Training & Workshops

The NC Growing Together Project (NCGT), with partners NC Cooperative Extension (NCCE), NC State University (NC State), and the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA), sponsors one- and two-day workshops across the state to assist farms in achieving GAP certification. CFSA also offers free one-on-one audit training sessions. For a comprehensive list of upcoming GAP training events, visit https://www.ncgrowingtogether.org/for-producers/#GAPs.

You may also contact the NCGT Extension and Outreach Program Manager, Emily Edmonds, via email at emelders@ncsu.edu or by phone at 828-399-0297.

CFSA members are eligible for one-on-one GAP certification assistance; applications are available at https://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/gaps-one-on-one-training/.

Cost-Shares & Grant Programs

**NCDA Grading Services GAP Certification Assistance Program**

NCDA’s GAP Certification Assistance Program provides up to $900 for first-time certification or $300 for recertification for qualifying farms. Information is released in early spring each year. http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/NCgradesvc/

Existing GAP-certified farms are able to reserve a reimbursement for their GAP renewal costs. Please visit the website above for more details, or visit www.ncgrowingtogether.org.

**Carolina Farm Stewardship Association**

Members of CFSA are eligible for the Cost-Share for GAP Certification Program, which provides funds directly to farmers to assist in meeting GAP/GHP requirements. https://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/usda-gaps/

**Small Grants through the NC Tobacco Trust Fund**

The NCTTF offers small grants managed by NC Cooperative Extension and RAFI to assist with projects that can help ensure GAP/GHP compliance. **Grants are specific to various regions, and farmers must contact their local extension agent or RAFI’s office to begin the application process. NCTTF also offers direct compensation to farmers whose agricultural business was affected by the MSA. (Most farms apply through NCTTF’s partner agencies listed below.)**

http://tobaccotrustfund.org/grants/ | Compensation programs accept applications on rolling basis

**RAFI-USA Agricultural Reinvestment Fund**: Alamance, Bertie, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton, Orange, Person, Randoloph, Vance, and Warren
http://rafiusa.org/grants/ | Applications released annually in fall

**AgVentures**: Duplin, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Greene, Guilford, Johnston, Lenoir, Martin, Nash, Pitt, Rockingham, Sampson, Stokes, Surry, Wayne, Wilson, and Yadkin
https://agventures.ces.ncsu.edu/grant-program/ | Applications released annually in fall

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WNC AgOptions: Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Clay, Cherokee, Cleveland, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, and Yancey
http://www.wncagoptions.org/ | Applications released annually in October

UMO Ag Prime (University of Mount Olive): Cumberland, Lee, Moore, Richmond, and Robeson
http://www.umoag.com/AgPrime/index.php | Applications released annually in fall/winter

Past Awards
RAFI's past awards in recent years have included vegetable cooling and packing infrastructure; loose leaf tea production equipment; restoration of a grain mill; educational facilities for on-farm agritourism; soybean processing for hog feed; fencing; water and irrigation systems; on-farm cooling systems; barns and storage areas; computer technologies; mobile market units; aquaponics systems; packaging systems; flash-freezing; and more.
http://rafiusa.org/grants/rafi-grant-recipients/

WNC Ag Options has awarded recent grants in the areas of aquaponics systems; on-farm cooling; cold storage; retrofit of existing facilities; new seedling management systems; steam pasteurization; pest management systems; production and packaging equipment; season extension; and others.
http://www.wncagoptions.org/category/by-county/

AgVentures has provided recent grants in the areas of harvest, planting, and growing equipment; RFID inventory systems; filtering and irrigation systems; new market niche products; flash-freezing and vacuum packaging; value-added manufacturing systems; internships; research of new products and pest control measures; season extension; agritourism; and more.
https://agventures.ces.ncsu.edu/grant-awards-by-year/

Microenterprise Loan Programs

NC Rural Center Microenterprise Loan Program
For larger projects or to complement grant funding, the NC Rural Center provides microenterprise loans to rural businesses, with a specific focus on supporting agriculture through low-interest loans that many banks will not secure. They also offer technical assistance and training.
http://www.ncruralcenter.org/business-programs6/microenterprise39

The Support Center of North Carolina
The Support Center is a statewide CDFI (Community Development Financial Institution) which approves micro-loans on behalf of the US Small Business Administration (SBA), the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), and US Department of Transportation (DOT). They also offer technical assistance and training.
https://thesupportcenter-nc.org/lending

The NC Growing Together Project provides resources to NC producers on vegetable, meat, dairy, and seafood production and processing; accessing wholesale market channels; and strategies for entering the state’s retail and wholesale supply chains. Learn more at www.ncgrowingtogether.org.