accept staff recommendations with the following amendments: 6 1. Incentivize the farm plan with 5 points to be submitted without taking the class but incentivize the class with a follow up. 2. Reduce the timeline on the process to 3 months from the current 6 months. 2nd Commissioner Cornell The motion carried 5-0.

**Fiscal Note:**

This second round of small farmer grants and fee assistance for small farmers going to the Extension Office classes to create a farm plan will be paid from 052.17.1770.552.82.53.

**Strategic Guide:**

Social and Economic Opportunity

**Background:**

This agenda item brings back the Small Farmer Grant review team's applications recommended for Board funding. For 2024, 56 grant applications were submitted for review totaling \$262,460 in funding requests. Based on the quality of responses, the grant review team recommends the Board award 28 applicants that scored 38.3 points or higher.

If the Board accepts staff funding recommendation, the total 2024 grant award will be \$124,460. This amount includes unencumbered funds rolled forward from the Boards 2023 awards. A total of 50 points were possible on the grant.

The median score of all applications was 39.0, the average score was 37.5, and the overall mode was 41.0.

To be considered, all applicants must have submitted an application by the grant deadline of 5 PM June 28, be a farm located in Alachua County, a resident of Alachua County, and produce food for people at the applicant's farm.

#### Recommended Grant Award List

Applicant	Total (max 50 pts)
Shannon and Jeffrey Fedenko	49
Jack and Neepa DeVries	48.3
Cheryle Morgan	48
Sarah Cervone	47.7
Janet Sweeney	45.7
Alix Freck and Alexander Venable	45
Jennifer Speedy	45
Erica MacArthur	45
Kala Fuhrmann	43.7
Rebecca Farr	43.3
Braze Ranch	43.3
Charlotte Simmons	43
Savanna Johnson	43
Gainesville Giving Garden	42.7
Diana Adams	42
Eddie Shuker	41.7
Anastasia Overton	41
Layne and Laurie Thomas	41
Annette Johnson	41
Susan M Frey	40.7
Gregoria Calderon Adler / James H. Adler	40.3
Karen Pierce	40
Natalia Derevianko	40
Kelli Sand	39.7
Cheryl Boyd	39.3
Korinne Johnson	39.3
Clement Doby	38.7
Daniel Robleto	38.3

#### Small Farmer Grant 2024 Overall Criteria

Goal: Promote local food system economic resilience and equity for marginalized communities that will:

1. Assists Alachua County residents.
2. Applicable to Alachua County based small producers (farms, ranches, or other agricultural operations) producing food stuffs for human consumption.
3. Prioritize funding for small producers with annual gross cash income of no more than \$75,000.
4. Prioritize black, women, indigenous, and persons-of-color owned agricultural operations
5. Support the immediate acquisition of capital infrastructure and equipment that will enhance the

productive capability and financial expansion of the farm. This grant recognizes that small producers may not have adequate cash flow to acquire capital equipment and then wait for reimbursement by the County. This grant offers an immediate infusion of funds at the point of award by the Board of County Commissioners.

6. Improve the economic viability of these small producers

7. Increase the resiliency of local food production and expand the production of related value added farm products

8. Achieve Board policies related to economic development: increases economic prosperity, economic equity and diverse tax base

### Scoring Criteria Priorities

**First Time Applicant:** Applicants who have not applied or received a grant award in the past two years will be eligible for 5 bonus points.

**Farm Plan:** Applicants that submit their having a UF-IFAS Agricultural Extension Farm Plan will be eligible for 5 bonus points.

**Location Priority:** Funds are limited to Alachua County residents with small-scale agriculture operations within Alachua County. No points are associated with this priority. Projects may be within municipalities or in unincorporated Alachua County. Applications for funding outside of Alachua County will not be considered.

**Economic Priority:** Priority will be given to applications of small producers with annual gross cash incomes between \$1,000 and \$75,000. Award 10 points for annual gross cash incomes between \$1,000 and \$75,000. Award 5 points for annual gross cash income between \$75,001 and \$150,000. Award 2 points for annual gross cash income between \$150,001 and \$250,000.

**Equity Priority:** Priority consideration will be given to applications of small producers that are owned and operated by black, women, indigenous, and or persons-of-color. Award 10 points for small producers that are owned and operated by black, women, indigenous persons, and or persons-of-color

**Viability Priority:** Priority will be given to applications for capital equipment that demonstrates an enhancement, cost avoidance, or savings of the economic productivity of the small producer's operation. A maximum of 20 points may be awarded for projects that define the specific equipment needed, cost, how it will be utilized, and economic return to the operations. See below for specific questions to be answered.

Three Primary Questions to be Answered under the Viability Priority:

How will the grant maximize or contribute to the farm's overall business plan and grow the farms profitability or avoid costs?

What are the estimated financial returns?

What specifically will be purchased with the grant funds?