



SUGARHOUSE GRANT PROGRAM & APPLICATION

Background

VMSMA's Sugarhouse Grant Program is funded through a 2022 federal earmark (aka Congressionally Directed Spending) in partnership with retired Senator Leahy's office. The earmark includes funding for VMSMA to create this Grant Program for Vermont sugar makers who participate in the Sugarhouse Certification Program. Funding, from \$1,500 to \$15,000 for individual operations, will be available to support Vermont's sugar makers as part of this five-year earmark.

Funding will be on a first-come, first-served basis and will be available until funding is depleted (expected in 2026). Once Grant funds are depleted, we will accept a small number of additional applications on a wait list. If existing projects finish under budget, we will start funding projects from the wait list.

Eligibility

Vermont sugar makers who participate in the Sugarhouse Certification Program are eligible to apply for grant funding in order to meet the requirements of their specific Certification.

There are several ways to receive funding from the Grant Program. The first step is always participation in the VMSMA Sugarhouse Certification Program. Once the onsite portion of Certification is complete, operations are either Certified or they receive a corrective action list that needs to be remedied before they are Certified.

1. For Sugar Makers whose onsite Certification visit occurred before January 1, 2023.

Operations who complete the Certification Program, have no corrective actions to remedy before receiving their three-year Certificate, and who completed upgrades within 6 months of the onsite visit to ensure they were compliant with the Program requirements. These operations can apply for grant funding for upgrades completed (which are related to the Sugarhouse Certification Checklist) within 6 months prior to the onsite visit.

2. For Sugar Makers whose onsite Certification visit occurs on or after January 1, 2023.

- a. Operations who complete the Certification Program and have no corrective actions to remedy before receiving their three-year Certification. These operations will receive free Certification at the two-year mark through this grant funding.
- b. Operations who complete the onsite visit portion of the Certification Program and have corrective actions to remedy before receiving their three-year Certification. These operations can apply for grant funding for upgrades needed to remedy the stated corrective actions.



Funding & Timing of Funds

Eligible Vermont sugar makers can apply for one of the following levels of funding:

1. Up to \$1,500 in grant funding with no match requirements. VMSMA will grant up to \$1,500 in funding for eligible Vermont sugar makers as noted above.
2. \$1,501 to \$15,000 in grant funding with a 25% match requirement. For projects that are estimated to cost more than \$1,500, eligible sugar makers will need to fund 25% of the project cost and can apply for a grant for 75% of the cost. For example, if you have a project that totals \$20,000, you could apply for \$15,000 in grant funding and you would have to fund the remaining \$5,000 (or 25%).

For grants of less than \$1,500, you will need to include a reasonable project quote and VMSMA will mail a check to your business for the entire amount. See below for grant reporting requirements.

For grants of more than \$1,500, you will need to include a reasonable project quote. VMSMA will mail a check for 50% of the cost to your business. The remaining 50% will be paid upon project completion. If you would prefer that VMSMA pay your equipment dealer or similar contractor directly, please note that on your application. See below for grant reporting requirements. Approved Grant projects MUST be completed within 9 months or remaining Grant funding will be forfeited. Project with extenuating circumstances can request an extension and will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Reporting Requirements

For grants of less than \$1,500: Within 30 days of the conclusion of the project, you will need to report on project completion to VMSMA via email or USPS mail, using the provided form. Appropriate completion of this form will close out your grant requirements.

For grants of more than \$1,500: Within 30 days of the conclusion of the project, you will need to report on project completion to VMSMA via email or USPS mail, using the provided form. Appropriate completion of this form will allow us to mail you the remaining 50% of your grant funding which will be based on actual costs if they are different from quoted/estimated costs.

Other Requirements

This grant program makes direct payments to sugar makers (or a designated vendor) to replace equipment that does not comply with food safety regulations and/or best practices for making safe, high-quality pure maple products. You must scrap or otherwise remove these replaced materials and equipment from any food production. By accepting any grant funds from this program, you agree that you will not offer these items, either for sale or free of charge, to another maple or food producer. Doing so will void your grant agreement and require immediate repayment of grant funds to VMSMA.

Approved Grant projects MUST be completed within 9 months or remaining Grant funding will be forfeited. Project with extenuating circumstances can request an extension and will be evaluated on a case by case basis.



VMSMA GRANT APPLICATION

Ready to apply? Please complete this form and email it to VMSMA's Certification Manager at Certification@vermontmaple.org or mail it to VMSMA, PO Box 662, Lyndonville VT 05851.

Sugarhouse & Contact Information

Company Name:

Physical Address (Street number, City, State, Zip):

Mailing/Business Address (or same as above):

Company Contact Person:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: Email:

Grant Funding Requested

Funding Requested (not to exceed \$15,000):

Project Description (please share details on the specific project to be completed and how it relates to your corrective action list). Use additional sheets of paper as needed to describe your project and specify your budget.:)

Any other information about the project you would like to share?

I have read and understand all Grant Requirements.

Printed Name:

Signature:

Date: _____

Please remember to include estimates & quotes to support the amount of grant funding you are requesting.

For VMSMA to complete:

Date of onsite Certification:

VMSMA Certifier Name:

Date of Corrective Action List:

Date of Grant Application:

Final Grant Award:

Date of Grant Payment: