

Dairy & Livestock

Apply now for USDA value-added grants

SEEKING working capital or funds to plan, start or expand a value-added venture with your farm, cooperative or agricultural organization? Apply now for federal funds.

Applications for the 2008 grant cycle of USDA's Value-Added Producer Grant program are now available. The deadline is March 31. Funds come from USDA's Rural Development agency.

Grant funding for 2008 is available

to independent producers, farmer or rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-owned producer-based business ventures. Funds can be used for determining the viability of a potential value-added venture or for working capital funds.

A maximum of \$100,000 is available for a planning grant, while a maximum of \$300,000 is available for working capital grants. The approximate total funding

is \$18.4 million, and the approximate number of awards is 130.

Last year, 162 recipients from 42 states received \$22.6 million to implement innovative projects, including 15 from Wisconsin totaling \$3.3 million. Wisconsin agricultural groups and producers use Value-Added Producer Grant funds for projects such as new venture startup costs, and feasibility studies to develop new products, expand product

lines and grow brand marketing.

For more information or assistance navigating the grant process, call Barb Brewster, USDA Rural Development Office, Steven's Point, at 715-345-7610, or Carl Rainey, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, at 608-224-5129. Or, visit the Web site www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm.

Source: DATCP

CWT to offer bred-heifer sale option

IN the next herd retirement round conducted by Cooperatives Working Together, dairy producers submitting bids to retire their milk cow herds also will have the option of selling all their bred heifers, according to CWT officials.

CWT will establish a flat rate per bred heifer to be paid to all producers choosing to include their bred heifers with their herd retirement bid. The producer will retain the slaughter value of the bred heifers, so the price per heifer that CWT offers will be in addition to the animals' slaughter value, just as the payment CWT makes to producers for their milk cows is in addition to the beef value of the animals.

CWT Chief Operating Officer Jim Tillison says the decision by the organization's operating committee to include a bred-heifer option "is the result of many months of work by our members to devise a new program to enhance the effectiveness of CWT's milk reduction activities. Our members asked us to come up with a way to make a bred-heifer removal option work for them, and I believe this new initiative will meet their expectations."

CWT has not announced when it will conduct a fifth herd retirement round. The last one was in February 2007. When the next round is conducted, producers submitting bids for milking herds will have the option of using the bred-heifer program. They will have to indicate the number of bred heifers they have at the time the bid is submitted and the location of the heifers. CWT will pay a flat fee, announced when the retirement program commences, for each heifer. Producers will have to sell all bred heifers, regardless of age.

Won't affect herd bids

Tillison says whether a producer elects to also sell his or her bred heifers will have no bearing on whether the producer's herd retirement bid is accepted by CWT. Also, if the farmer's herd retirement bid is not accepted, the bred heifers he or she offers will not be accepted, either.

Additional details about the terms of the bred-heifer program will be posted to the CWT Web site once a herd retirement round commences.



¹Some states require an individual be licensed if involved in the recommendation, handling or application of any pesticide. Consult your local Extension office for information regarding licensing requirements.

²Restrictions do apply to the transfer of grazing animals to sites intended to grow sensitive crops. Refer to the label for a complete list of transfer restrictions.

³Trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC. Always read and follow label directions. R38-881-011 (01/08) BR 010-57408 536-M2-11-07