



**Division of Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance**

**Agricultural Food Safety  
Improvement Program (AFSIP)  
Fiscal Year 2023  
(July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023)**

Request for Response (RFR): RFR File: **AGR-AFSIP-FY23**

**For the implementation of practices that help reduce or prevent  
food safety risks while increasing market access for produce and aquaculture operations**

**Application Deadline: Friday, September 30, 2022, by 4 P.M.**

(Refer to application submission instructions on page 9)

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Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources  
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## GRANT OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

<p><b>Executive Office of Energy &amp; Environmental Affairs</b>  <b>Bethany A. Card, Secretary</b>  <b>Grant Announcement</b>  <b>RFR ID: RFR-AFSIP-FY23</b>  <b>Dated: August 2, 2022</b>  <b>Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (AFSIP)</b></p>	
<b>Proposals Sought For:</b>	The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (“Department” or “MDAR”) seeks Applicants to implement eligible practices that help prevent or reduce food safety risks, promote produce farms’ transition to compliance with the United States Food & Drug Administration (“FDA”) Food Safety Modernization Act (“FSMA”), and meet market demands for on-farm food safety.
<b>Overview &amp; Goals:</b>	To improve on-farm food safety by minimizing microbial hazards while increasing competitive market access by meeting buyer demands for demonstrated practices that work towards protecting public health in the Commonwealth.
<b>Eligible Projects:</b>	Practices that help prevent or reduce on-farm food safety risks for produce or aquaculture operations (See further detail on eligible projects in Section 3).
<b>Eligible Applicants:</b>	Produce operations that grow, harvest, pack, or hold produce and aquaculture operations that are engaged in production agriculture for commercial purposes (See further detail on eligible Applicants in Section 1). The property must be in active agricultural use and managed as a commercial enterprise by the Applicant for at least the three (3) years previous to the date of application.
<b>Application Deadline:</b>	Received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2022. (See further detail on deadlines and grant program calendar in Section 8).
<b>Funding Availability:</b>	Maximum funding per Applicant is 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000. (See further detail on Funding Availability in Section 4).
<b>Match Requirement:</b>	Minimum of 20% of total project costs including materials and contracted labor. (See further detail on the Match Requirement in Section 4D).
<b>Duration of Contract:</b>	Contract end date is June 30, 2023 with no extensions. (See further detail on anticipated duration of contracts in section 5C).
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Laura Maul – (617) 626-1739 <a href="mailto:Laura.Maul@mass.gov">Laura.Maul@mass.gov</a> 30 Riverside Drive, Suite 202 Lakeville, MA 02347

# 1. APPLICANTS

## 1A. Eligible Applicants

Applicant must own the property upon which the project will be implemented or have a written lease agreement with the owner as specified in Section 1C. The property must be in active agricultural use and managed as a commercial enterprise by the Applicant for at least the three (3) previous years to the date of application.



Operations that grow, harvest, pack, or hold produce as defined by 21 C.F.R. Part 112, that are principally and substantially engaged in the business of production agriculture or farming for commercial purposes as defined under M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A.

Applicants that grow Covered Produce under the Produce Safety Rule (“PSR”) with an average annual value of produce sold over the previous three (3) year period of \$25,000 or more will receive additional points in the review (see definitions in Section 7E).



Aquaculture farmers as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A, currently licensed, who raise a marine or aquatic species intended for human food.

## 1B. Size of Operation

There is no minimum acreage requirement. Projects that provide the most state benefits per grant dollar are more likely to receive funding.

## 1C. Leased Property

If the proposed project is on a property not owned by the Applicant, a lease agreement must demonstrate the Applicant’s long-term, legal right to use the property. This typically means a lease agreement for not less than three (3) years. The proposed project must also be allowed under the terms of the lease agreement. The Department may request a copy of the lease agreement as part of its review.

## 1D. Previously Funded Applicants

Proposals from individuals/operations that have been previously funded by the Department under the Ag Food Safety Improvement Program (“AFSIP”) will be considered a lower priority for funding but are still eligible for consideration under the Program.

## 1E. Applicants with an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (“APR”)

Before applying to the Program, Agricultural Preservation Restriction (“APR”) landowners should consult with the Department’s APR Program (or holder of the APR) to determine if there are any requirements that apply to the proposed project under the terms of their APR. APR applicants must obtain, or be in the advanced stages of receiving, all approvals required under their APR and must be in compliance with the terms of the APR or resolve any outstanding compliance or legal issues with MDAR prior to submitting their proposal. Failure to do so will render proposals ineligible. The APR Program is not able to provide technical assistance with the development or drafting of any proposal. To find your APR contact, please call or email Jill Ward at [jill.ward@mass.gov](mailto:jill.ward@mass.gov) or (413) 726-2011.

