### **Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives**

## Specialty Processing Equipment & Dairy Business Planning Grants



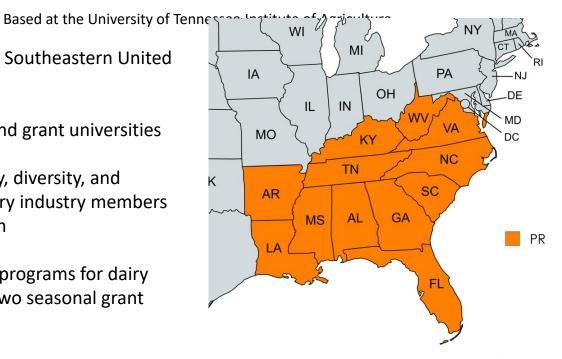




## **Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative**

 Serves dairy businesses in the Southeastern United States and Puerto Rico

- Collaboration between five land grant universities
- Aim is to improve the vibrancy, diversity, and economic sustainability of dairy industry members at all levels of the supply chain
- Offers four competitive grant programs for dairy producers and processors in two seasonal grant application cycles

























## **Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative**

Based at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

 Offers four competitive grant programs for dairy producers and processors in two seasonal grant application cycles

#### **Fall Grant Cycle:**

- Specialty Processing Equipment
- Dairy Business Planning

#### **Spring Grant Cycle:**

- Farm Infrastructure Improvement
- Precision Technology and Management





















### What is the purpose of SDBII Business Grants?

- Diversify dairy product markets to reduce risk and develop higher-value uses for dairy products.
- Promote business development that diversifies farmer income through processing and marketing innovation.
- Encourage the use of regional milk production.



### Who Can I Reach Out to for Help?

### **Program Contacts**

Tennessee, Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, & PR Shep Stearns & Ansley Roper: sdbiigrants@utk.edu

Kentucky, Arkansas, Virginia, & West Virginia Tori Embry: tembry@kydairy.org

North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, & Mississippi Brittany Whitmire & Stephanie Ward: ncdairyextension@ncsu.edu



### Who can apply?

SDBII funding is open to licensed dairy businesses in the southeastern states covered by SDBII. Applicants must market a dairy product intended to be consumed by humans as food. Projects related to the sale of raw milk to consumers are not allowed.

### Applicants Must Either:

- Operate a permitted dairy farm
- Operate a permitted dairy processing facility



## Can I apply again if I have already received an SDBII grant?

- Applicants must select one grant category to apply to per grant cycle
- No more than two awards can be active at one time.
- Previous grants in the same category must be deemed complete by SDBII prior to submitting a new application
- Applicants may not be awarded more than \$700,000 total across all awards within a three-year period (including the amount the applicant applies for in the present round)



### What Grants are Currently Available?

- The RFP and Grant Application are available for two grant opportunities right now:
  - Specialty Processing Equipment Grant

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/specialty-equipment-processing-grant/

Dairy Business Planning Grant

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/dairy-business-planning-grant-open/



### **Purpose of Specialty Processing Equipment Grant:**

- Value chain and commodity innovation
  - New products, new ways to use milk
- Facility and process updates for dairy processors
  - Specialized equipment involved in processing milk
- Product development, packaging and marketing of dairy products
  - Limited runs, test batches for new products, new packaging, etc.



### **Specialty Processing Equipment Grant**

### **Award Funding Available:**

- \$150,000 maximum award
- 25% match calculated against award REQUEST

The Specialty Processing Equipment Grant is competitive, and only the highest quality grants will be selected for an award of funding.



## Allowable Costs Specialty Processing Equipment Grant

- Specialized milk processing equipment
- Equipment installation
- Supply items needed for the project
- Marketing plans
- Certain marketing or promotional activities or materials
  - Limited Runs
  - Test Marketing



### **Unallowable Costs**

- Real estate purchases
- Employee labor
- Repayment of loans or mortgages
- Rent or contract payments for time periods extending beyond the
- 12-month period allowed for eligible projects
- Legal fees (for suits, disputes, etc.)
- Lobbying, fundraising, or other political activities
- Costs related to production agriculture equipment and supply items (e.g., "farm costs")



### **Allowable and Unallowable Expenses**

https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/AMSGrantsTermsandConditions.pdf

#### Allowable and Unallowable DBII Expenses

#### WHAT IS ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT?

The DBII has reviewed the AMS/USDA guidelines around allowable and unallowable costs for reimbursement. Here we provide a brief summary of some of those guidelines.

