



## 2009 Value-Added Producer Grant Application Instructions

**NOTE:** The 2009 notice of funds available for the USDA Value-Added Producer Grant program was released on September 1, 2009. This notice replaced the earlier funding announcement released May 6, 2009. Approximately \$18 million in competitive grant funds is available to help independent agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. The maximum grant amount for a planning grant is \$100,000 and the maximum grant amount for a working capital grant is \$300,000.

**REQUIRED FORMS** (To be submitted with the completed grant – applicants requesting less than \$50,000 are not required to submit the following items at the time of application; however, if selected for an award, the applicants will be required to submit these items as part of the conditions of the award.)

### **SF-424: “Application for Federal Assistance”**

Applicants are required to have:

- an **Employer Identification Number** (or a Social Security Number if the applicant is an *individual or steering committee*) **and**
- a **DUNS number** (unless the applicant is an individual). The DUNS number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities and refers to the Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS). To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dnb.com/us> and click on “Get a D&B D-U-N-S® Number” under *Customer Resources*, or call (866) 705-5711. Be certain to sign the completed form.

For the VAPG program, it is recommended that you complete the following items: 1, 2, 5 – 15, 17 and 18.

### **SF-424A: “Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs”**

For the VAPG program it is only necessary to complete Sections A, B, C and D.

### **SF-424 B: “Assurances - Non-Construction Programs”**

It is recommended that you fill out each item on the form, including the name of the applicant organization, the signature of the authorized representative (should be the same as for the SF-424), the title of the authorized representative, and the date the form was submitted.

The forms above can be downloaded at the following website:

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/applicantsrequired.htm>

This website has samples illustrating how these forms should be filled out. In the final grant application the forms should be placed prior to the **Title Page** of your application.

**SUBMISSION DATES:** Applications for grants must be submitted on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines.



Ascendant Note – Electronic submissions have been problematic in the past because it is tough to get confirmation the complete applications was received and sent to the appropriate location. A paper submission sent in early can be confirmed with the state Business Program Administrator.

**Paper copies** for unreserved funds and reserved funds must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight no later than **November 30, 2009**, to be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding. Late applications will not be eligible for FY 2009 funding. If an application is submitted on paper, one signed original (no stamped, photocopied, or initialed signatures) of the complete application must be submitted. Paper applications must be submitted to the Rural Development State Office for the State in which the Project will primarily take place. **Contact information for each State office is listed at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd\\_map.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html).** Each application submission must contain all required documents in one envelope if by mail or courier delivery service.

Ascendant Note – Applicants should make contact with their state Business Program Administrator or Specialist early to discuss their project and get feedback and tips. Often if applicants finish their application well before the due date the administrator will review and provide comments on things like eligibility or missing information.

**Electronic copies** for unreserved funds and reserved funds must be received by **November 30, 2009**, to be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding. Late applications will not be eligible. Electronic applications must be submitted through the Grants.gov Website at: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If the application is submitted electronically, the applicant must follow the instructions given at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants are advised to visit the site well in advance of the application deadline if they plan to apply electronically to ensure that they have obtained the proper authentication and have sufficient computer resources to complete the application. **Applications submitted by electronic mail or facsimile will not be accepted.**

Note: **Reserved Funds** are funds reserved to fund applications submitted by Beginning Farmers or Ranchers and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers of Ranchers (10% of available funds) and funds reserved for Mid-Tier Value Chain projects (an additional 10% of available funds).

Grant awards are expected to be announced on or about **January 7, 2010**.

**ADDITIONAL GRANT INFORMATION:**

Applicants can visit USDA’s Website at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm), which contains application guidance, including Frequently Asked Questions and an Application Guide with templates. Or applicants may contact their USDA Rural Development State Office. The State Office can be reached by calling (800) 670-6553 and pressing “1,” or by selecting the Contact Information link at the above Website.

Applicants are encouraged to contact their State Offices well in advance of the deadline to discuss their projects and ask any questions about the application process. Also, Applicants may submit drafts of their applications to their State Offices for a preliminary review anytime prior to **October 1, 2009**. The preliminary review will only assess the eligibility of the application and its completeness. The results of the preliminary review are not binding on the Agency.



Please **delete everything in blue** on the application templates as that is only information to assist you in preparing your application. There is scoring information included in the templates to assist in making sure you have covered everything necessary to receive the highest possible points.

**Ascendant Note** - Simply following the templates does not guarantee that your application will be determined to be eligible and complete, or that it will be funded. You should refer to the 2009 NOFA and the official USDA Grant Regulations in order to obtain a comprehensive list of program requirements. If you have questions during the application process, please contact your state USDA Rural Development Representative.