## 1F. Produce Applicants in the Commonwealth Quality Program (“CQP”)

Produce Applicants are not required to be a participant in the Commonwealth Quality Program (“CQP”). However, applicants that have been audited and are active participants in the CQP will receive additional points in the review. Applicants should provide a copy of their CQP certificate with their response.

## 1G. Food Safety Modernization Act – Produce Safety Rule

Produce Applicants are not required to be covered under the Food Safety Modernization Act (“FSMA”) PSR (“PSR”) (see definitions in Section 7E). Applicants that are covered under FSMA and are addressing a concern identified in their inspection will receive additional points in the review.

## 1H. Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) – Grower Training Course

The Produce Safety Alliance (“PSA”) Grower Training Course satisfies the FSMA PSR requirement outlined in 21 C.F.R. § 112.22(c) that requires ‘*At least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed food safety training at least equivalent to that received under standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration.*’ Produce Applicants are not required to have attended this training for funding, but Applicants that have attended the training and provide a copy of their certificate will receive additional points in the review. For more information about upcoming courses, please go to: [ag.umass.edu/vegetable/upcoming-events](http://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/upcoming-events).

## 2. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Priority projects are listed below. Projects that still meet AFSIP goals but are not listed below **will** be considered in the review process.

Sector	Priority Projects – Tier I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water systems, delivery, treatment devices, processing and washing equipment</li> <li>• Portable restrooms and/or hand washing sinks (mobile or stationary)</li> <li>• Harvest &amp; storage equipment (bins, totes, bin storage, racks)</li> <li>• Packing shed walls, ceilings, and light fixtures</li> <li>• Drainage systems for coolers and washing &amp; packing areas</li> <li>• Wildlife fencing</li> <li>• Pest deterrent</li> <li>• Refrigeration/Cooling Equipment</li> <li>• Pesticide storage</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Funding Per Applicant \$50,000.00</b>	
Sector	Priority Projects – Tier II
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New construction, retrofitting, or expansion of a washing &amp; packing facility</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Funding Per Applicant \$200,000.00</b>	

Sector	Priority Projects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice machines</li> <li>• Insulated containers</li> <li>• Walk-in refrigeration units</li> <li>• Processing equipment such as tumblers/graders to improve process efficiency</li> <li>• Facility upgrades necessary to obtain a Massachusetts Department of Public Health or Division of Marine Fisheries Wholesale Dealer Permit</li> <li>• Refrigerated vehicle</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maximum Funding Per Applicant \$50,000.00</b></p>	

### Ineligible Projects

- Projects that request funding for for feasibility studies, audits, composting toilets, septic systems for bathrooms, sewer connections for bathrooms, single use containers, or non-refrigerated vehicles.
- Projects requesting funding for salaries, trainings, and educational materials relating to agricultural farm food safety practices.
- Non-labor costs (e.g., management) and fees associated with project oversight and administration costs are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Projects requesting funding for **used** equipment and/or materials.
- Labor costs contributed by the operation towards the proposed project is not eligible for reimbursement.
- All projects involving marijuana and hemp shall not be eligible for funding from the Department through this RFR.
- Projects requesting funding for work that has already been started or projects that have been completed for which the Applicant seeks reimbursement.

## 3. PROPOSALS

### 3A. Eligible Proposals

Proposals must meet the minimum requirements listed below in order to be considered for funding.

- Food safety projects that support produce operations and activities defined by 21 C.F.R. Part 112 and M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A, unless otherwise ineligible under Section 2B of this RFR.
- Food safety projects that support aquaculture operations and activities defined by 322 CMR 16.00, 105 CMR 500.020, and M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A, unless otherwise ineligible under Section 2B of this RFR.

### 3B. Ineligible Proposals

- Proposals from Applicants whose operation is out of compliance with any federal, state, or local laws or regulations, including such laws and regulations that relate to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Proposals from Applicants who are not aquaculture operations, or produce operations engaged in growing, harvesting, packing, or holding produce.
- Proposal from Applicants who are not engaged in production agriculture.