Further examples of allowable and unallowable costs are provided at the end of this document, along with a link to AMS official list of allowed and unallowed costs.

Please contact your state coordinator if you have questions regarding allowable/unallowable costs.

#### WHAT ARE ALLOWABLE REIMBURSEMENTS?\*

Per the USDA, the purpose of the project in the application is to develop/implement a businessrelated initiative that has a dairy focus. For example:

- A dairy farmer who is seeking to diversify and wants to develop a yogurt-type product would be eligible.
- · A dairy farmer who wants to diversify by building a wedding barn would not be eligible.
- · A dairy farmer who wants to diversify by selling freezer beef would not be eligible.

Eligible uses of the reimbursement grants with a dairy-focused initiative include, but are not limited to:

- Value-added product development;
- Specialty equipment needed to complete the applicant's project examples:

The purchase of a cheese vat is allowed under technical activities.

The purchase of an office computer is not allowed.

The purchase of livestock is <u>not allowed</u>.



## Grant Focus Specialty Processing Equipment Grant

The focus on the project must be on purchasing processing equipment to:

- Produce new products
- Increase capacity
- Increase efficiency



## **Example Projects Specialty Processing Equipment Grant**

### Examples of eligible projects:

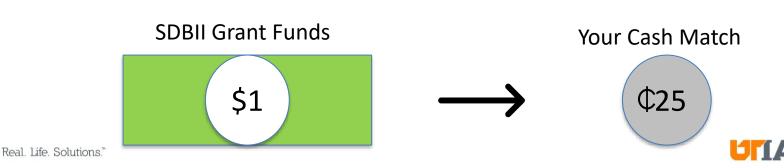
- A project to fund the purchase of a vat pasteurizer to create a new line of flavored milks.
- A project to fund the purchase of a cream separator to produce cream products.
- A project to fund the purchase of a new cheese drain table to increase capacity of cheese production.



### **Specialty Processing Equipment Grant**

### Match Requirement:

Applicants must provide a cash match of at least 25% of the requested grant funds. For instance, a grant application requesting \$100,000 would require \$25,000 in matching expenses. Please note that a 25% match on requested funds is the same as 20% of the total project cost. To illustrate this, we can see that \$25,000 (the match) equals 25% of \$100,000 (the request), and 20% of \$125,000 (the total project cost). Must be allowable expenses.



### **Grant Workbook Components**

Please read the request for proposal IN FULL before starting your application.

Request-for-Proposal-SDBII-Specialty-Processing-Equipment-Grant-2025

Specialty-Processing-Equipment-Grant-Budget-Workbook-2025

Download

SDBII-Specialty-Processing-Equipment-Grant-Rubric-2025

Download



### **Dairy Business Planning Grant**

### **Dairy Business Planning Grant:**

- \$30,000 max award
- No match required



## Allowable Costs Dairy Business Planning Grant

- Leveraging the experience and judgment of reputable industry experts to evaluate the feasibility of a proposed new enterprise, business/marketing approach, process, or major investment
- Increasing the applicant's working knowledge of their existing business and/or future enterprise
- Gaining a certification, credit, and/or educational experience that improves the competitiveness of the business or its workforce
- Utilizing legal services to strengthen the business structure or succession plan



## **Example Projects Dairy Business Planning Grant**

- A dairy farm conducts a feasibility study exploring the viability of starting an on-farm creamery with the help of a qualified and experience consultant
- A producer-processor dairy business hires a lawyer to draft a new set of company bylaws
- A dairy farm hires a certified crop advisor to plan a transition to feeding a high forage diet
- A dairy business hires an agricultural business consultant to assist in drafting a business plan
- A group of cheese makers pay to attend a short course to improve their cheesemaking skills
- A milk processor pays a food scientist to develop/update a food safety plan



### **Scoring Criteria**

The grant is scored out of a possible 100 points based on the following categories

- Grant Application (5 possible points)
- Goals Alignment (10 possible points)
- Summary (20 possible points)
- Work Plan (20 possible points)
- Business Fundamentals (20 possible points)
- Budget (20 possible points)
- Other Considerations (5 possible points)



### Remember to:

- First read the grant RFP IN FULL
- Reach out with questions to one of your state coordinators
- Email questions about submission to <u>sdbiigrants@utk.edu</u> or call (860) 595-6053
- Applications must be received by: <u>September 24, 2025, at 5:00 pm/ET</u>



