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BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & RURAL RESOURCES
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COMMERCIAL FARM PFAS VIABILITY FUND

The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) aims to provide financial assistance to help farmers make investments to adapt to PFAS contamination and remain viable commercial farms. Funding will be provided at the discretion of DACF and may be considered taxable income.

What are the requirements to request funding?



1. You must be a commercial farm that has DACF-confirmed unsafe levels of PFAS contamination.
 - a. A water test result of 20 ppt or higher for wells servicing the farm or fields *and/or* soil test results exceeding Maine CDC's current [crop specific soil screening levels](#) and
 - b. One or more samples of farm products showing PFAS exceeding current Action Levels or at levels deemed of concern by the Maine CDC.
2. You have partnered with DACF to investigate the scope of contamination at your farm and have granted ongoing access.

When a farm requests DACF financial assistance to support farm viability activities, DACF will rely on all available information it has compiled on the farm to assess the request. Farms that have not established this level of interaction and information sharing will not be eligible to seek Farm Viability funding until staff have a robust level of understanding of the farm and its PFAS contamination.

What costs are eligible?



DACF's experience with farms highlights some established areas for viability assistance, as discussed below. DACF reserves the right to expand and update this list as new and unique farm circumstances arise.

1. DACF currently has four categories of assistance:
 - a. Clean Feed Assistance: essential if fields cannot safely produce the quantity and type of feed necessary.
 - b. Equipment and Inputs: if converting operations to new products or production methods (i.e., new crop(s)). A producer who receives funding for equipment will be required to provide assurances they will not sell the equipment in a particular period and, if they do, pay back the cost of the equipment.
 - c. Infrastructure Investment: permanent physical assets requiring significant investment (i.e., greenhouse). Investments are currently capped at \$150,000.
 - d. Debt Service Assistance: for on-farm investments made within two years before PFAS discovery that are important to future operations (i.e., a pack shed built to grow the business, pre-PFAS). Payments will not exceed \$50,000.



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What needs to be submitted?



1. [Producer Farm Viability Fund Infrastructure Support application form](#); **including**
 - a. Project Description (max 1 page): PFAS impacts, proposed project description, reasoning, and expected result(s).
 - b. Project Details: Quotes for work, other relevant pricing/project details, contractor information, design plans if existing, anticipating timing.
 - c. Payment process selected: DACF can directly reimburse the applicant, directly contract with vendors, or can reimburse Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) and/or Maine Farmland Trust (MFT) if they have agreed to provide funding for the approved project.
2. *Note: DACF will provide written approval specifying work approved, amounts to be granted, and length of award. **Work completed without this written approval assumes the risk it may not be reimbursed.***
3. A completed [State of Maine Vendor Authorization form](#), if seeking direct reimbursement.
4. Proof of payment (paid invoices), if DACF will be reimbursing the applicant or MOFGA/MFT
 - a. DACF can also create a contract directly with contractor(s), enabling direct payments.

DACF Criteria: DACF will consider the proposed project's total cost and whether the infrastructure investment(s) are essential to the viability of the farm. This could include the likelihood of success or return on investment for the proposed infrastructure investment and other relevant factors. DACF reserves the right to cap the amount of funding for all requests based on available resources and other factors. Other criteria for consideration include: timing, alternative options, level of risk, producer's demonstrated lack of available financial capacity, number of other requests for DACF support by other producers, etc.

DACF reserves the right to amend program parameters and criteria at any time. Producer Farm Viability Fund Program payments are subject to the availability of DACF's PFAS funding.

Contact DACF staff at pfas.dacf@maine.gov

