

Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Apply now for buy local, buy Wisconsin grants

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MADISON – Farmers, groups and businesses involved in Wisconsin’s food industry who are seeking to grow their local markets are encouraged to apply for grants now available through the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program.

Since its inception in 2008, the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program has generated more than \$9.4 million in new local food sales. Managed by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the grants can help farms and business more efficiently process, market and distribute food in local markets including stores, schools and institutions.

“Just as a wide variety of foods makes for a healthy diet, a variety of farms and agribusinesses makes for a healthy economy,” said BLBW program manager Kietra Olson. “We encourage growers, processors and distributors of diverse products to apply, and we look forward to funding some innovative ideas.”

Proposals must be received at DATCP by 4 p.m. March 9, 2018. Each proposal must include a cover page, a completed budget template and three-page project description. The necessary documents can be found online at <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/BuyLocalBuyWisconsinGrants.aspx>. Recipients will be announced in May, 2018.

A total of \$200,000 is available in grant funding; the maximum award for each

project is \$50,000. Grant applicants must provide a cash or in-kind match of at least 50 percent of the total project budget.

Qualified applicants include individuals, groups or businesses involved in Wisconsin production agriculture, food processing, food distribution, food warehousing, retail food establishments or agricultural tourism operations. Proposals could include collaborations or partnerships.

Since 2008, DATCP has awarded 52 BLBW grants for a total of \$1.4 million. The program has resulted in more than 200 jobs retained or created and has benefited more than 2,700 producers.

Anyone with questions about the application process can contact DATCP's Buy Local Buy Wisconsin program manager Kietra Olson at [608-224-5112](tel:608-224-5112) or Kietra.Olson@Wisconsin.gov.