



Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (SDBII)

Based at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Center for Dairy Advancement and Sustainability

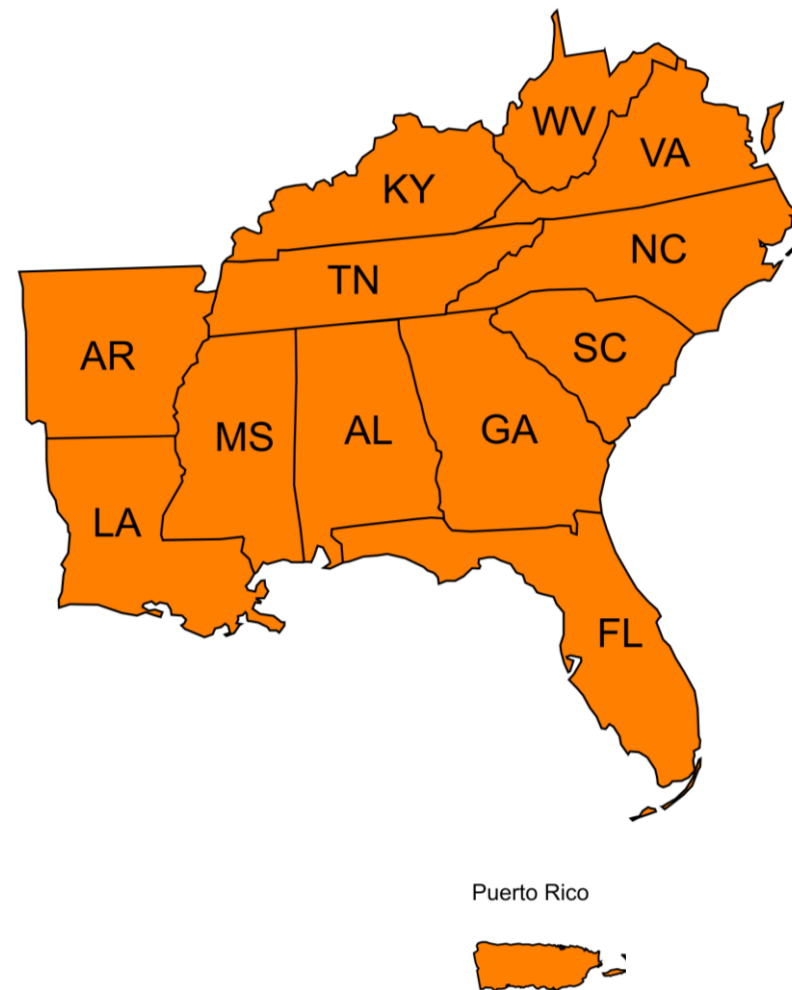




Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative

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- Serves dairy businesses in the Southeastern United States
 - TN, KY, NC, WV, VA, SC, GA, AL, MS, LA, AR, FL, and Puerto Rico
- Aim: Expand and strengthen regional dairy economies by fostering market diversification, value-added product development, innovative on-farm processing, and modernization to increase farmer income and reduce risk.

