

Business Planning Consultant – Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers Responsibilities and Qualifications

Program Description

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Farmers provides free technical assistance and cash benefits to producers of agricultural commodities and to fish harvesters who have been adversely affected by import competition. To participate in TAA, an agricultural or fisheries commodity must first petition USDA to become eligible for TAA. A commodity is eligible if it has experienced more than a 15% decline in the national average price, or the quantity of production, or the value of production in the most recent marketing year compared to the previous three marketing years; and if imports contributed importantly to this decline. If USDA certifies a commodity eligible for TAA, then individual producers or harvesters of that commodity can apply for TAA benefits. For more information on TAA visit www.TAAforFarmers.org.

TAA training will help producers increase profitability, improve production efficiency, consider marketing opportunities, and evaluate alternative enterprises. A business planning consultant will be provided to each TAA participant to coach them in the development of a business plan. Upon completion of a business plan, participants will get up to an \$8,000 payment.

The Center for Farm Financial Management (CFFM) is the National TAA for Farmers Training Coordination Center and works in cooperation with the four Extension regional risk management education centers at Washington State University, the University of Nebraska, the University of Arkansas, and the University of Delaware to deliver TAA training and assistance to farmers and fishermen.

The Center for Farm Financial Management is located at the University of Minnesota in the Department of Applied Economics in the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences and the University of Minnesota Extension Service. For more information, visit <http://www.cffm.umn.edu>

Role and Location

The Center for Farm Financial Management will initiate contracts with individuals to conduct business plan consulting with farmer and fishermen participants in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program for Farmers (TAA). The location of the consulting is unknown until commodities are approved for TAA and may be anywhere in the United States.

Consultant Role

Business Planning Consultants will work individually with participants in the TAA for Farmers program. Consultants will be expected to coach program participants to help them complete a business plan that meets the program's approval criteria. Consultants will NOT write business plans, they will only provide guidance to the participants. Travel expenses will be provided to meet up to three times with each participant. Additional contact with participants via email, phone, and online will be expected to help them complete their business plans.

Consultants will be expected to report progress on the TAA for Farmers reporting website after each meeting with participants. Consultants will recommend approval or disapproval of the business plan, but will not make the final decision on whether a plan is approved. If plan is not recommended for approval, consultants will provide suggestions to the participant on how to improve the plan.

There is no guarantee that consultants will be assigned to consult with any program participants or any minimum number of program participants.

Qualifications

Consultants should have experience in business plan education or consulting, or in farm/fisheries management, or in farm/fisheries finance or lending. Consultants need to have adequate time available to consult with a minimum of 20 participants annually (approximately 40 days of consulting time).

Nationally available consultants must be willing to travel anywhere in the United States to meet with TAA participants. Consultants recruited to work with producers of specific commodities need to be able to travel within the primary geographic area in which producers of the commodity reside. Consultants must be willing and available to attend training on business and financial planning.

Consultants must have their own notebook computer and must have high-speed internet access.

Computer experience is highly recommended as the majority of business plans will be completed using the online AgPlan business planning tool, www.agplan.umn.edu.

Contractual Arrangements

Business planning consultants will contract with the University of Minnesota. Consultants will be paid \$1,000 for each TAA participant with whom they consult. Payment will be made as work is completed with a portion of the payment being paid only upon successful completion and approval of a business plan. All travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Application Procedure

A complete application must include:

- 1) Letter explaining your qualifications and experience;
- 2) A two page curriculum vitae or resume;
- 3) Names and contact information for three individuals who can comment on your abilities and experience.

Email or phone inquiries about this program are welcome. Email all application materials to:

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