

State of Maine Agritourism Development Program

The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is seeking applications for the new Maine Agritourism Development Course

Thank you for your interest in the Maine Agritourism Development Course. The selected participants will work alongside experts at Maine DACF and an independent consultant to start, add to, or improve their agritourism offerings. This application process is competitive and not all applicants will be accepted. Our goal is to offer this program on a rolling basis. If you are not selected, your application will be retained for future opportunities.

While the program is offered free of charge to the selected participants, there will be a significant time commitment. Each participant will be asked to develop and implement a work plan over the course of 8 months. We estimate the weekly time commitment will be an average of 2 hours each week. This program requires regular communication with the agritourism consultant who will lead you through the program and will visit your operation no fewer than three times. In these visits, the independent consultant will offer expert guidance on improvements to the visitor experience and visitor safety on your farm. These visits are not regulatory and the consultant has no authority to evaluate your farming operation or farming practices. Visits to your farm are for the sole purpose of this program and to help achieve your goals set forth in this program.

Eligibility Criteria

- The applicant must be a private, for-profit company that is owned by individuals, partners, or corporations that grows or produces at least one specialty crop as defined by USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. For more information about what crops qualify, please visit <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>.
- The applicant must own and operate a farm business that has been producing agricultural products commercially in the State of Maine for at least two (2) years (no less than 24 months) at the time of application;
- The applicant must have ownership of the land that is being farmed, or be a partner or shareholder in a legal entity that owns the farmland;
- If the applicant has recently purchased farmland, they must provide evidence that they have had at least two years (24 months) of experience operating a commercial farm operation elsewhere in Maine;
- The applicant must have valid State of Maine certification (organic certification if an organic farm) or licensure relevant for their type of agricultural operation, i.e. Commercial Kitchen License, Milk License, Mobile Vendor License, etc

Learn more: www.maine.gov/dacf/agritourism/course

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* 1. By checking the box below, I confirm my eligibility for this program. If selected, I commit to dedicate the time and resources needed to successfully complete the program.

☐ Agree

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Tell us more about yourself

* 2. Applicant Name

* 3. Farm Business Name

* 4. What is your role in the farm business? (Select the most appropriate answer)

- ☐ Owner
- ☐ Manager
- ☐ Employee

* 5. Telephone (with area code)

* 6. Email

* 7. Physical Address, Town, Zip

* 8. In what county is the farm located?

* 9. Number of Years in commercial operation

* 10. Do you have a website?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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11. What is your website address?

* 12. Do you have an email list/newsletter?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 13. Do you have social media?

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ Twitter

☐ Other (please specify)

☐ None of the above

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Tell us more about your business

* 14. Briefly describe your farm and business as you would to your customers

* 15. Who are your current customers?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Family, friends, neighbors
- ☐ Community
- ☐ Statewide
- ☐ National / International
- ☐ Farmer's Markets
- ☐ CSAs
- ☐ Buying Clubs
- ☐ On-farm farmstand or store
- ☐ Off-farm farmstand or small grocery/natural foods store
- ☐ Larger wholesale stores
- ☐ Wholesale distributor
- ☐ Large contract-based customers or processors

* 16. Where are your customers located?

- ☐ Mostly within my town
- ☐ Mostly within my county
- ☐ Mostly within my region (e.g. Northernmost Maine, Western Maine, Central Maine, Downeast and Acadia region, Western Maine, Midcoast and Islands, Greater Portland & Casco Bay, or Southern Maine)
- ☐ Mostly within my state
- ☐ I sell mostly to out of state customers

* 17. Identify the products you produce by ranking them.

The #1 product generates the most income. The last # generates the least income. If you do not produce one or more of the products, please select "N/A"

For more information on the specialty crop types, please visit [the USDA specialty crop information page at this link.](#)

<input type="text"/>	Fruits and Tree Nuts	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Vegatables	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Culinary Herbs and Spices	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Medicinal Herbs	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Horticulture	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Annual Bedding Plants	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Potted Flowering Plants	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Potted Herbaceous Perennials	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Cut Flowers	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Cut Cultivated Greens	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Foliage Plants	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Christmas Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Deciduous Flowering Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Broadleaf Evergreens	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Deciduous Shade Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Landscape Conifers	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="text"/>	Deciduous Shrubs	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

* 18. Do you currently offer agritourism experiences?

☐ Yes

☐ No

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19. What activities do you offer?