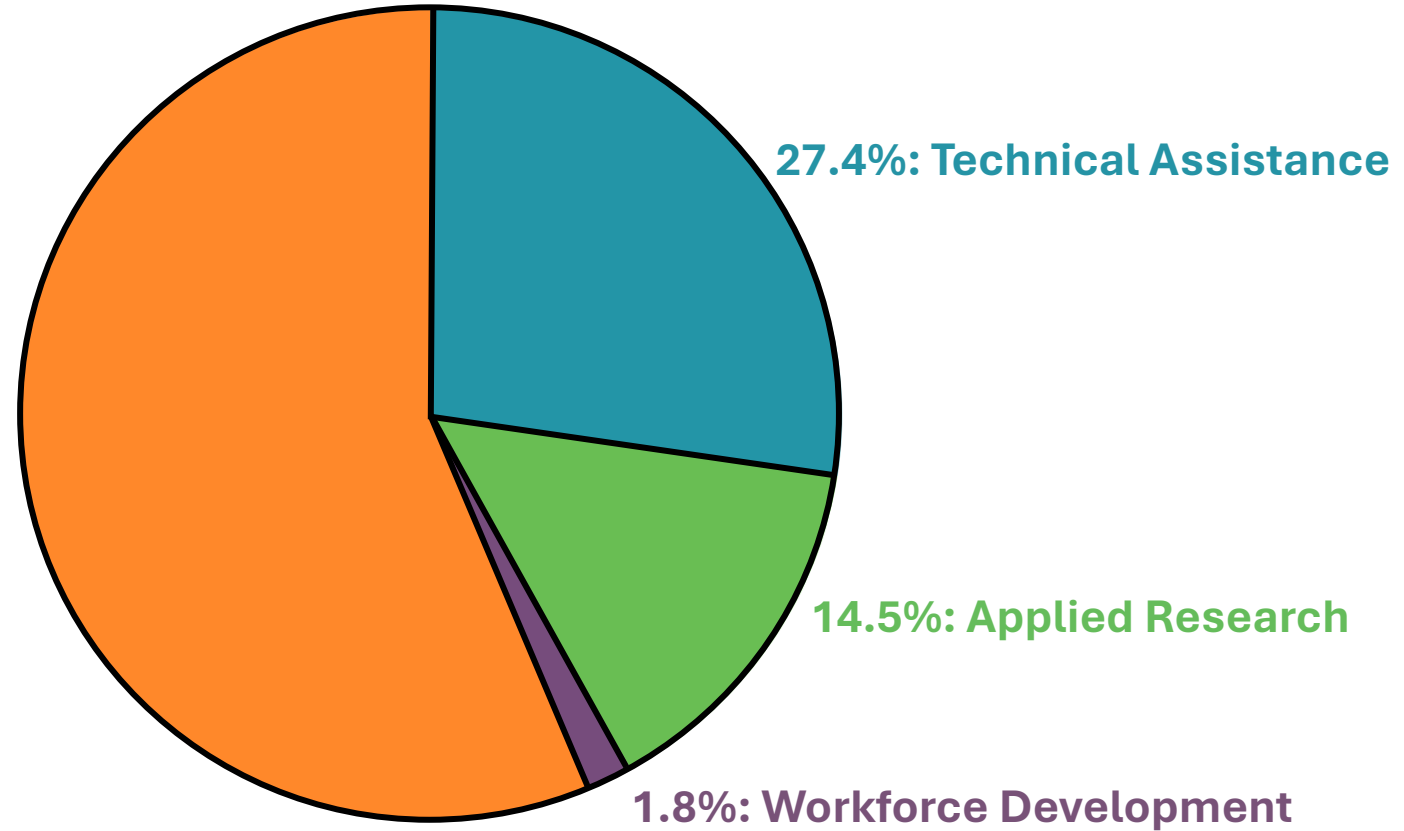




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56.3%: Business Grants to Producers and Processors





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Find the full SDBII Regional Impacts on our website:

sdbii.tennessee.edu

or **scan here!**





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Results:

- \$20M+ awarded
- 214 projects funded to date
- Impacts to date:
 - \$2 return for each \$1 invested
 - 109 jobs created
 - 363 jobs maintained