### 3C. Locator Maps

Proposals should include a map or aerial photo with the property boundaries drawn and the exact location of the project described in the application. Maps are available online or can be prepared by your USDA-NRCS field office. Maps and photos provided by USDA-NRCS are a free service provided to farmers. Responders should plan on contacting NRCS as soon as possible as it may take several weeks before you receive any map or photo. If you already have an up-to-date NRCS Farm Conservation Plan, you may submit copies of maps and aerial photos from the plan.

## 4. FUNDING AVAILABILITY, BUDGETING GUIDELINES, & ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

### 4A. Maximum Funding

- Each Applicant must submit a proposal and budget requesting not more than \$50,000 in AFSIP grant funding. If grant funding is available, the Department may increase the maximum threshold at its discretion.
- Produce operations may request up to \$200,000 in grant funding specifically for the new construction, retrofitting, or expansion of a commercial washing and packing facility.
- Awards are limited to one (1) per agricultural operation using a unique tax identification number per round of funding.
- The Department reserves the right to offer an award amount different than the amount requested.

### 4B. Appropriation

All contracts shall be subject to available funding, whether through the appropriation and authorization of sufficient funds or the receipt of sufficient revenues. If available funding ceases for any reason, a contract shall be deemed under suspension and contract performance must halt. A contractor will not be entitled to compensation for any performance provided during the period of contract suspension. The Department may lift the suspension if available funding is received. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, the Department may terminate the contract.

### 4C. Budget Guidelines

- Proposals must include an adequate budget for the proposed project. Preliminary budgets are acceptable for the evaluation process, but applicants must receive quotes from vendors or contractors before a contract will be given. Applicants who provide quotes from a vendor or contractor with their response will receive additional points in the review.
- As this is a reimbursement program, applicants who demonstrate having the balance of funding needed to implement the proposed project by providing bank credit reference letters, line of credit reference letters, demonstration of other grant funds for the project, or an executed loan will receive additional points in the review.

### 4D. Match

Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of 20% of the total costs of the project.

## 4E. Environmental Justice Policy

For the purposes of this RFR, “Environmental Justice” is defined as the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy, climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and burdens. Environmental Justice is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment regardless of race, color, national origin, income or English language proficiency.

“Environmental Justice Population” is defined by the Environmental Justice Policy, issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in 2017, as neighborhoods where one or more of the following criteria are met:

- Annual median household income that is equal to or less than 65 percent of the statewide median
- 25% of its population is minority; or
- 25% or more of the residents have English Isolation

## 5. PROJECT TERMS

### 5A. Terms

If awarded, all projects will be required to execute and abide by the standard Commonwealth of Massachusetts Terms and Conditions. In addition, all final contracts are subject to successful negotiation of a Final Scope of Services. No project may commence until a contract has been executed by all parties.

### 5B. Review Process

The Department cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications. In order to maintain integrity of the competitive grant process, the Department is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with any information regarding specific applications during the solicitation process.

There will be two steps of review following the grant application period.

**Step I:** An initial review to evaluate eligibility and completeness to determine if all required information is provided. The application will then be reviewed and a point score will be given based on the criteria listed in Evaluation Criteria, Section 7D.

**Step II:** All projects which are favorably reviewed in Phase I may require a field visit prior to final award determinations being made. A favorable initial evaluation and field visit DOES NOT guarantee funding for a proposed project. The purposes of the field visit are as follows:

- Verify that the operation is engaged in commercial agriculture and assess the proposal request;
- Determine the appropriateness of the practice proposed for the farm;
- Confirm the ability to implement and maintain the practice;
- To explore other items deemed necessary, and
- Develop a basis for future ‘before and after’ comparisons.
- Department staff may modify the scope of the proposed project to more effectively achieve program goals.

Additionally, all projects must meet applicable federal, state, and local public health orders, regulations, ordinances, or other guidance issued related to COVID-19 in effect at the time of the Project.

## 5C. Duration of Contracts

All projects must be completed by June 30, 2023 with no options for extensions.

## 6. DELIVERABLES, OWNERSHIP, AND CREDIT DUE

### 6A. Installation Standards & Permits

- The funded contractual activity will be evaluated prior to full reimbursement. Work will be evaluated for satisfactory completion and compliance with standards. Spot inspections may be conducted at the Department's discretion on all work for the life of the project. Only work that satisfies the terms and conditions for this RFR, contract, and any other instructions by the Department shall be eligible for reimbursement.
- Proposals which are favorably reviewed and awarded a contract must apply for and receive all required permits, licenses, and any other federal, state, or local approvals necessary for the project prior to any reimbursement from the Department.

