



Lakewinds Organic Field Fund: ***Making a difference in the lives of local farmers.***

Lakewinds Food Co-op started Lakewinds Organic Field Fund (LOFF) in 2011. LOFF is a grant program dedicated to making a bigger impact on local farming, farming associations, and organic food by furthering the development and sustainability of organics. Supporting local and organic farms is key to our mission as a food co-op, and is central to our ongoing effort to build a local food system that values the financial wellbeing of smaller scale agriculture, soil health, environmental responsibility, and our owners' desires for high quality, organic food.

Overview of Lakewinds Organic Field Fund

The purpose of Lakewinds Organic Field Fund (LOFF) is to support local farmers and farming associations by making direct grants to further the goals of organic or transitional farms and the organizations that support them. Our website features information on previously funded projects, including:

- improvement to packing sheds and other facilities
- purchase of equipment and tools
- financial support for the process of organic transition
- purchases that increase farm productivity or efficiency
- projects that improve soil health
- other projects that benefit the farm

LOFF is open to all farmers and farming associations, but preference will be given for farmers and farming organizations located in Minnesota, northern Iowa, and western Wisconsin.

Applicant Eligibility

Funding is available for the following types of project proposals:

1. Organic certification
2. Non-profits that support sustainable and organic agriculture
3. Transitioning a conventional farm to organic
4. Early stage organic farms
5. Education and training related to organic farming

LOFF will not provide funding for:

- Political or religious programs
- General operating or marketing expenses
- Endowment funds
- Scholarships
- Fundraising events
- Proposals that do not address organic farming issues



Proposal Deadline

- The **deadline for application to Lakewinds Organic Field Fund is Friday, February 2, 2018.** Proposals must be postmarked or received by the deadline date. Applications postmarked or received after this date will not be considered unless previous arrangements have been made with the LOFF Committee Leader.
- If a project is funded, applicants will be notified and funds awarded by March 15, 2018. Awarded funds will be paid out in full at the time of announcement. If a project or grant contains any special conditions, no monies are disbursed until those conditions have been met.

Funding Levels

Proposals should feature objectives that are realistically achievable with a modest level of funding. LOFF will not fund a project for more than \$8,000 per year.

Multi-year Projects

LOFF acknowledges the importance of conducting long-term research to verify experimental results. The LOFF Committee will consider funding multi-year projects, but cannot guarantee funding for any project beyond a single year. Submission of an interim report and new proposal is required to be considered for continued funding in subsequent years.

Organic Field Fund Proposal Requirements

In order to fairly evaluate grant proposals, all submissions should follow the requirements as stated below. Proposals that surpass the page limit or otherwise do not meet these requirements will not be considered for funding.

Proposals may be a maximum of five (5) pages in length at 12pt font. Bibliographic references and investigators' curricula vitae (CVs) may be included as appendices to the proposal. CVs are limited to no more than two (2) pages each.

The successful application will provide a clear rationale and demonstrate a significant need for the proposed project. It is important that the project objectives be clear, well structured, and succinct. Demonstrate why your project is necessary, present measurable outcomes, and explain specifically what you hope to accomplish.



To Apply

1. Complete the Lakewinds Organic Field Fund application form, including cover sheet (provided), answer proposal narrative questions, and include all required attachments.
2. Number the pages of your proposal. Limit the proposal to no more than 5 pages (including cover page – first page of application).
3. Submit your application. Applications may be mailed, hand delivered, or emailed. By submitting your proposal, you give Lakewinds Food Co-op permission to conduct on-site video and photo shoots and interviews (as requested) to be used for Lakewinds promotional materials, including but not limited to in-store signage, quarterly owner newsletters, website, and social media channels.

Paper option:

via US Postal Service or hand deliver to:

Lakewinds Business Office
Attn: LOFF Committee
6321 Bury Drive, Suite 21
Eden Prairie, MN 55346

Telephone: 952-512-2135 (Jill Holter)

Electronic option:

Application may be emailed to:

marketing@lakewinds.com

- Send proposal as a Word or PDF attachment to an email.
- Lakewinds will not accept proposals submitted in the body of an email.
- Please include "Attn: LOFF2018 Committee" in the subject line.

Applications must be postmarked or received no later than Friday, February 2, 2018.



Application Review Process

Project proposals are reviewed and selected by the LOFF Committee. This committee is comprised of Lakewinds Board members, members at large, and employees. LOFF reserves the right to seek outside technical consultation as necessary. The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals:

1. Presents clear objectives demonstrating that the project will foster the improvement and/or sustainability of organic farming practices, and specifies measurable outcomes that will indicate successful achievement of the objectives.
2. Proposal is well-written and clear; follows the requirements including page limits and font size; demonstrates the conceptual adequacy of the project, and presents a realistic timeline for each of the project's components.
3. Presents a well-justified and detailed budget appropriate to carrying out the project's objectives, including any matching funds applied for or already secured.
4. Percent of donation dollars going to overhead vs. project.
5. Inspires community involvement and support.
6. Lakewinds' potential impact on the organization.

If Your Project Is Funded

Applicants will be notified and funds awarded by March 15, 2018. Awarded funds will be paid out in full at the time of announcement. If a project or grant contains any special conditions, no monies are disbursed until those conditions have been met.

Final Reporting Requirements

Unless other arrangements have been made, grant recipients are required to provide a project final report by December 15, 2018. Evaluation involves analyzing whether or not the original project objectives were met, not the success or failure of a project.

There is no specific format for reports; however, a report should contain the following:

- Details on how the money was spent: actual cost of the project vs. original budget.
- Any formal evaluation data.
- Project challenges and successes from the organization's perspective.
- Photographs and/or video documentation.

Final reports may be delivered to the address above. If choosing to email, please include "Attn: LOFF – Final Report" in the subject line.