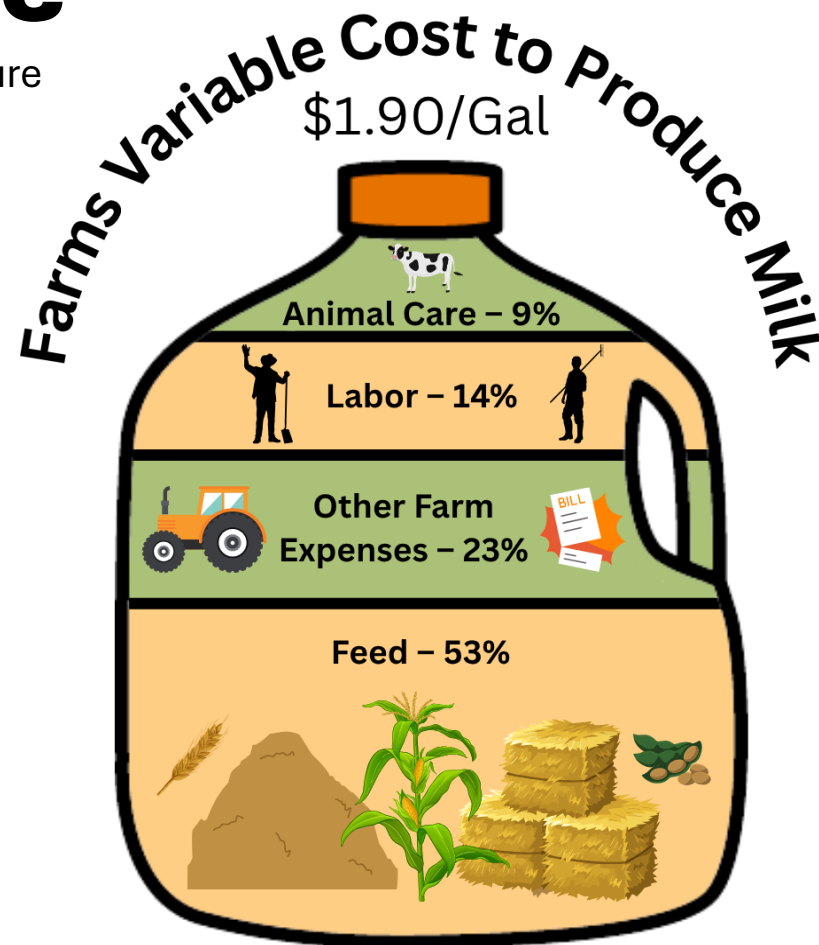


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- Farm-specific support tool
- Uses expenses and performance indicators to benchmark against other producers in the Southeast





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- Four competitive grant programs across two seasonal cycles

Fall Grant Cycle:

- Specialty Processing Equipment
 - 126 applications
 - 64 funded projects
- Dairy Business Planning
 - 34 applications
 - 34 funded projects

Spring Grant Cycle:

- Farm Infrastructure Improvement
 - 159 applications
 - 81 funded projects
- Precision Technology and Management
 - 75 applications
 - 42 funded projects



Dairy Business Planning Grant

Award Funding Available

\$30,000 max award; No match required.

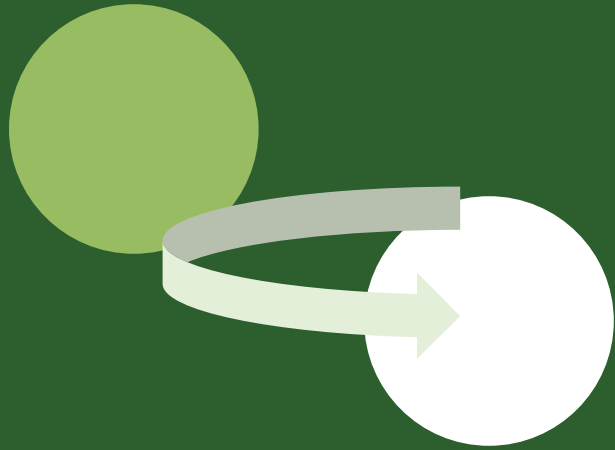
Funding Priorities

Funds outside experts to guide business planning and learning.

Examples of Eligible Projects

- Evaluate feasibility of a new enterprise, approach, or major investment
- Build working knowledge of your business or future enterprise
- Earn certifications or training that boost competitiveness
- Use legal services to strengthen structure or succession plans





*Guiding Hillview Farm through
generational ownership transition*

HILLVIEW FARM, INC.

Bridgewater, Virginia

Contact: Paula Greene

2024 DAIRY BUSINESS PLANNING GRANT

Planning the Next Generation of Ownership

WHAT THE GRANT SUPPORTS

- **Ownership Transition Planning**

Legal and accounting services engaged to plan the transfer of Hillview Farm, Inc. and Long Glade, LLC to the next generation.

- **Estate & Shareholder Review**

Individual estate plans underway and a full review of the shareholder agreement now in progress with the family's attorney.

“The grant will allow the senior generation to begin transferring ownership of Hillview Farm, Inc. and Long Glade, LLC to the next generation.”

— Paula Greene, Hillview Farm, Inc.

Specialty Processing Equipment Grant

Award Funding Available

\$150,000 maximum award; 25% match on amount requested.

Funding Priorities

Value chain innovation and facility/process updates

Product development, packaging, and marketing

Examples of Eligible Projects

- Vat pasteurizer for a new flavored-milk line
- Cream separator for cream products
- Cheese drain table to boost production capacity





New bottling line installed at Duchess Farm Products

DUCHESS FARM PRODUCTS, LLC

Rural Retreat, Virginia

Owner / Operator: Joe Blankenship

2024 SPECIALTY PROCESSING EQUIPMENT GRANT

Doubling Bottling Speed & Market Reach

WHAT THE GRANT FUNDED

● High-Speed Bottling Line

A new automated bottler that doubled fill-and-cap speeds and gave products a cleaner, more professional package.

● New Partnerships & Products

5 new business partnerships formed; strawberry and cookies-and-cream milk are now in development.

“We are more efficient in the bottling process. Speeds have doubled. Our products look much better in the new packaging. We expect to be able to double our market now.”