### Unique Entity Identifier

For both of the opportunities discussed today you will need a UEI from SAM.GOV





### Thank you! Questions?



**Shep Stearns** 

sstearn1@utk.edu

(860) 595-6053

Southeast Value-Added Discussion Group

https://sdbii.tennessee.edu/

















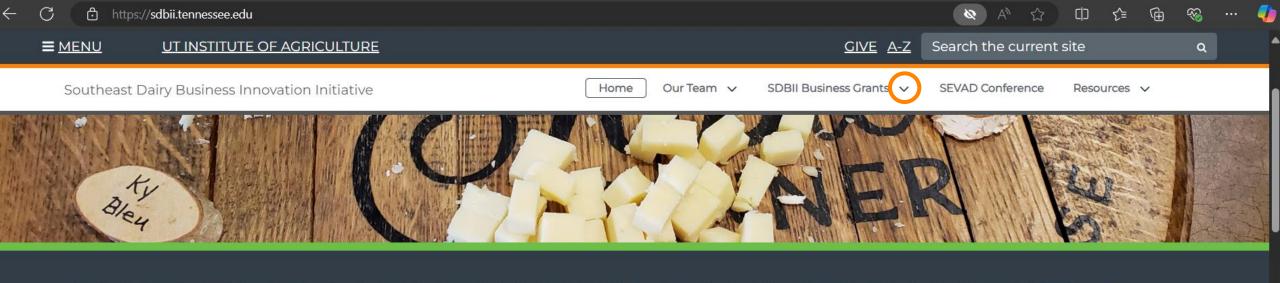




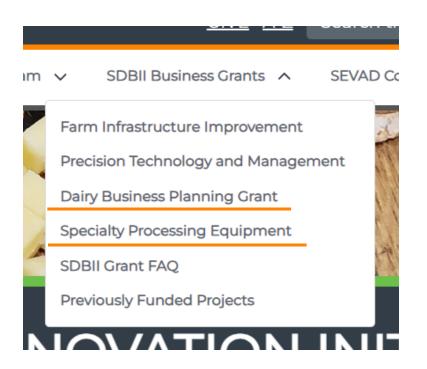


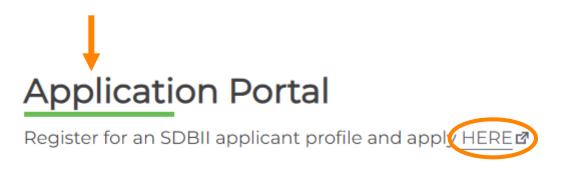
# **New** SDBII Application Portal Quick-Start Guide





### SOUTHEAST DAIRY BUSINESS INNOVATION INITIATIVE





https://sdbii.Tennessee.edu



Logon
Email Address*
Password*
Log On Create New Account
Forgot your Password?

Welcome to the University of Tennessee: Center for Dairy Advancement and Sustainability's Online Portal.

New Users: Please click on "Create New Account" to complete the registration process and create your logon credentials.

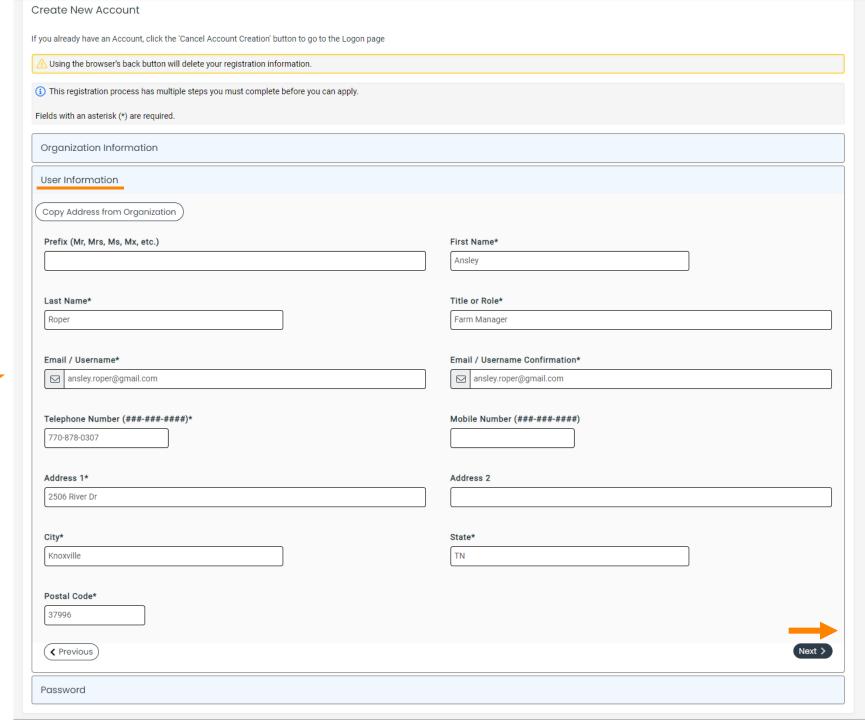
Existing Users: Please enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, please use the "Forgot your Password?" link to the left to reset your password.

