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# Grant Information Session:

## Service Eligibility Partners Grant

*and*

## Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Grant

Wednesday, April 9, 2025 (Virtual)

Wednesday, April 16, 2025 (In-person)

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Center for Urban Smart Agriculture

Maricopa County Cooperative Extension

University of Arizona



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
**Center for Urban  
Smart Agriculture**

**Maddie Mercer**

Office of Environmental Programs

City of Phoenix



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# Agenda

- **Introductions**
- **Grants Overview**
  - **Service Eligibility Partners Grant**
  - **Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture Grant**
- **Questions**

# Center for Urban Smart Agriculture

We **connect** specialists, farmers, institutions, government, and industry to **advance urban agriculture through research, collaboration, and policy**, supporting efforts in **water and climate, agroecology, business, policy, supply chains, and human nutrition**.

The program offers **certificate courses, e-learning curriculum, apprenticeships, workshops, and field days** to support urban, small-scale, and beginning farmers.



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Center for Urban  
Smart Agriculture



# City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs

- **OEP Mission:** Advance **environmental protection** and **sustainability** by promoting sound environmental policies and practices through leadership, education, and **technical** and **regulatory assistance**.
- **Food Systems Goal:** Ensure all Phoenix residents have enough to eat and have access to **healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant food**.



# Grants Overview

- Two new funding opportunities:

Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant	Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aims to help small growers become eligible for USDA-FSA and NRCS services and programs.</li><li>Will provide <b>awards of up to \$10,000</b> to help improve growers' capacity and business operations.</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aims to help local producers adapt to Maricopa County's changing climate.</li><li>Will provide <b>awards of up to \$30,000</b> to implement new practices and infrastructure that help growers adapt to extreme heat &amp; drought.</li></ul> 
Focuses on business development	Focuses on practices & infrastructure

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# Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant

Supports Maricopa County growers and small-scale operations in **building the capacity outlined in their business plans**, while also increasing their **eligibility for USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) services and programs**.

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# Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant

- Will provide awards of **\$5,000 to \$10,000** to help improve growers' capacity and business operations.
- Aims to help small growers become eligible for USDA-FSA and NRCS services and programs.
- This opportunity supports growers and small-scale operations in building the capacity outlined in their business plans.

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# Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant

**Location:** Operation must be in Maricopa County, Arizona.

**Farming Status:** Must be **actively** farming/ranching or **starting** a farm/ranch.

**Size:** Small-scale operation must be **under 50 acres** or **under \$25,000 annual revenue**.

**Employees:** Must have no more than **5 employees**.

**Prior Funding:** Not had prior FSA or NRCS funding **in the past 10 years**.

**Product:** **Cannot be produced for private consumption**. The primary product must be a farm commodity. Operations that manufacture agricultural support supplies are not eligible.

**Be registered** with the Arizona Department of Revenue.



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# Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant

## Desired Project Activities

- **Promote efforts to reduce** the impact of local food production/urban agriculture on our changing climate (mitigation).
- **Enhance the resiliency** of both the farm and local food system in the face of various shocks and disruptions (adaptation).
- **Adopt new and/or expand** existing sustainable food production practices.
- **Advance equity** within the local food system.
- **Strengthen the economic viability** of the farm by increasing the ability to grow and sell products locally.
- **Contributes to greater capacity** to distribute healthy food to people in need.

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# Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant

## Project Examples

### **Agriculture Business Development:**

- Professional development in operating an agriculture business.
- Financial literacy for increase eligibility in USDA, FSA, and NRCS programs and services.
- Implement or enhance record-keeping for agriculture business.
- And/or other needs producers identify and justify that they will increase their eligibility for FSA and NRCS programs and services.

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# Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant

## Project Examples

### Agriculture Operational Enhancements:

- Incorporation of your business.
- Translation services.

**Eligibility Focus:** Projects that [increase eligibility](#) for FSA and NRCS programs and services.

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## Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant

Provides financial assistance to Maricopa County growers to help **navigate, adapt, and succeed** in our region's ever-changing environment.



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# RSA Grant Description

- Will provide awards of **\$10,000 to \$30,000** to implement new practices and infrastructure that help growers adapt to extreme heat and drought
- Aims to help local producers adapt to Maricopa County's changing climate
- For private and non-profit farms interested in implementing projects designed to accelerate the transition toward a more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive food system

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# Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant

**Location:** Operation must be in **Maricopa County**, Arizona.

**Farming Status:** Must be **actively** farming/ranching or **starting** a farm/ranch.

**Employees:** Must have **no more** than 50 employees.

**Product:** **Cannot be produced for private consumption.** The main product may involve producing agricultural support supplies.

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# Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant

## Desired Project Activities

- **Promote efforts to reduce** the impact of local food production/urban agriculture on our changing climate (mitigation).
- **Enhance the resiliency** of both the farm and local food system in the face of various shocks and disruptions (adaptation).
- **Adopt new and/or expand existing** sustainable food production practices.
- **Advance equity** within the local food system.

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# Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant

## Desired Project Activities

- **Strengthen the economic viability** of the farm by increasing the ability to grow and sell products locally.
- Applicants should outline **how partnering with the City on implementing resilience and sustainability measures will help the entity continue to grow food** in an increasingly arid urban environment subject to extreme heat and drought.
- **Contribute to greater capacity** to distribute healthy food to people in need.



