

May 14, 2012

Subject: Request for Expressions of Interest - Beginning Farmers Training Facilities

Due to budget constraints, USDA has had to cut back on both programs and facilities. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012, authorized the closing of four research locations occupied by the Agricultural Research Service. The Secretary of Agriculture may make land and facilities at these locations available to interested parties for use in establishing Beginning Farmers Training Facilities. The availability of the land and facilities at these locations provides a unique opportunity to grow new farmers.

The four research locations are:

1. North Appalachian Experimental Watershed Research, Coshocton, OH
2. J. Phil Campbell Sr. Natural Resource Conservation Center, Watkinsville, GA
3. Appalachian Farming System Research Center, Beaver, WV
4. Crop Quality and Fruit Insect Research, Weslaco, TX

In accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Property Management Regulation (AGPMR) 110-75.115-5010, these properties have been screened simultaneously among USDA agencies for reassignment to another USDA agency. In the event another USDA agency expresses a mission need for one of these properties, that agency will be given priority over any non-Government recipient.

Application Process

Applicants must provide the following information in this order:

1. USDA Facility being requested for use.
2. Name of Organization/Institution.
3. Organization contact person, including email address and telephone number
4. Type of institution: example: community based or educational organizations.
5. Name of Individuals or groups that will be operating the facility
6. Source of funding to operate and maintain the facility
7. Anticipated use of land and/or facilities. Please be as specific as possible. In the event applications are received from two or more institutions, applications will be rated on how the proposed use will address these factors:
 - a. How the anticipated use of the facility will support Beginning Farmers Training education activities.
 - b. Plan to build and sustain a Beginning Farmer Training Facility.
 - c. Experience of organization in agriculture and natural resources research.
 - d. Financial backing of project and ability to adequately operate and maintain facility

Applications should be sent to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Procurement and Property Management
Property Management Division
Attn: Paul Walden
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Mail Stop 9304
Washington, DC 20250

Mailed applications must be received by 5:00 PM, EST, June 15, 2012. Applications may also be sent via email, in one attachment, to paul.walden@dm.usda.gov. Email applications must be received by 5:00 PM, EST, June 15, 2012. If submitting the application via email, send in one transmission; *please do not send multiple emails*.

Also, Paul Walden is the official point of contact for all inquiries regarding these disposals. He may be reached via email at paul.walden@dm.usda.gov or by telephone (202) 720-7283.

SUMMARY OF AVAILABLE PROPERTY

Northern Appalachian Experimental Watershed Research, Coshocton, Ohio:

Owned Land: 631.7 acres
Land Use: Watershed management, grazing (48%), hay/crops (17%), forest (32%)

Owned Buildings: 22 buildings; Laboratory 3,600 square feet, Office 4,800 square feet, 5 Barns totaling 23,250 square feet and various other support buildings for a total of 74,571 square feet, constructed between 1935 and 1996.

J. Phil Campbell, Sr. Natural Resource Conservation Center, Watkinsville, Georgia:

Owned Land: 1,069 acres.
Land Use: Grazing (425 acres), Crops (178 acres) and Wildlife/Conservation/Forest 373.5 acres).

Owned Buildings: 17 buildings; Laboratory/Office 10,802 square feet, Office/Headhouse and Greenhouse 8,690 square feet, Crops Processing 2,400 square feet, and various other support buildings for a total of 59,996 square feet, all constructed between 1940 and 2006.

Appalachian Farming Systems Research Center, Beaver, West Virginia:

Owned Land: 277.74 acres.
Land Use: Constructed assets, grazing and forage crops – 136 acres.

Owned Buildings: 18 buildings including Laboratory with Greenhouses 31,288, Hydrology Laboratory/Office 7,064 square feet and multiple barns and other support buildings for a total of 64,504 square feet, all constructed between 1979 and 2003.

Crop Quality and Fruit Insects Research; Integrated Farming and Natural Resources Research; Beneficial Insect Research; and Honey Bee Research, Weslaco, Texas:

Owned Land: 71.86 acres
Land Use: Research Plots, Citrus Plots, Constructed Assets.

Owned Buildings: 30 buildings for a total of 135,595 square feet, all constructed between 1960 and 2002.