2024 SEMAP TIE Award

Purpose:

The purpose of the *Tools, Innovation, and Equipment (TIE) Award Program* is to encourage farmers and fishers to trial new equipment, implement systems that they haven't tried before, and/or solve problems faced on their farm. The proposed project should improve the business' financial viability and sustainability. Award recipients will share information about their completed project with the broader agricultural community.

Timeline:

The application period opens February 16, 2024 and applications are due by 5pm on March 15, 2024. Awards will be announced at the end of March and projects should be completed by December 31, 2024. Exceptions and extensions will be considered.

Award Size and Details:

Awards range from $500 to $3,000. This is a reimbursement-style grant and funds will be sent within 14 days of receiving receipts. Reimbursements can only be requested once the project is completed. Funds can't be spent before a contract is signed. This year, we will consider special circumstances where applicants require partial or complete funds up front. If you decide to pursue this option, please provide relevant context in your application.

Eligible Applicants:

Active farmers on land or sea in Massachusetts or Rhode Island may apply. Preference will be given to producers in SEMAP's primary service area of Bristol, Plymouth, and Norfolk counties. Nonprofit and for-profit entities may apply. Preference will be given to those who have not previously received a TIE award, but there is no limit to the number of awards one entity may receive.

Eligible Projects:

Projects should be in line with the purpose of the TIE Award. Topics and work areas *include but are not limited to*:

- Marketing of crops or other farm offerings
- Production, storage or distribution improvements
- Small-scale facility upgrades
- Pest, disease, and/or weed management
- Composting systems
- New crop trials
- Farm tools and equipment
- Irrigation systems
- Effective wildlife exclusion

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Ineligible Expenses:

Award funds may NOT be used for:

- General production and operating expenses
- Labor costs or farmer time
- Large scale capital projects
- Land purchase
- Administrative costs that would exist without the project
- Costs associated with starting a farm business
- Utilities

Project Data and Reporting Requirements:

Award recipients will be expected to collect and track project-specific data, findings and lessons learned; after award notifications, SEMAP staff can assist you in determining metrics and means of data collection. These findings will then be presented to the broader agricultural community via written report, video presentation, on-farm or conference workshop, interview with SEMAP staff, or any combination of these by April 2025 and preferably within 60 days of project completion. Awardees will help to amplify their presentation of findings via social media and their networks.

Project summaries may be stored on SEMAP's website, along with any available design plans and project contact information for farmers interested in replicating or adapting the project. Participating in this program is a long-term commitment to the regional agricultural community!

Award Timeline:

- March 15, 2024: Applications due by 5pm.
- March 29, 2024: Applicants notified and announced
- First week of April 2024: Contracts signed and expenses may begin
- December 31, 2024: Final project costs incurred and receipts sent to SEMAP
- By April 2025: Findings presented via written report, video presentation, on-farm workshop, interview with SEMAP staff, and/or at the Southeast New England Agriculture Conference and Trade Show.

Contact Information:

Direct questions to: smurray@semaponline.org or (774) 400-7277. Apply at semaponline.org/tieawards via online form or mail. All applications must be received by 5pm on March 15th.