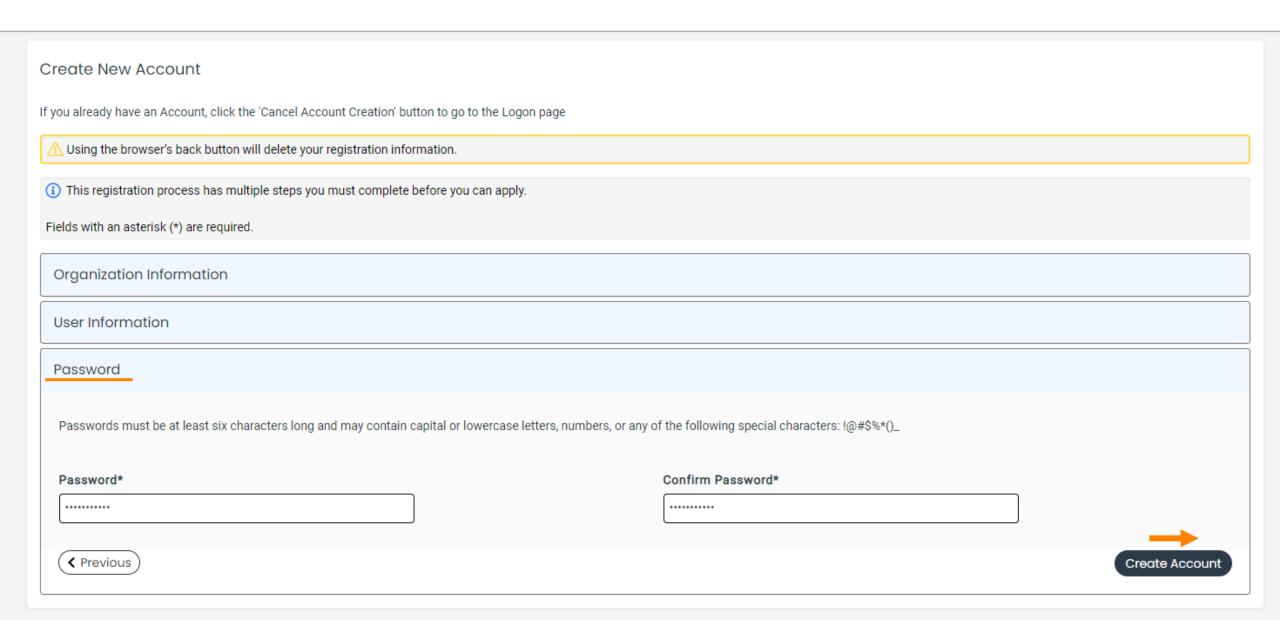
Not Sure? If you think that you or someone at your organization has already registered in the system, do not create a new account. Please contact our Grant Administrator to receive your username.

#### Create New Account

If you already have an Account, click the 'Cancel Account Creation' button to go to the Logon page	
⚠ Using the browser's back button will delete your registration information.	
(i) This registration process has multiple steps you must complete before you can apply.	
Fields with an asterisk (*) are required.	
Organization Information (Legal business name)	
Organization Name*  Roper Farms	Unique Entity ID (UEI)  https://sam.gov/content/home Formerly DUNS Number  required if awarded funding. We recommend filing for it as early as possible! Please visit the website listed to do this.
Website	Telephone Number (###-####)*  123-456-7890
Organization Email	Address 1*  123 Roper Rd
Address 2	City*  Knoxville
State*  TN	Postal Code*  37920  Next >
User Information	
Password	

