



# Agricultural Utilization Research Institute

*Agricultural innovation from idea to reality*

**Applied Technology Services**

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## **AURI**

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# Table of Contents

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<b>TYPES OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE APPLIED TECHNOLOGY SERVICES PROGRAM</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ELIGIBILITY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PREREQUISITES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ATS PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EVALUATION OF PROJECTS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AURI FIELD OFFICES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>7</b>

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# Program Emphasis

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*AURI provides expertise and assistance to increase value, demand and market opportunities for agriculturally-based products.*

**T**he Applied Technology Services (ATS) program is intended to bring agriculturally-based products or processes to commercialization by using AURI technical personnel, labs and pilot plant services to:

- Provide entrepreneurial resources with respect to value-added start-ups
- Provide informational and technical assistance
- Deliver quality service to clients
- Provide high-quality process and product development
- Foster project development through collaboration

Technical and business development assistance is offered by AURI's various professional and technical staff in many forms including, but not limited to:

- Technical Feasibility: A project may focus on a new or improved process technology or on development of new value-added food or non-food agricultural products. The project may include an evaluation of the product's technical soundness and quality.
- AURI technologists/scientists are available to provide consulting and technical services with respect to product and process development; product evaluation and testing; and sourcing materials, equipment and services.
- AURI pilot plants and labs are available, on a confidential basis, to assist in product and process development, scale-up, nutritional assessment and production for market assessment.

## Types of Assistance Available Through the Applied Technology Services Program

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The focus of the ATS program is providing in-house lab facilities, pilot plants, and technical and business consulting. The following are examples of services that may be provided by AURI staff:

- Analytical testing of products or processes in development
- Product formulation
- Pilot production-line development
- Laboratory scale trials
- Engineering review
- Process analysis
- Process or business evaluation.

## Eligibility

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The ATS program is available to an applicant who can demonstrate the project will impact the use of an existing agricultural commodity or commodities, alternative crop or crops, or livestock. The ATS program is designed to add value to an agricultural commodity or commodities and to foster long-term economic growth, but is not for crop or livestock production. The project and its proposed benefit must impact Minnesota or a commodity produced in Minnesota.

## Prerequisites

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The process or product must use a Minnesota grown commodity and must be deemed as having commercial viability by the staff of AURI.

## ATS Project Development Process

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A client is allowed a maximum 10 hours of in-house AURI assistance prior to completion of an ATS Application. However, an application may be completed any time a need for AURI assistance is identified.

A client is encouraged to discuss the project with AURI staff. The staff will assist in determining an appropriate AURI program and in initiating the application process. Approval of a project involves the following steps:

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**STEP 1:** A client is required to sign an Initial Assistance Agreement (IAA), acknowledging acceptance of service by AURI staff and outlining pertinent information with regard to proposed AURI technical assistance.

**STEP 2:** The client and an AURI staff member work together to complete an ATS Application, in which the client and an AURI staff member may be asked to identify:

- Activities to be performed
- Expected outcomes
- Project objective(s)
- Approximate number of hours necessary to complete the project
- Anticipated date of completion.

The ATS Application is an informal document submitted to AURI's management team for consideration.

**STEP 3:** The AURI project approval team and/or the Executive Director, reviews the ATS Application. The management team decides to either accept the project and assign an appropriate project team, or deny the project and list project concerns.

**STEP 4:** Once a project is accepted, the project team and the client will work together in an effort to achieve the project's goals.

**STEP 5:** Upon completion of each project objective, the client will report pertinent progress toward project goals and outcomes.

## Confidentiality

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AURI will treat all mutually agreed upon information provided by an applicant as confidential. Information provided to or gathered by AURI related to funding programs shall be treated as private data. Such data includes:

- *Security information, trade secret information, or labor relations information disclosed to members of the Board of Directors or employees of AURI.*

Proprietary information provided to AURI should be limited, set apart from the text of the application, and clearly marked as CONFIDENTIAL. AURI will limit the dissemination of proprietary information to staff and project reviewers on a confidential basis. AURI does not assume liability for any inadvertent disclosures.

Once a client submits an ATS Application, AURI will not, consistent with relevant law, make public any information disclosing product, process, commodity, invention, technology, innovation, or service pursuant to the ATS program until a patent, copyright or trademark is

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applied for, or for two years after completion of the project, whichever occurs first. AURI does not assume liability for any inadvertent disclosure.

## Evaluation of Projects

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AURI assistance is intended to occur early in the existence of a product or process, during which feasibility is determined. A request for AURI assistance is analyzed with respect to a project's positive impact on Minnesota and its agriculture. A project is reviewed and evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- **Uniqueness:** How innovative or unique is the product or process?
- **Commodity Source:** Are Minnesota agricultural commodities utilized?
- **Utilization:** How much commodity or by-product will be utilized?
- **Producer Impact:** How many Minnesota agricultural producers may benefit from the proposed project?
- **Value Added:** How much value is added to the agricultural commodity through further processing?
- **Economic Impact:** How does the economy of Minnesota benefit from this project?
- **Cost Savings:** Does the new product/process result in cost savings to agricultural producers?

Answers to each of these questions will determine the extent to which AURI may assist a client. A project, which demonstrates significant positive impact, is likely to receive more assistance than one showing minimal impact. Some projects may be eligible for technical assistance only, while others may be eligible for financial and technical assistance.

## AURI Offices

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## Additional Information

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Additional information regarding AURI's programs and services, as well as necessary forms and guidelines, may be obtained by contacting one of the offices listed above or by accessing AURI's website at *[auri.org](http://auri.org)*.