

Monsanto program offers community support grants

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Drought disaster areas can receive additional funding

Farmers across the country work hard to build their businesses that help fuel their rural communities. For the third consecutive year, America's Farmers Grow Communities, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund, will give farmers the opportunity to win a \$2,500 donation for their favorite local nonprofit organization.

With more than 90% of the U.S. corn and soy production currently impacted by the drought, a farmer's ability to invest in his or her community is affected. To help, the Monsanto Fund will provide additional financial support.

Winning farmers from counties that have been declared natural disaster areas by the USDA will have an opportunity to direct an additional \$2,500 donation to a local non-profit to address community needs that have surfaced due to the drought.

To date, more than 660 counties have been declared disasters areas within the 1,271 eligible Grow Communities counties.

Since the inception of America's Farmers Grow Communities, thousands of farmers have nominated their favorite local nonprofit groups, such as FFA chapters, schools, fire departments, local food pantries or other civic groups. Several Gothenburg groups have been recipients.

This year, rural community members can suggest an idea or initiative that needs funding in their local community. Eligible farmers may review the ideas and consider them in their application. Community members who wish to plant an idea and encourage farmers to support their cause can do so at www.growcommunities.com.

Now through November 30, 2012, eligible farmers can apply online, and rural community members can submit their ideas at www.growcommunities.com or by calling 1-877-267-3332.

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The Monsanto Fund will select one winner at random from each of the eligible counties and announce winning farmers and recipient nonprofits in January 2013.

Eligible counties in Nebraska include Dawson, Custer, Lincoln and Frontier among others.

America's Farmers Grow Communities is sponsored by the Monsanto Fund to highlight the important contributions farmers make everyday to our society and to help them positively impact their communities. This program is part of the Monsanto Fund's overall effort to support rural America.

Another program that is part of this effort is America's Farmers Grow Rural Education, giving farmers the opportunity to nominate their local public school district to apply for a grant up to \$25,000. Winners of the first annual Grow Rural Education program will be announced on Aug. 28.