### 6B. Reporting

- There are no written reporting requirements; however, the Department will periodically check on the progress of awarded projects to ensure they will meet completion deadlines.

### 6C. Invoicing

- Disbursement of funds under this RFR will be done on a reimbursement basis and will require that acceptable documentation be submitted to the Department prior to any payment. **Only expenses incurred during the period of the contract are eligible for reimbursement. Any incurred project costs that occur prior to an executed contract are NOT eligible for reimbursement from the Department.**
- Satisfactory documentation for eligible costs and payments associated with approved projects must be submitted to the Department and approved prior to reimbursement. Applicant must clearly provide invoices for items purchased and labor hired, as well as proof of payment in the form of cancelled checks, credit card receipts, and/or bank checks.

## 7. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

### 7A. Application Submission Instructions

A proposal form is attached and **must** be completed in its entirety. The application **must** be submitted by one of the methods listed below to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources by the response date deadline. **If sending a hard copy, print only single sided and please do not staple or put the application in a binder.**

- **Email to: [MDARGrants@mass.gov](mailto:MDARGrants@mass.gov)**
- Hard Copy sent by Mail or Hand Delivered to:

**Laura J. Maul  
Program Coordinator  
Department of Agricultural Resources  
30 Riverside Drive, Suite 202  
Lakeville, MA 02347**

Applications must be received by the Department by 4:00 PM on Friday, September 30, 2022.

This RFR allows for the submission of hard copy or email proposals. All Bidders are advised to allow adequate time for submission of their proposal by considering potential mail or shipping company delays online impediments like Internet traffic, internet connection speed, file size, and file volume.

MDAR is not responsible for delays encountered by Bidders or their agents, mail or package delivery issues, or for a Bidder's local hardware failures, such as computers or related networks, associated with bid compilation or submission. Bids submitted via email will be deemed received by the time indicated by MDAR's OUTLOOK system clock which is considered the official time of record and which may be different than the time sent by the Bidder.

All email submissions will receive an email confirmation of submission.

### Special Note:

*All State agencies are subject to 815 CMR 2.00, State Grants, Federal Grants Awards, Federal Sub-grants and Subsidies as well as the [Office of the Comptroller's policy on State Grants, Federal Sub-Grants, and Subsidies](#). Departments must use COMMBUYS to publicly post the availability of a discretionary Grant or Grant Program and publish the results of the grantee selections. Use of COMMBUYS to receive electronic quotes for grant opportunities is optional; however, state agencies are encouraged to require grantees to register and submit quotes (applications) through COMMBUYS, which provides a central repository for receipt of electronic applications. As more grantees use COMMBUYS to identify grant opportunities, they will have a single location to apply for grants from multiple state agencies, resulting in efficiencies for both the grantees and the state agencies.*

- For more information regarding the benefits of registering in COMMBUYS, you may go to [COMMBUYS](#) support pages.

## 7B. Additional Application Documentation

Where applicable, an Applicant should include the following additional documentation:

- Produce Applicants that have are active CQP participants should include a copy of their certificate (see Section 1F).
- Produce Applicants that have completed a PSA grower training course should include a copy of their certificate (see Section 1H).
- Aquaculture applicants should provide a copy of their HACCP certification where available.
- Applicants should provide a map of their farm property boundaries (see Section 2C).
- Applicants should provide quotes from vendors and/or contractors when available (see Section 4C).
- Applicants should include balance of funding documents. This can be bank credit reference letters, a line of credit reference letter, demonstration of other grant funds for the project, or an executed loan (see Section 4C).

## 7C. Additional Contract Documentation

If selected, the Respondent will be required to submit the following forms to complete the contract:

- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, filled out and signed by the Respondent
- Scope and Budget Form
- Commonwealth Terms and Conditions filled out by and signed by the Respondent (if not already on file)
- Commonwealth W-9 tax information form filled out and signed by the Respondent (if not already on file)
- Completed Contractor Authorized Signature Verification Form
- Completed Electronic Funds Transfer Form

These forms do not need to be completed as part of the response. Assistance to complete these forms will be provided to Respondents selected to participate in the Program. These forms are available for review at [www.mass.gov/osd](http://www.mass.gov/osd) or by request.

