

'Acres' Agricultural Business Program Expanding Opportunities for Small & Mid-Sized Agriculture Businesses Nationwide

Acres, a national agricultural business accelerator program, launched 2026 cohort with: sponsor ecosystem; supplier readiness, certification, long-term growth.

KANSAS CITY, MO, UNITED STATES, June 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Expanding Opportunities for Small & Mid-Sized Agricultural Businesses Nationwide with "Acres: Growing the Future of Agriculture"

Acres, a national agricultural business accelerator program, recently launched its 2026 cohort with expanded sponsor ecosystem and continued focus on supplier readiness, certification and long-term growth.



Acres Program Benefits Include:

Business education and growth strategy development



Acres reflects the power of collaboration between corporations, business development organizations, and entrepreneurs working to strengthen the future of agriculture."

Phala Mire, COO of NMSDC

Access to GrowthWheel™ business planning tools

Certification support through National Minority Supplier Development Council

Mentorship and executive engagement

Connections to corporate sourcing and procurement leaders

Resources to improve long-term operational resilience and scalability

Acres: Growing the Future of Agriculture, a national business accelerator designed to strengthen small and

mid-sized agricultural enterprises, recently announced the launch of its 2026 cohort. Developed

in partnership with NMSDC (National Minority Supplier Development Council), the Acres program helps farmers, producers and agribusiness owners build the capabilities needed to compete for expanded market opportunities and long-term business success.

Since launching in 2022, Acres: Growing the Future of Agriculture has supported agricultural entrepreneurs across multiple sectors, including produce, livestock, commodity and specialty products. Cargill joined the initiative as the founding sponsor and continues to play a key role in advancing the program's mission of building stronger, more inclusive agricultural supply chains.

As the program has grown, additional sponsors have come alongside Cargill in a connected and intentional way, each bringing distinct industry insight, market perspective, and supplier development expertise. Sponsors including UNFI, Bayer, Papa John's, Compass Group Foundation, Hershey, and Suntory Global Spirits help expand the program's reach by creating visibility, mentorship, and practical growth pathways for participating businesses.

Together, this sponsor ecosystem reflects a shared commitment to agricultural innovation, business capacity building, and stronger procurement readiness for small and mid-sized agricultural enterprises.

The Acres Program is facilitated by Amber D. Smith, CEO and Farmer of Farms by Amber. Amber comes with years of experience in farming and building partnerships within the agricultural community and communities at large.

The 2026 cohort brings together producers from across the country for a 10-week learning experience focused on business growth, market readiness, operational capacity, and sustainability. This year's cohort include: Hunt Farms Holdings (Pembroke, NC), Versatili Tree Farms (Lakeworth, FL), Gulf American Shrimp (Port Saint, FL), Swanson Family Farm (Decatur, GA), Agape Organic Farms (Dansville, MI), P188 Farm 7 (Prentiss, MS), Brown Family Farms of Fayette County (Connerville, IN), McGruder Farms (Sawyer, AL), VertiGreens (St. Louis, MO), DAwn2Dusk Farm (Cambridge, MN), Africando Foods (Tiffin, IA), Texas Bypass Local Food Program (College Station, TX), Forestdale Farm (Flagstaff, AZ), Rich 4 Family Farm (Starkville, MS), Mama's Honey Haus (Owatonna, MN).

Participants receive practical guidance and resources designed to help them scale operations, strengthen competitiveness, and prepare new procurement opportunities.

"Acres reflects the power of collaboration between corporations, business development organizations, and entrepreneurs working to strengthen the future of agriculture," said Phala Mire, COO of NMSDC. "By investing in the growth of emerging agricultural suppliers, we are helping create a more resilient and innovative marketplace and national economy."

As demand grows diverse, agile, and sustainable suppliers, Acres continues to serve as a launchpad for agricultural businesses seeking to expand their reach, build stronger operations, and access new commercial opportunities.

For more information about Acres: Growing the Future of Agriculture, [visit:
https://nmsdc.org/programs/acres-growing-the-future-of-agriculture/](https://nmsdc.org/programs/acres-growing-the-future-of-agriculture/)

About Acres: Growing the Future of Agriculture

Acres: Growing the Future of Agriculture is a national accelerator program supporting small and mid-sized agricultural businesses through education, mentorship, certification support, and corporate connections. The program helps producers build capacity, increase readiness, and pursue long-term growth opportunities in the marketplace.

About NMSDC

Since 1972, NMSDC (National Minority Supplier Development Council) has worked to advance business opportunities for certified suppliers and connect corporations with high-performing small businesses to drive our national economic growth and prosperity.

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