



For Immediate Release
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ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED OFFERS GRANTS FOR FARMERS TO MAKE WELFARE IMPROVEMENTS ON FARM

Alexandria, VA -- Animal Welfare Approved is pleased to announce a call for proposals for its 2011-2012 Good Husbandry Grants. Now in its fourth year, the Good Husbandry Grants program has funded nearly one hundred projects across the country to improve farm animal welfare. Certified farmers and those who have submitted an application for AWA certification may apply for up to \$5,000 towards projects such as mobile housing, breeding stock, and on-farm processing equipment. Slaughter plants working with or seeking to work with AWA farmers are also eligible for funding.

"One of the greatest triumphs of this grants program is that it gives farmers the freedom to try new ideas without the risking the farm," says Program Director Andrew Gunther. "It is becoming obvious that industrial agriculture is unable to meet our needs as a society, and innovation in agriculture is now more important than ever. We are thrilled to be able to contribute towards developing solutions for future generations of farmers - solutions with positive impacts that extend far beyond the farm gate."

The funding priorities for this year's cycle include improved genetics, increased outdoor access, welfare improvements in the slaughter process and non-lethal predator control. A primary goal of this grant program is to facilitate the growth and success of high-welfare, pasture-based systems. Gunther explains: "The biggest challenge in agriculture right now is getting animals outside. The science tells us that when farm animals are responsibly managed on open pasture or range, a whole host of challenges inherent in industrial agriculture simply disappear. For instance, the incidence of pathogenic E. coli is much lower in pasture-based systems, and animals are proven to have higher welfare. This ultimately leads to more nutritious, healthier products."

In Marengo, IL, Hasselmann Family Farm's 2009-2010 Good Husbandry Grant funded the construction of new mobile housing for the farm's farrowing sows, facilitating the transition to pastured production. Since moving the sows onto pasture farmer Scott Hasselmann has seen numerous benefits - not only in terms of animal health and welfare, but in improved disease prevention, farm sanitation and whole farm fertility. AWA's Good Husbandry Grants program will also continue its focus on welfare improvements in the slaughter process. "As a birth through slaughter program we are committed to working with plants to ensure high welfare at slaughter," says AWA Lead Auditor Tim Holmes.

Another 2009-2010 grant awarded to Fruitland American Meat in Jackson, MO funded the purchase of a new knock box and handling facility improvements. The modifications have allowed the plant to safely



and humanely handle smaller animals such as lambs, hogs, and calves - improving animal welfare and helping the plant diversify its business.

Farmers and slaughter plants interested in applying should visit the Animal Welfare Approved Good Husbandry Grants page (www.animalwelfareapproved.org/farmers/grants-for-farmers) or contact Grants Coordinator Emily Lancaster at Emily@AnimalWelfareApproved.org or (202) 618-4497.

[Animal Welfare Approved](http://www.animalwelfareapproved.org) is a national nonprofit organization that audits, certifies and supports farmers raising their animals with the highest welfare standards, outdoors on pasture or range. Called a "badge of honor for farmers" and the "gold standard," AWA has come to be the most highly regarded food label when it comes to animal welfare, pasture-based farming, and sustainability. All AWA standards, policies and procedures are available on the AWA website, making it one of the most transparent certifications available.

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BRIEF

Animal Welfare Approved is offering grants of up to \$5,000 to improve farm animal welfare on AWA-certified farms and farms that have applied for the free certification. Slaughter plants working with AWA farms are also eligible for funding. A primary goal of this grant program is to facilitate the growth and success of high-welfare, pasture-based systems. The deadline to apply is September 30, 2011. Farmers and slaughter plants interested in applying should visit the Animal Welfare Approved Good Husbandry Grants page (www.animalwelfareapproved.org/farmers/grants-for-farmers) or contact Grants Coordinator Emily Lancaster at Emily@AnimalWelfareApproved.org or (202) 618-4497.