## 7D. Evaluation Criteria

### All Applicants:

- Project application is in compliance with the submission requirements and format presentation for this RFR.
- Project is for a produce or aquaculture operation engaged in commercial agriculture with direct farming practices and primary source of income is derived from their operation.
- Team make-up and past experience demonstrate the capacity and ability to administer projects of the scope and value described by the responsive proposal to this RFR.
- Adequate identification of any on-going operation & maintenance and/or periodic replacement needs and how they will be accomplished to ensure project longevity.
- Project has adequate supporting documentation in the form of quotes and maps.
- Applicant has adequately identified any contingencies and permit needs as well as provided an adequate implementation schedule to show how the project will be completed by the June 30, 2023 deadline.
- Applicant has demonstrated adequate project economics including demonstrating having the balance of funding needed to implement the proposed project. This can be by bank credit reference letters, line of credit reference letter, demonstration of other grant funds for the project, or an executed loan.
- Project demonstrates an increase to competitive market access by meeting buyer demands.
- Project directly addresses a food safety concern and demonstrates an immediate potential to minimize the risk of contamination by the implementation of the proposed project.

### Produce Applicants:

- Applicants that grow Covered Produce (see definitions in Section 7E) under the PSR with an average annual value of produce sold over the previous three (3) year period of \$25,000.
- Project is to upgrade a practice that directly contacts fresh produce.
- Applicant has been audited/inspected under the CQP. Include copy of active certificate.
- Project will directly address fixing a concern identified by Produce Safety Staff during an inspection of the applicant's premises.
- Operation demonstrates that an active supervisor or responsible party has completed a PSA grower training course. Include copy of certificate.

### Aquaculture Applicants:

- Applicant is in compliance as a licensed and permitted aquaculture farm in Massachusetts.
- Project will improve food safety and/or market competitiveness by facilitating rapid temperature reduction, reducing time/temperature exposure, or improving traceability by shortening distribution chain.
- Applicants who have been certified in Seafood Hazard Analysis/Critical Control Point (HACCP) through an AFDO authorized training program will be considered more favorably. Include a copy of the certificate.

All proposals being considered for funding may require a site visit. Information gathered during the site visit can be used as additional evaluation criteria for funding. The Department reserves the right to fund only proposals that received an initial favorable review and a satisfactory site visit verifying proposal details.

## 7E. Definitions

### **Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA):**

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was passed in 2011 in response to dramatic changes in the global food system and the understanding of foodborne illness and their consequences, including the realization that preventable foodborne illness is both a significant public health problem and a threat to the economic well-being of the food system. FDA finalized seven major rules to implement FSMA, recognizing that ensuring the safety of the food supply is a shared responsibility among many different points in the global supply chain for both human and animal food. The FSMA rules are designed to make clear the specific actions that must be taken at each of these points to prevent contamination.

### **Produce Safety Rule (PSR):**

The PSR is one of seven food safety regulations that that FDA has finalized to implement FSMA. The PSR sets a series of standards for the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of produce grown for human consumption, 21 C.F.R. Part 112 (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/11/27/2015-28159/standards-for-the-growing-harvesting-packing-and-holding-of-produce-for-human-consumption>).

### **Covered Produce:**

Covered produce includes any raw fruit or vegetable commonly consumed raw, including, but not limited to, the following: fruits and vegetables such as almonds, apples, apricots, apriums, artichokes-globetype, Asian pears, avocados, babacos, bananas, Belgian endive, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, brazil nuts, broad beans, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, burdock, cabbages, Chinese cabbages (bok choy, mustard, Napa), cantaloupes, carambolas, carrots, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, chayote fruit, cherries (sweet), chestnuts, chicory (roots and tops), citrus (such as clementine, grapefruits, lemons, limes, mandarin, oranges, tangerines, tangors, and unqi fruit), cowpea beans, cress-garden, cucumbers, curly endive, currants, dandelion leaves, fennel-Florence, garlic, genip, gooseberries, grapes, green beans, guavas, herbs (such as basil, chives, cilantro, oregano and parsley), honeydew, huckleberries, kale, kiwifruit, kohlrabi, kumquats, leek, lettuce, lychees, macadamia nuts, mangos, other melons (such as canary, Crenshaw and Persian), mulberries, mushrooms, mustard greens, nectarines, onions, papayas, parsnips, passion fruit, peaches, pears, peas, peas-pigeon, peppers (such as bell and hot), pine nuts, pineapples, plantains, plums, plumcots, quince, radishes, raspberries, rhubarb, rutabagas, scallions, shallots, snow peas, soursoy, spinach, sprouts (such as alfalfa and mung bean), strawberries, summer squash (such as patty pan, yellow and zucchini), sweetsop, Swiss chard, taro, tomatoes, turmeric, turnips (roots and tops), walnuts, watercress, watermelons, and yams (21 C.F.R. § 112.1(b)(1)). \*This list a non-exhaustive list and does not include all covered produce.

