Silvopasture Farmer Assistance Application

The Silvopasture Farmer Assistance Program is an initiative funded by the Edwards Mother Earth Foundation (EMEF). It is managed by Virginia Tech University in partnership with Rural Action and Appalachian Sustainable Development. The program provides direct financial support and technical assistance to farmers implementing silvopasture projects. Applicants are selected for funding on a rolling first come, first served basis. Projects may receive funding in 2022 or 2023 depending on specifications and planning requirements.

The program will fund open-field silvopasture projects (planting trees in pastureland). It is anticipated that funded projects will be between 2 and 12 acres, but all acreage proposals are welcome. General guidelines for silvopasture farmer assistance are as follows, but may vary based upon demonstrated need:

Up to $1,500 per acre for the first 4 acres
Up to $1,000 per acre for the second 4 acres
Up to $750 per acre for additional establishment beyond 8 acres

Farmers who receive financial support must be willing to share successes and lessons-learned onsite with other farmers. Minority, female, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and/or socially/economically disadvantaged farmers are highly encouraged to apply. A portion of grant dollars is dedicated to supporting these farmers. Virginia, East Tennessee, East Kentucky, West Virginia, Southeast and South Central Ohio, and Western Pennsylvania are priority funding locations, but applications from farms in proximity to these regions are not discouraged.

Applications will be accepted at any time following the release of this announcement. A first round of projects will be identified on or about June 15, 2022, followed by applicant consultation and site assessment. If the proposed project is deemed feasible, funding will be provided at a rate suitable to support completion. Unfunded applications will be retained in the review pool until program funds are exhausted. Direct questions to John Munsell at Virginia Tech (jfmunsel@vt.edu). If applicants do not wish to submit online, applications can also be emailed or mailed to:

John Munsell
Virginia Tech 304C Cheatham Hall (MC: 0324)
Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation
Blacksburg, VA 24061 USA
jfmunsel@vt.edu

Rural Action VIRGINIA TECH. APPALACHIAN sustainable DEVELOPMENT

Application Form

The application consists of 4 sections and 1 budget worksheet

Section 1 – Contact Information

Name _____

Home Address _____

Town/City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____

Phone number _____

Email address _____

Farm Name (if applicable)_____

Farm Address (if different from home)_____

Town/City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____

Section 2 – Silvopasture Project Information

For the purposes of this application, **Silvopasture** is defined as planting trees in pastureland to provide shade for animals, manage forage, and grow additional timber or non-timber products. Funds may be used to prepare sites, purchase planting stock, rent equipment, acquire and install tree protection, and pay contractors. Funding will not be provided to buy or treat animals, pay for producer time, thin woodlands, or buy large equipment (e.g., augers, all-terrain vehicles, scalpers, tractors). Learn more about silvopasture: https://www.fs.usda.gov/nac/practices/silvopasture.php.

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. Why do you want to apply for silvopasture funding? (Check all that apply)

☐Provide shade for my livestock
☐Provide fodder for my livestock
☐Grow timber
☐Grow non-timber products (fruits, nuts, or pods, mushroom logs, etc.)
☐Reduce soil loss
☐Improve how the farm looks
☐Trade in carbon or water quality markets
☐Other, please explain below

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Do you currently manage livestock or poultry underneath trees and/or shrubs you have planted? (check only one)

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. How many acres would you like to plant in silvopasture?
   (*Keep in mind up to $1,500 per acre is available for the first 4 acres and up to $1,000 per acre for the second 4 acres. Up to $750 per acre is available for any additional acreage beyond 8. Projects are expected to be between 2-12 acres, but larger acreage is possible.*)

   _____ Acres

4. List the trees and/or shrubs you would like to plant in your silvopasture.

   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Where would you like to establish silvopasture on the property you own or lease? (*Please be as specific as possible and provide a map showing where as one of your supporting documents if possible.*)

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Which tree and/or shrub products do you hope to sell, if any, from your silvopasture (raw material, value-added)?

   _____
   _____
   _____

7. Where and when do you intend to get tree and/or shrub planting stock for your silvopasture? When would you like to start preparing to plant, and how will you protect your planting? (*Funding program ends in December 2023.*)

_____
_____
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_____
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_____

8. Are there any special conservation or water access concerns or potential restrictions that may affect the long-term success of your silvopasture? For example, conservation easements or protected areas, limited or no water access, lease arrangements, or rare or endangered species.

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, explain the concern(s) and your plan for managing these issues to ensure they do not affect project success?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. How many years of experience do you have with livestock/poultry production?

_____ Years of experience

10. How do you plan to integrate livestock/poultry into the silvopasture you establish? (check all that apply)

☐ Permanently raise animals in the silvopasture
☐ Regularly rotate animals between the silvopasture and open pastures
☐ Turn out animals in the silvopasture when needed to reduce pressure on open pastures and/or protect animals from harsh weather
☐ Other_____

11. Explain how your silvopasture will benefit your farm, livelihood, and community.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Section 3 – Peer-to-Peer Learning Commitment

EMEF financial assistance recipients will join a peer-to-peer demonstration network known as an Agroforestry Regional Knowledge (ARK) Exchange. If you are selected to receive EMEF assistance and accept funding, you must agree to share your successes and lessons learned at least once with other farmers in the ARK Exchange. You may not be asked to host or present to a group of farmers, but agreeing to do so is necessary to receive funding.

Are you and your farm willing to be part of the ARK Exchange should you be selected to receive EMEF financial assistance?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 4 – Background Information

Approximately how much of your work-week is currently spent farming crops and/or raising livestock/poultry? (check only one)

☐0-10% ☐10-20% ☐20-30% ☐30-40%
☐40-50% ☐50-60% ☐60-70% ☐70-80%
☐80-90% ☐90-100%

Approximately how much of your current annual income comes from farming crops and/or or raising livestock/poultry? (check only one)

☐0-10% ☐10-20% ☐20-30% ☐30-40%
☐40-50% ☐50-60% ☐60-70% ☐70-80%
☐80-90% ☐90-100%

What was your household's total income before taxes in 2021? (check only one)

☐Less than $10,000 ☐$10,000-$19,999 ☐$20,000-$29,999
☐$30,000-$44,999 ☐$45,000-$59,999 ☐$60,000-$74,999
☐$75,000-$99,999 ☐$100,000-$149,999 ☐$150,000 or more

How do you identify? (check only one)

☐Male ☐Female ☐Neither Male nor Female ☐Prefer Not to Answer

What is your race/ethnicity? (check all that apply)

☐White ☐Hispanic/Latino ☐Black/African American ☐Native American
☐Asian ☐Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ☐Other_____
☐Prefer not to answer

Are you lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender? (check only one)

☐Yes ☐No ☐Prefer Not to Answer

Do you lease the farmland you manage? (check only one)

☐Yes ☐No

If yes, for how long is your current rental arrangement? _____ Years

Appendix – Supporting Documents

Provide a realistic estimated budget based on the cost structure and time frame of the proposed project. Include on-farm items and supplies needed (e.g., trees, tools, contractor fees, etc.). Also estimate the amount of time you will dedicate to the project and indicate an anticipated calendar of events. Use the time-budget worksheet to provide this information.

Attach at least three digital pictures from different angles of the site where you would like to establish silvopasture. Take pictures that demonstrate key features. Provide a short description of each picture and annotate or mark it to highlight important places and site conditions.

Optional Information

You may attach no more than 3 supporting documents (not pictures) to your application, such as annotated maps or aerial imagery, existing planning documents, business plans, farm newsletters, promotional videos, product lists, and website links.