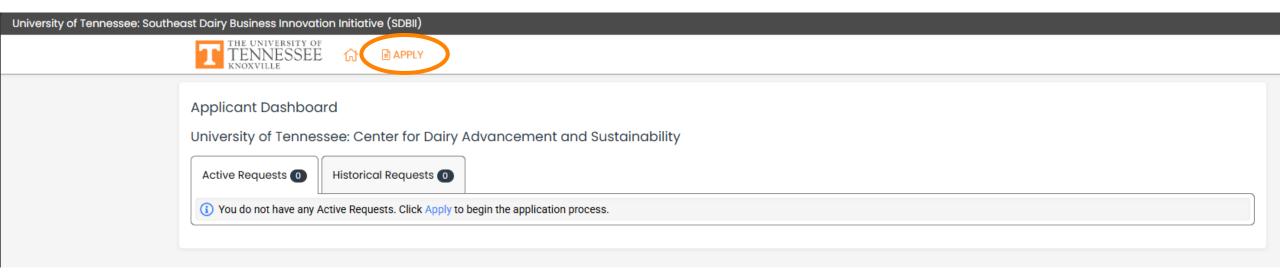
Your username
will be the
email address
of the user
completing the
application!





You will get a confirmation email that your account was created to the account entered for USER

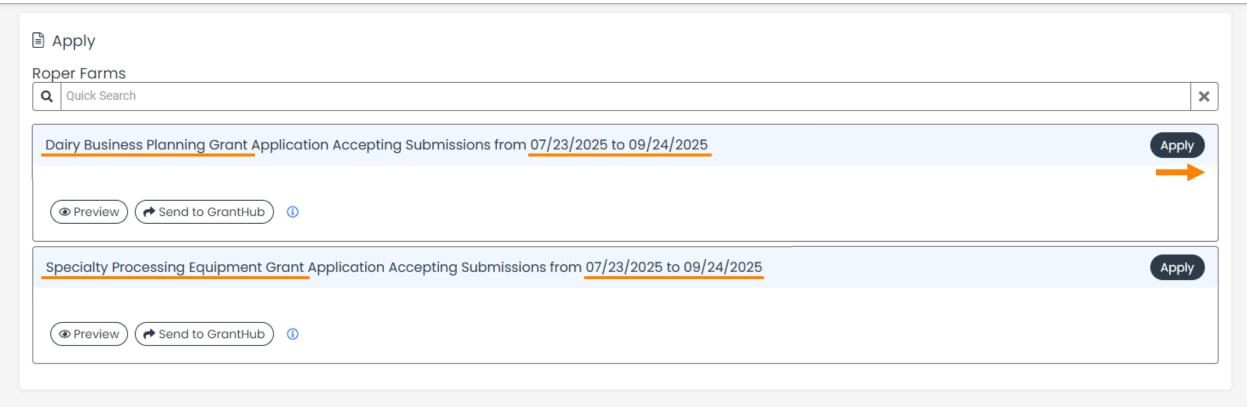
This is called your **dashboard** and is what you will see every time you log into Foundant. This page can be accessed at any time by clicking the  $\widehat{\ensuremath{n}}$  icon. If you have not yet started an application, click "Apply" in the menu bar.