— Joe Blankenship, Duchess Farm Products, LLC

Dairy Farm Business Grants

Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant:

- Max award: \$100,000
- Match: 25% of request (e.g., \$25,000 on \$100,000)

Precision Technology Investment Grant:

- Max award: \$150,000
- Match: 25% of request (e.g., \$50,000 on \$200,000)



Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant

- Cooling & ventilation upgrades for heat stress
- Increased water & feed access
- Equipment to boost parlor throughput & efficiency
- Better feed & forage management/storage
- Improved animal housing & environment
- Water, waste & manure management
- Improved farm business structure
- Business, financial & leadership training
- Efficient on-farm milk cooling & storage



2024 FARM INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Cooler Barns Mean Healthier Cows

WHAT THE GRANT FUNDED

● Barn Ventilation Fans

Four Air Blaster fans installed in the free-stall barn, plus additional fans in the calf barn to combat heat stress.

● Calf Fresh-Air Tube

A fresh-air tube installed over the baby calves to support respiratory health and stronger calf raising.



One of four Air Blaster fans installed in the free-stall barn

**ROCKY RIDGE CREAMERY,
LLC**

New Market, Virginia

Owner / Operator: Tammie Stiles

“It has increased milk production and quality, especially in the hotter months. Less money was spent on mastitis, respiratory issues, and overall herd health — which decreased the time and money spent on extra labor.”

— Tammie Stiles, Rocky Ridge Creamery, LLC

Precision Technology Investment Grant

- Wearables: movement trackers, estrus detection
- Tech-driven pasture, forage & feed management
- Automation & robotics for farm processes, including:
 - Automated youngstock feeding
 - Automated manure/nutrient management
- Cow comfort & heat-abatement housing upgrades
- Biotechnologies to improve herd performance
 - Genomic testing programs
- Business management improvements
 - Inventory and financial analysis tools
 - Agribusiness management training
 - Long-term enterprise feasibility studies
 - Consultations with industry experts
- Technology & equipment for improved milk quality





Lely Discovery 120 Collector, installed on the barn floor

INTERSTATE DAIRY LLC

Mt. Crawford, Virginia

Owner / Operator: Kevin Wenger

2024 PRECISION TECHNOLOGY & MANAGEMENT GRANT

A Grant-Funded Upgrade for Cow Comfort & Efficiency

WHAT THE GRANT FUNDED

● Lely Discovery 120 Collectors

Robotic barn-floor cleaners that scrape and collect manure automatically, keeping cows cleaner and reducing skid-steer use.

● SmartDairy Controller System

Automated sort gate plus milk-weight and milk-out data collection, with parlor antennas and updated meter E-PROMs.

“Due to declining milk prices and high operating costs, we would not have been able to afford the Lely Discovery collectors or the SmartDairy Controller system without the SDBII grant program.”

— Kevin Wenger, Interstate Dairy LLC



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“SDBII is so helpful for family farms bringing in the next generation and pursuing innovative, sustainable ways to farm.”

– Brush Creek Swiss Farms, Siler City, North Carolina



“It’s no wonder young people leave the farm — I didn’t have the funds to grow. Thanks to this grant, I can provide for my family and reach for my dream of a successful creamery.”

– Ocoee Creamery, Old Fort, Tennessee



“Cheese cutting that took 3 hours now takes less than one. Our staff are more productive, and I could justify raising their wages.”

– Harvest Moon Farm, Crestwood, Kentucky



“SDBII has had a huge, concrete impact on every revenue stream. It’s the difference between the dairy ending with Randy’s generation or continuing into Taylor’s.”

– Ran-Lew Dairy, Graham, North Carolina





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“I can’t express how grateful I am for this opportunity — it helps ensure family dairy farms stay profitable for the next generation.”

– *Maid-N-Meadows, Windsor, Kentucky*



“We used the funds for a batch and blast freezer to produce goat’s milk ice cream. This grant put us ahead of the game — without it, this project wouldn’t have been possible.”

– *Buffalo Creak Farm and Creamery, Germanton, North Carolina*



“Our problems changed from “how do we survive another month” to “how do we hire enough people.” SDBII completely changed our business’s future.”

– *Sequatchie Cove Creamery, Coppinger Cove, Tennessee*



“The new equipment makes our team’s job easier and more productive — they go home with more energy for their families.”

– *Boxcarr Handmade Cheese, Cedar Grove, North Carolina*



Questions? Contact us.

Dr. Elizabeth Eckelkamp
Associate Professor & Center Director
eeckelka@utk.edu
244 Brehm Building
Knoxville, TN 37996
(865) 974-8167

Ansley Roper
Dairy Extension Specialist
aroper2@utk.edu
148 Brehm Building
Knoxville, TN 37996

Shep Stearns
Dairy Extension Specialist
sstearn1@utk.edu
244 Brehm Building
Knoxville, TN 37996
(860) 595-6053



For more information:

<https://sdbii.tennessee.edu>
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