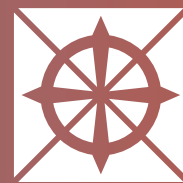


# VALUE ADDED PRODUCER GRANT SUCCESS



SOUTHERN  
EXTENSION  
RISK  
MANAGEMENT  
EDUCATION

## CRYSTAL PRAIRIE, LLC | CHICKASHA, OK

Beef is one of the hottest commodities across the diverse food landscape in America and accounts for millions of meals daily. However, there are many concerns today about the health disadvantages associated with purebred beef. The Gearhart family of Crystal Prairie L.L.C. are among today's entrepreneurs in the beef production industry. The Gearhart's make their living by raising beefalo, a lean red meat alternative to beef cattle. USDA Certified Grass Fed Beefalo is a crossbreed between bison and cows, and are more advantageous in health categories such as calories, cholesterol, total fat, and protein.

Located in the heart of Oklahoma, Crystal Prairie aims to raise quality grass-fed beefalo to be sold at markets and directly into homes all over America. The beefalo of Crystal Prairie offer lean red meat in several different cuts including roasts, steaks, ribs, and ground beef. The Gearhart's currently facilitate the only farm in the state of Oklahoma that offers USDA Certified Grass Fed Beefalo. The combination of a friendly environment and humane farming practices allow Crystal Prairie to produce a healthy choice for all Americans that enjoy beef products but fear the health risks of purebred beef.

In 2016, Crystal Prairie was awarded a \$39,000 Value Added Producer Grant to increase their sale of grass-fed beefalo through direct mail and targeted advertising practices. The grant enabled the farm to expand its sales methods.

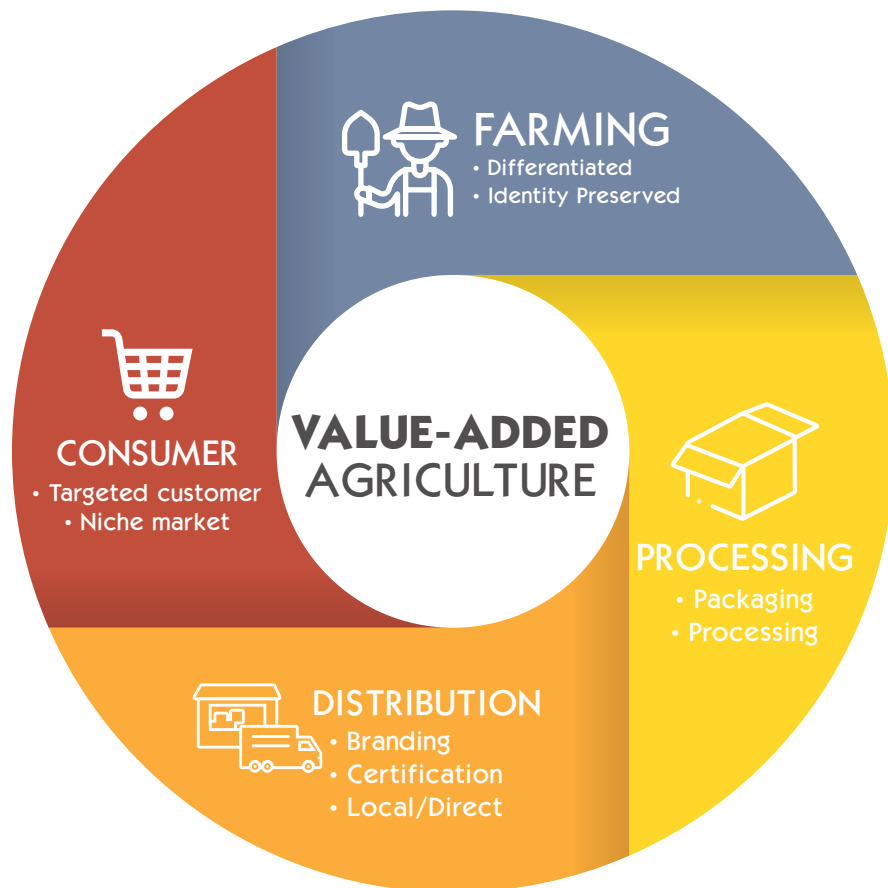


Photo courtesy of Crystal Prairie, LLC.

***“We’ve had a very positive experience with the grant. As a private independent farm, the grant provides support and the ability to make contacts that would be difficult to make otherwise.” – Tamara Gearhart***

The Southern Risk Management Education Center ([SRMEC](#)) seeks to empower producers to manage marketing and price risks which includes promoting the Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. The VAPG program helps farmers and ranchers understand, develop and implement diversification strategies to enhance their business' products. In partnership with Agricultural Marketing Resource Center ([AgMRC](#)), SRMEC promotes successful value added ventures across the Southern region. To learn more about farmer and rancher VAPG successful stories visit <https://srmec.uaex.edu/News/vapg-success-stories.aspx>.

# Understanding “Value-Added”



The USDA defines “value-added” as any agricultural commodity or product whose value has been increased by:

- Undergoing a change in physical state (e.g., turning fruit into jam);
- Being produced, marketed, or segregated for its special character or identity (e.g., GMO-free, organic, grass-fed);
- Transforming natural resources into energy on the farmstead (e.g., biodiesel);
- Being aggregated and marketed as a locally-produced food (e.g., as part of a Buy Local campaign, state-produced branding or labeling effort); or
- Linking farmers with local and regional supply networks in which they are equal partners (e.g., farm to school or other mid-tier value chains)

Visit [srmec.uaex.edu/News/vapg-success-stories.aspx](https://srmec.uaex.edu/News/vapg-success-stories.aspx) to read value-added success stories!