

Cost-Share Funds Available For Farmers

Kansas farmers who currently use organic production practices or would like to pursue organic certification are encouraged to apply for cost share funds from the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA).

The program, funded by the 2014 Farm Bill, is administered through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The program is intended to assist Kansas farmers by offsetting costs associated with organic certification or recertification. Under the state's agreement with USDA, they are eligible for up to 75 percent of the cost of their organic certification, up to \$750, for certification occurring between October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014, as long as funds remain. "This is a great opportunity for farmers to achieve this certification at a reduced cost," said Annarose Hart, marketing specialist with the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

To receive cost share funds, Kansas organic farmers and handlers must complete the Organic Certification Cost Share Program Application, and submit it along with a copy of the organic certification document, an invoice showing the amount paid for that certification and a W-9 form. KDA was allocated nearly \$73,000 in funds for the cost share program for farms certified between 10/1/13 to 9/30/14.

Upon receipt of cost share documents, KDA will confirm certification and then provide reimbursement. Based on the receipt of the completed application packet by KDA, reimbursements will be on a first-come, first-served basis until the limited program funds are exhausted.

The program application is posted on the KDA website, Organic Cost Share Program. The site is also a great resource for program updates.