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# Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant

## Project Examples

- Water management and efficiency measures
- Green and climate resilient infrastructure
- GHG emissions reduction
- Regenerative agriculture practices or carbon farming
- Greenhouses with sustainability features
- Shade structures and shade cloth
- Enhancing wildlife habitat and biodiversity

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# Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant

## Project Examples

- Soil health improvement projects
- Planting native crops
- Hydroponics and aquaponics production
- Vertical farming
- Smart farming
- Food waste mitigation efforts

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# Application Process

- **Deadline:** 5:00 PM on April 30, 2025.
- Application components
  - Online Qualtrics form - <https://tinyurl.com/SEPRSAGRANT>  
**Note:** no applications will be accepted by email.
  - Required attachments
    - Project narrative
    - Project budget  
**Note:** The total length should **not exceed** five pages.
  - Applicant resume (SEP grant applications only)
- Optional attachments
  - Pictures
  - Plans, blueprints, etc.

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# Evaluation Criteria

- **Completeness** of application
- Alignment with **allowable budget categories**
- **Relevance** and **connection** to desired project characteristics

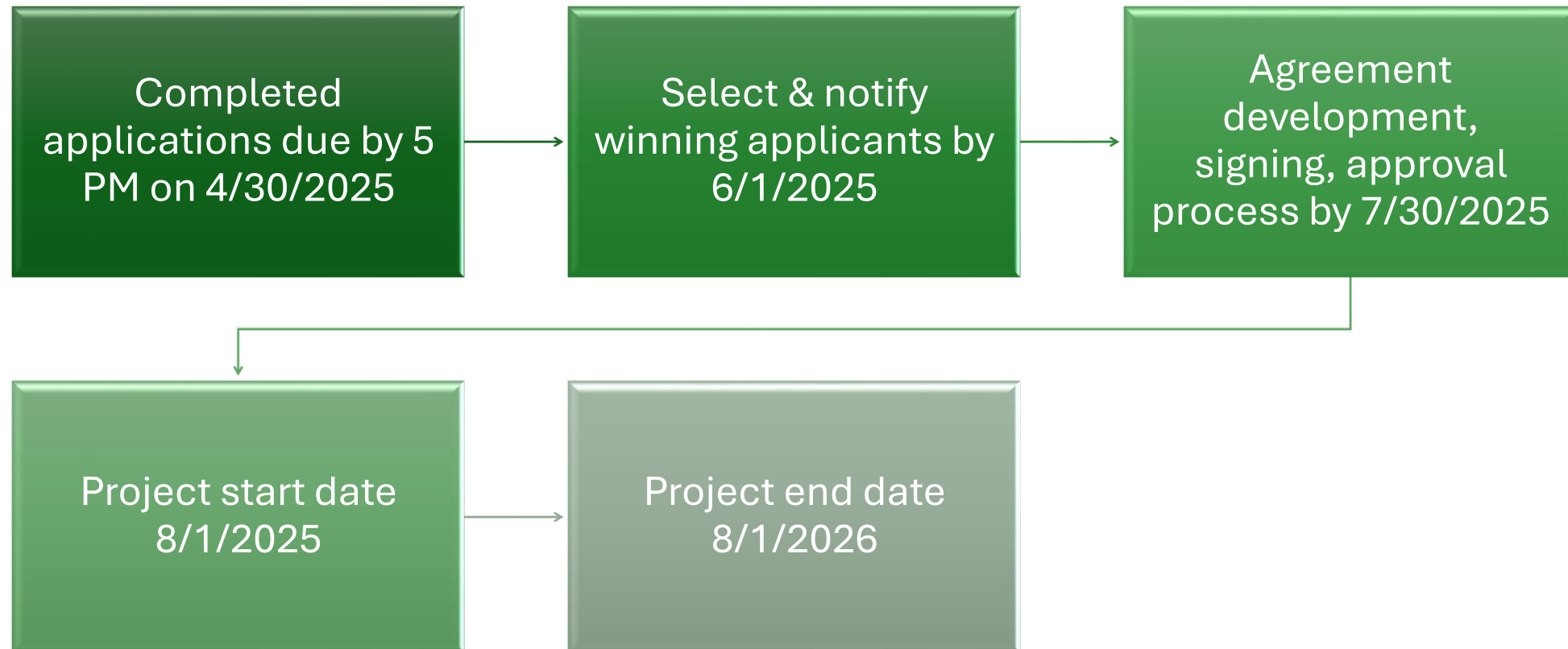


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# Timeline

- Completed applications due by **5 PM on April 30, 2025**
- **Select & notify** winning applicants by June 1, 2025
- Agreement development, signing, approval process by July 30, 2025
- Project Length is **12-months**
  - Project **start** date August 1, 2025
  - Project **end** date August 1, 2026

# Timeline



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# Questions?

## **Questions about the SEP Grant University of Arizona**

Naomi Pier  
nmpier@arizona.edu  
(602) 827-2140

## **Questions about the RSA Grant City of Phoenix**

Maddie Mercer  
madeline.mercer@phoenix.gov  
602-534-5387

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# Grant Application



<https://tinyurl.com/SEPRSAGRANT>