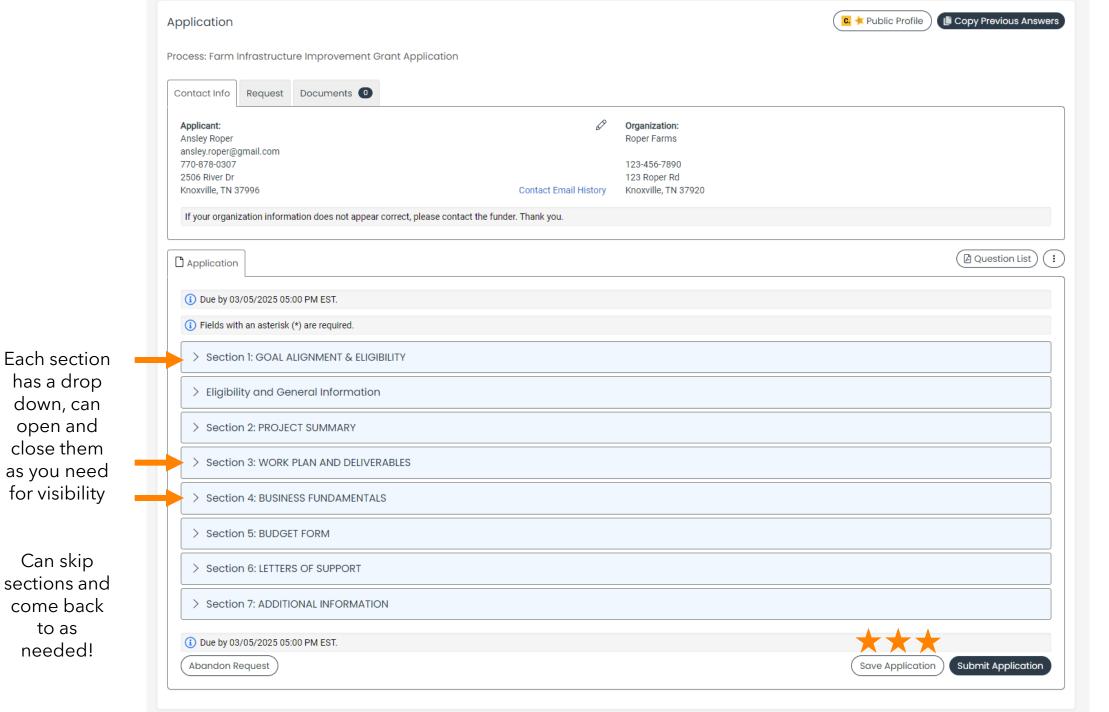




APPLY



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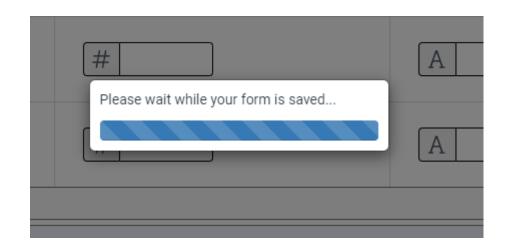


Can skip

to as

needed!

Auto-saves, but **PLEASE** double-check and save your work when you step away from your application!

