

MARYLAND FARMS AND FAMILIES PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS, 2024

AUTHORITY: Md. Code Ann. Agric. Art., §§10-2001 et seq.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) is seeking requests for grant proposals (RFGP) from qualifying non-profit organizations, including nonprofit farmers' markets and local nonprofit organizations partnering with one or more participating local farmers' markets and farm stands for projects to be funded under the Maryland Farms and Families Program (the Program). The Program's purpose is to double the purchasing power of food-insecure residents of Maryland with limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables and to increase revenue for farmers through redemption of federal nutrition benefits at Maryland farmers' markets and farm stands.

1. Grant Proposal: A grant proposal:

- (1) Shall include a plan for State Fiscal Year 2025 (through June 30, 2025) to match purchases of Maryland citizens at participating farmers' markets throughout the State made with checks from the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits.
- (2) Shall indicate the percentage of the granted amount that will be distributed to participating Maryland farmers markets. (Distribution of more than 70 percent of the grant in the form of incentives is encouraged and will be considered in ranking of applications.)
- (3) Shall be no more than 10 pages (8 ½ by 11, 11 point type, double spaced) in length with supporting documentation, and shall include a detailed Scope of Work.

2. Limitation on the use of Grant funds:

The Grantee (successful applicant) shall distribute at least 60 percent of the granted amount directly to participating Maryland farmers' markets and farm stands for matching dollars for purchases made with FMNP, SNAP and WIC benefits. No more than 40 percent of the funds may be used for program development, promotion and outreach, farmers' market training and capacity building, technical assistance, program data collection, evaluation and administration.

3. Qualifications — Eligible Applicants:

To qualify to receive a grant under this program, the nonprofit organization must demonstrate to MDA's satisfaction that it has a demonstrated record of: (a) Designing and implementing successful healthy food incentive programs that connect federal food benefit recipients with local farmers; (b) Implementing funds distribution and maintaining reporting processes; (c) Providing training and technical assistance to farmers' markets; and (d) Conducting community outreach and data collection, including customer surveys. Additionally, in awarding a grant, MDA may also consider whether the nonprofit organization has a demonstrated record of providing services in food deserts. In its proposal, the applicant must furnish proof that it is a qualifying organization.

4. Reporting Requirements:

The Grantee (successful applicant) shall submit a report to MDA of: (a) The names and locations of farmers' markets and farm stands that received funds under this program; (b) The dollar amount

of funds awarded to each; (c) The dollar amount of FMNP, SNAP and WIC benefits used at each market participating as well as any unspent matching funds at each market. Additionally, the report shall include the number of FMNP, SNAP and WIC transactions carried out at participating farmers markets and an assessment of the program's effectiveness in increasing consumption of fresh, local fruits and vegetables by FMNP, SNAP and WIC families as determined by customer surveys.

5. RFGP Posting Date: October 4, 2024

6. Application Deadline: No later than 5:00PM EST, October 11, 2024.

7. Estimated Total Program Funding Available for this funding cycle: ~\$300,000

8. Award Ceiling: \$300,000

9. Award Floor: \$100,000

10. Opportunity category: Competitive Grants

11. Other Funds/Cost Share or Matching Requirements: None -- but encouraged. If the applicant is providing matching funds, it should be stated in the proposal, including the amount of the match.

12. Selection Criteria: Eligible applications that are received prior to the deadline will be evaluated on a competitive basis. MDA will review, rank, and make funding recommendations based upon the above criteria, including the criteria specified in Md. Code Ann. Agric. §§10-2001 et seq.

13. Budget: The applicant shall include a budget with its proposal setting forth how it will distribute/use the grant.

14. Timeline

Date of Posting of RFP: 10/4/2024

Deadline for Application Submission: 10/11/2024 5:00PM EST

Submit proposals by mail to: Mark Powell, Chief of Agriculture and Seafood Marketing, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Agriculture, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401. Also, submit electronically to Mark.Powell@maryland.gov. Call 410-841-5775 with questions.