- ☐ Farm stays
- ☐ Classes or Workshops
- ☐ Tours
- ☐ Hayrides/guided rides
- ☐ Maze or other entertainment
- ☐ Dinners or tastings
- ☐ Horseback riding
- ☐ Hiking or trails
- ☐ Mountain biking
- ☐ Public events (concerts, festivals, or any event the public can attend free or for a charge)
- ☐ Private events (weddings, reunions, etc)
- ☐ Pick-Your-Own
- ☐ Farmstand
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* 20. Do you want to offer other activities to visitors?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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21. Which activities would you like to add to your operation?

- ☐ Farm stays
- ☐ Classes or Workshops
- ☐ Tours
- ☐ Hayrides/guided rides
- ☐ Maze or other entertainment
- ☐ Dinners or tastings
- ☐ Horseback riding
- ☐ Hiking or trails
- ☐ Mountain biking
- ☐ Public events (concerts, festivals, or any event the public can attend free or for a charge)
- ☐ Private events (weddings, reunions, etc)
- ☐ Pick-Your-Own
- ☐ Farmstand
- ☐ Other (please specify)

22. Is there anything else you would like us to know about the activities you offer or want to offer?

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Tell us about your production land

* 23. Total acres farmland owned.

* 24. Number of owned acres in agricultural production.

* 25. Number of owned acres in silvicultural production (timber, firewood, etc.).

* 26. The year you first farmed this land.

* 27. Is the farmland protected with a permanent agricultural conservation easement?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 28. Do you lease additional farmland?

☐ Yes

☐ No

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29. How many additional acres are leased?

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Tell us more about your business' management capacity

* 30. Number of years in commercial operation

* 31. Number of full employees (including self)

* 32. Number of part-time employees (including self, if applicable)

* 33. To what degree is the farm supporting your household?

Percentage of our household income which is derived from the farm.

0 100

* 34. Do you or your business partner work off farm?

- ☐ Yes, we both work off farm.
- ☐ Yes, I work off farm.
- ☐ Yes, my business partner works off farm.
- ☐ No, neither of us work off farm.

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* 35. Briefly describe your experience in and knowledge of farming

* 36. Briefly describe your experience in and knowledge of agritourism

* 37. Rate your knowledge of the following areas

	No Knowledge	Beginner	Intermediate	Enough to be dangerous	So good, I can teach others
Farming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Event Planning and Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safety and Liability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agritourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Next, we want to learn more about your ability to transform

* 38. How often do you review finances or the business' accounts?

- ☐ At least once a week
- ☐ Usually once a month
- ☐ Every few months or so
- ☐ Only once a year, or when I am forced to
- ☐ We never review finances or business accounts
- ☐ Someone (who is not me) reviews the business finances as a part of their job

* 39. Methods used to track expenses and income

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Quickbooks or other online software with point-of-sale (Square, Shopkeep Etc.)
- ☐ Quickbooks or other software
- ☐ Excel, Google Sheets, or another Spreadsheet System
- ☐ A Farm Ledger
- ☐ Pencil, paper and notebooks
- ☐ Loose notes & receipts
- ☐ A family member
- ☐ A hired bookkeeper
- ☐ A hired accountant

* 40. Describe your experience with planning and implementing changes in your business.

* 41. What are some major changes you have made with your business in the last 5 years?

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We want to learn more about your ideas for change

This program is designed to help you undertake and succeed with changes in your business. In order to help you succeed, we need to know more about what ideas you have for your business and how these ideas relate to you, your business, and the communities you serve.

* 42. Why are you applying for this opportunity? (/how will this help you?)

* 43. My/Our long-term vision for the farm business is....

* 44. To achieve this vision, and make the farm more viable, in the next 3 years I/we need to...

* 45. These changes will impact the long-term, maintainable, farm profitability and net worth of the business by...

* 46. These changes will impact my/our quality of life by...

* 47. These changes will impact our immediate community by...

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Tell us more about the impact of your ideas for change

Complete the following statements to describe how your Idea(s) for Change might impact your farm business' ability to: hedge against development pressure; increase number of farm employees; provide community benefits; and conserve other natural resources on the farm.

* 48. Pressure on our farm/farmland is (high, moderate, low) because..... Our idea(s) for change will improve this by...

* 49. Our Idea(s) for Change might help the farm to provide more employment opportunities by..... and/or support regional visitor infrastructure by...

* 50. Our Idea(s) for Change might also enhance the farm's importance in the local community by...

* 51. Our Idea(s) for Change might help the farm protect and improve the farm's natural resources - water, soil, air, wildlife habitat, etc. - by...

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52. Is there anything else you would like us to know, or consider, when reviewing your application?