

By Senator Albritton

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to young farmers and ranchers;
3 creating s. 570.842, F.S.; creating the Florida Young
4 Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant Program within the
5 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;
6 specifying the purpose of the grants; requiring the
7 department to select grant recipients based on
8 specified criteria; requiring the department to adopt
9 rules; requiring that applicants meet specified
10 eligibility requirements; requiring the department to
11 give preference to veterans; specifying a range for
12 grant amounts awarded; providing that a recipient may
13 not receive more than one award per grant period under
14 the program; specifying that grant funding is
15 contingent upon specific appropriation from the
16 Legislature; providing an effective date.

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18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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20 Section 1. Section 570.842, Florida Statutes, is created to
21 read:

22 570.842 Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant
23 Program.—

24 (1) The Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant
25 Program is created within the department to support the startup
26 functions associated with new farming and ranching operations.

27 (a) Grants administered by the department through this
28 program must be for the purpose of fostering the creation and
29 expansion of agricultural businesses by young farmers and

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30 ranchers in this state.

31 (b) The department shall select grant recipients based on
32 selection criteria adopted pursuant to subsection (2).

33 (2) The department shall adopt rules governing the
34 operation of the program, including an application process and
35 selection criteria for grant recipients.

36 (a) At a minimum, in order to be eligible to receive a
37 grant, an individual must meet all of the following
38 requirements:

39 1. Be an agricultural producer, be an employee of a farm or
40 ranch, or have been actively involved in Future Farmers of
41 America for at least 1 year.

42 2. Be at least 18 years of age, but younger than 35 years
43 of age.

44 3. Have operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10
45 years.

46 4. Demonstrate, at a minimum, a dollar-for-dollar matching
47 investment for the grant amount requested.

48 5. Submit, on a form prescribed by the department, a grant
49 application during the application period established by the
50 department. The department may designate only one period each
51 year for accepting applications.

52 (b) In the application review process, the department shall
53 give a preference to an applicant who is a veteran, as defined
54 in s. 1.01(14).

55 (3) Each grant award under the program must be between
56 \$5,000 and \$20,000, with no more than one award being made to an
57 individual grant recipient per grant period.

58 (4) Annual grant funding for this program is contingent

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59 upon specific annual appropriation by the Legislature.

60 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.