

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USDA Value Added Producer Grant Workshop April 26 in Traverse City

TRAVERSE CITY, MI – Agricultural producers can learn about the USDA's Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program at a workshop April 26 in Traverse City. The workshop is being offered by USDA Rural Development in cooperation with MSU Extension, the MSU Product Center, and the Northwest Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

The VAPG program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. Generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the goals of the program.

USDA Rural Development Business Specialist, Bobbie Morrison will provide an overview and requirements of the program. Wendy Wieland, MSU Extension/MSU Product Center and Annie Olds, SBDC Regional Director will discuss how the respective organizations can assist businesses in their grant application process. The workshop will help producers learn if the grant program is the right tool for their farming operation and how local partners can assist with their application.

The workshop will run from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the large conference room at the Traverse City Michigan Works Center, 1209 South Garfield Avenue. The entrance to the conference room is located off the parking lot on the south side of the building.

There is no charge to attend the workshop and no registration is required. For more information, contact the SBDC at sbdc@networksnorthwest.org or 231-922-3780.

The Michigan Small Business Development Center (MI-SBDC) enhances Michigan's economic well-being by providing counseling, training, research, and advocacy for new ventures, existing small businesses, and innovative technology companies. The Northwest Michigan Regional office is hosted by Networks Northwest and serves the ten county region including: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford counties. The Northwest Michigan SBDC's contributing partners are Baker College and Northwestern Michigan College. For more information, go to: sbdcnorthwest.org.

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Board Chair: **Gary W. Fedus**

Chief Executive Officer: **Elaine Wood**



NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at danboss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: networksnorthwest.org/media

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our web site, networksnorthwest.org

Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.