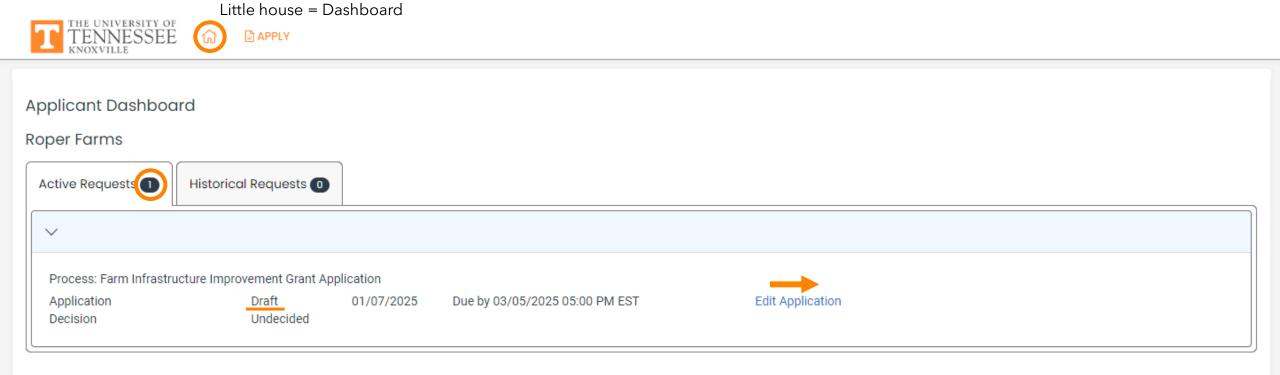


#### Confirmation

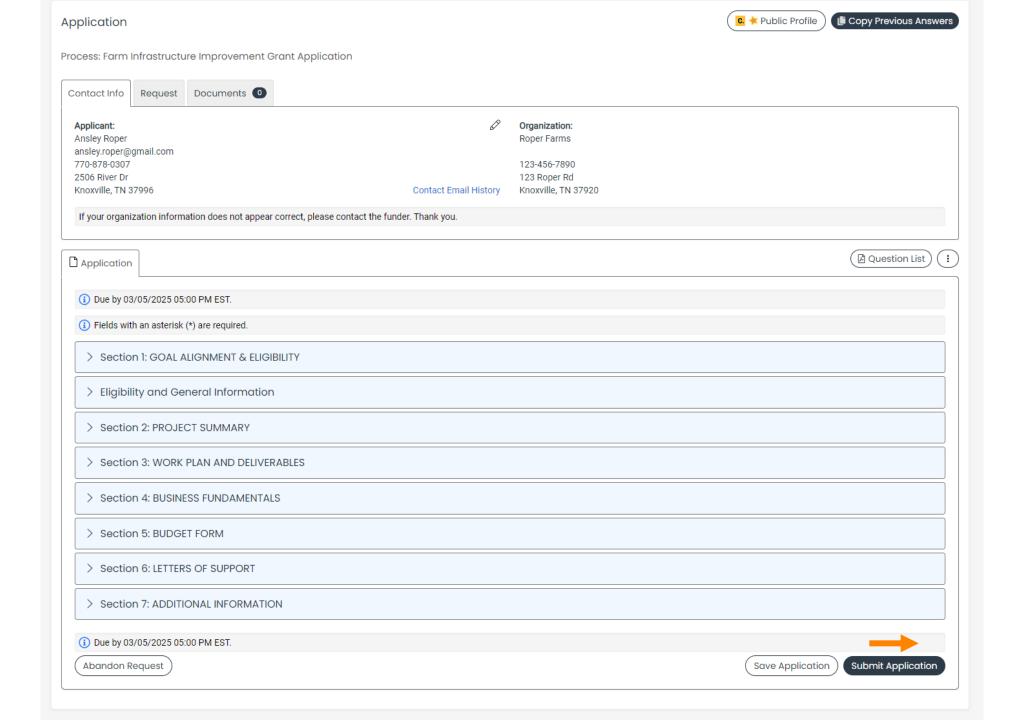
- Your Application has been saved.
- i The following required questions have not been answered:
  - Project Name
  - Main Contact
  - · Email of Main Contact
  - Verify Email
  - Project Impact
  - · Dairy Species
  - Product Types
  - · Primary Contact Phone Number
  - Grant Preparation
  - · Professional Assistance
  - · U.S. Business Eligibility
  - · Official Business Name
  - · SDBII Assistance/Participation
  - Project Summary
  - Requested Funds
  - Milking Herd Size
  - · Planning for Challenges
  - · Business Fundamentals
  - Budget Workbook Upload
  - Quote Upload

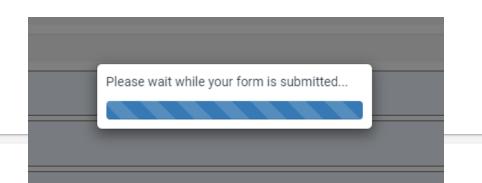
  - · Letters of Support
  - · Additional Information
  - · Additional Document Upload





Hard deadline set by the software - the portal will not take applications after 5:00 PM EST on 9/24/25!





#### Confirmation

Your Application has been submitted.



#### Applicant Dashboard

#### Roper Farms



Historical Requests 0



Process: Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant Application

Application Decision Submitted Undecided 01/07/2025

View Application

### Application - Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant Received - University of Tennessee: Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (SDBII) > Inbox ×







University of Tennessee: Center for Dairy Advancement and Sustainability <administrator@grantinterface.com>

9:42 AM (1 minute ago)







to me -

Dear Ansley,

Thank you for submitting your Application - Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant. It was successfully received. You should hear from us in approximately 6 weeks after the due date, 03/05/2025 05:00 PM EST.

You will be contacted if any additional information is required.

Sincerely,

University of Tennessee: Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (SDBII)

### Things to Remember

- Your organization name should be your legal business name\*
- UEI is not required to apply but is required once awarded, please begin the process to acquire this as soon as possible KCARD can help with this if needed, email Cara at cstewart@kcard.info
- Selecting "Save Application" often will ensure your responses remain saved
- The portal will allow you to come work on your application and come back to it as often as you need to just remember your username and password!
- Applications will not be accepted after the deadline of 9/24/2025 at 5:00 PM EST

### Questions?

- For general grant-related questions, please contact your state contact
  - TN, AL, LA, FL, PR
    - sdbiigrants@utk.edu
  - KY, AR, VA, WV
    - tembry@kydairy.org
  - NC, SC, GA, MS
    - ncdairyextension@ncsu.edu

 For questions on the portal, please contact Shep (<u>sstearns1@utk.edu</u>) and Ansley (<u>aroper2@utk.edu</u>)