



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Shapiro Administration Tours Skyline Pastures Farm, Highlighting PA Investments in Success of Military Veteran Farmers

Invites Veterans' Organizations to Apply for Funding to Deliver Grants to Military Veterans for Farm Start-Ups, Expansion

Mohrsville, PA – Today, **Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding** and **Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs Brigadier General Maureen Weigl** toured [Skyline Pastures](#) in Mohrsville, Berks County, a veteran-owned farm that received \$5,000 in 2022 to fund erosion control and a livestock-watering system through Pennsylvania Veterans In Agriculture Grants.

Skyline was one of 11 veteran-owned farms to receive sub-grants through the PA Veteran Farming Network, one of two Pennsylvania veterans' organizations funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture program in 2022.

Following the farm tour, Redding invited veterans' services organizations to apply for up to \$200,000 in Pennsylvania Veterans in Agriculture funds to deliver subgrants to military veterans for farm and related business start-ups and expansion. Grants of up to \$200,000 will be awarded to veterans' organizations. Each veteran organization will in turn offer grants of up to \$10,000 to veterans entering farming or expanding farms or related businesses.

"Veterans return from serving our country with valuable, hard-won skills they can put to work on the farm," **Secretary Redding** said. "Like any other business, they need to finance planning, safety, permits, equipment, and other critical needs. These grants are a tangible way the **Shapiro Administration** is thanking our veterans for their service and supporting their future success in agriculture."

Grants may be used for agricultural business needs ranging from feasibility studies to food safety, biosecurity, and conservation planning; and from equipment purchases, to permits, marketing, and working capital.

"The spirit of commitment to community and country is strong in the military and agriculture," said **Brig. Gen. Weigl**. "It's obvious why some veterans choose farming as a way of life. We are grateful to Secretary Redding and the Shapiro Administration for investing in the contributions veterans make to Pennsylvania's agricultural industry."

Over the next decade, agriculture faces a critical workforce shortage as a generation of farmers and laborers retire. These grants are one of many ways increased agriculture funding in the bipartisan 2023-24 Shapiro Administration budget is building the workforce and infrastructure

Pennsylvania's \$132.5 billion agriculture industry needs to keep growing, feeding our economy, and supporting more than 593,000 jobs.

The 2023-24 budget sustains support for the [PA Preferred® Homegrown By Heroes](#) program, which helps farmer-veterans market their locally grown products to feed consumer demand.

Full application guidelines for Pennsylvania Farmer Veteran grants will be published in the November 4, 2023 edition of the PA Bulletin.

Organizations must submit applications online using the Department of Community and Economic Development's [Electronic Single Application](#), by Friday, December 15, 2023 at 5 p.m.

View a map of [PA Farm Bill funding highlights](#) and learn more about initiatives and investments to grow, protect, and sustain Pennsylvania's agriculture industry at agriculture.pa.gov.

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