



---

# ALACHUA COUNTY

## 2025 SMALL FARMER GRANT REVIEW AND SCORING OF APPLICATIONS

**Monday, June 30, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.**

Alachua County Administration Building  
12 SE 1st Street, Second Floor, Grace Knight Conference Room

### MEETING MINUTES

#### 1. Call to Order 10:34 a.m.

Scoring Committee Members Present: Bailey McClellan (Chair), Sean McLendon, Cindy Sanders.

Others Present: Jessica Hurov, Kali Blount

#### 2. Adoption of Agenda

Sean McLendon made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Cindy Sanders. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 3. Read Grant Criteria and Scoring Priorities

Bailey McClellan read the grant criteria and scoring priorities into the record.

- a. Goal: Promote local food system economic resilience and equity for marginalized communities that will:
  - Assists Alachua County residents.
  - Applicable to Alachua County based small producers (farms, ranches, or other agricultural operations) producing food stuffs for human consumption.
  - Prioritize funding for small producers with annual gross cash income of no more than \$75,000.
  - Support the immediate acquisition of capital infrastructure and equipment to enhance the farm's productive capability and financial expansion. 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.
  - Improve the economic viability of these small producers
  - Increase the resiliency of local food production and expand the production of related value-added farm products
  - Achieve Board policies related to economic development: increases economic prosperity, economic and diverse tax base.
- b. **Scoring Criteria:**

- **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.
- **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 from 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.
- **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.

#### 4. **Review of Individual and Composite Final Scores**

Bailey McClellan read each applicant's final scores as were recorded on the combined scoring sheet.

#### 5. **Group Discussion**

The total available funding for the 2025 Small Farmer Grant Program is \$115,753.68, which includes \$15,753.68 in unspent funds carried over from FY24. During the committee meeting, the Small Farmer Grant Scoring Committee reviewed all applications and discussed funding recommendations for those applicants who scored 28 points or higher (27 applications).

Applicants who scored 29 points or higher (24 applications) were recommended to receive the full amount requested in their applications. The combined total of those full funding recommendations amounts to \$113,535.11.

For the three applicants who scored 28 points, the committee recommended evenly dividing the remaining balance of \$2,218.57. This results in each of those applicants receiving \$739.52 in grant funding.

#### 6. **Motion for Recommendation of Applications to the Board of County Commissioners**

Sean McLendon motion to recommend the 27 highest scoring applications to the Board of County Commissioners, seconded by Cindy Sanders. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 7. **Public Comment**

Kali Blount inquired about what types of expenses are eligible for reimbursement through the Small Farmer Grant Program.

The Scoring Committee explained that the program reimburses capital expenses outlined in the application that are intended to improve economic viability, support local food production, and increase economic prosperity. Examples of eligible capital expenses include items such as cattle chutes, tractor equipment, irrigation installation, and hoop houses.

Kali also asked whether applicants in this grant cycle may be experiencing effects from recent federal funding cuts or policy changes.

The Scoring Committee responded that, given the small-scale nature of the farming operations represented in the

applications, applicants may or may not be directly impacted by those federal changes. However, it was acknowledged as an important consideration moving forward.

**8. Adjourned at 10:59 a.m.**