### **Rarely Consumed Raw:**

The following produce is considered “rarely consumed raw” and is not covered by the Produce Safety Rule: asparagus, beans (black, great Northern, kidney, lima, navy, pinto), beets (garden – roots and tops), beets (sugar), cashews, cherries (sour), chickpeas, cocoa beans, coffee beans, collards, corn (sweet), cranberries, dates, dill (seeds and weed), eggplants, figs, ginger, hazelnuts, horseradish, lentils, okra, peanuts, pecans, peppermint, potatoes, pumpkins, squash (winter), sweet potatoes, and water chestnuts (21 C.F.R. § 112.2(a)(1)). \*This list is an exhaustive list – if your commodity is not listed, it is likely to be considered ‘covered produce’.

## 8. DEADLINES & PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

<b>Release of RFR</b>	<b>August 2, 2022</b>
<b>Application Due Date</b>	<b>Friday, September 30, 2022, by 4 P.M.</b>
<b>Estimated Award Date</b>	November, 2022
<b>Estimated Contract Start Date</b>	Notwithstanding any verbal representations by the parties, or an earlier start date listed in the Standard Contract Form, and only after an award is issued and a final scope of services has been negotiated, the effective start date of a contract shall be the latest of the following dates: the date the Standard Contract Form has been executed by an authorized signatory of the contractor and the procuring department; the date of secretariat or other approval(s) required by law or regulation; or a later date specified in the Standard Contract Form.

## 9. MISCELLANEOUS

<b>Type of Procurement</b>	Grant
<b>Use of This Procurement by Single or Multiple Departments</b>	This RFR is a single department procurement. All contracts awarded under this RFR will be utilized by the Department.
<b>Request for Single or Multiple Contractors</b>	Multiple
<b>RFR Distribution Method</b>	<p>This RFR has been distributed by the Department's Farm and Market Newsletter, posted to the program's website at <a href="http://www.mass.gov/agr">www.mass.gov/agr</a>, and by a distribution list of requested applicants.</p> <p>This RFR has been distributed electronically via COMMBUYS. It is the responsibility of every Applicant to check COMMBUYS for any addenda or modifications to an RFR to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to Applicants who fail to check for amended RFRs and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Potential Respondents are advised to check the "last change" field on the summary page of RFRs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure they have the most recent RFR files.</p> <p>Respondents may not alter RFR language or any RFR component files. Those submitting a proposal must respond in accordance to the RFR directions and complete only those sections that prompt a Respondent for a response. Modifications to the body of this RFR, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this RFR are prohibited. Any unauthorized alterations will disqualify response.</p>
<b>List of Attachments</b>	<p>A. Application Form</p> <p>B. RFR Required Specifications</p>

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT RESPONSE FORM (FY 2023)

## 1. Agricultural Operation Information

Applicant Name:

Operation Name:

Legal Structure:  Sole Proprietor  Corporation  Partnership  LLC  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

City, State, Zip:

County:

Home Phone:  Mobile Phone:

E-Mail:  Website:

Site Address is same as above

Site Address

Site City, State, Zip

I am a farmer as identified in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 128, Sec. 1A:  Yes  No

Historically Underserved Farmer  Limited Resource Farmer  Beginning Farmer  Socially Disadvantaged Farmer  Veteran Farmer

How many years have you been farming on this property?

Is this property leased?  Yes  No Do you have the lease in writing?  Yes  No

What year does the lease end?

Who is the owner of the property?

## 2. Agricultural Operation Details: Complete the appropriate section



### Produce Operations

Please check all commodities your operation grows:

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apples          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet cherries   | <input type="checkbox"/> Melon          | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspberries   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apricots        | <input type="checkbox"/> Chestnuts        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mulberries     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rhubarb       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apriums         | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicory          | <input type="checkbox"/> Microgreens    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rosemary      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artichoke       | <input type="checkbox"/> Chives           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mung beans     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rutabaga      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basil           | <input type="checkbox"/> Cilantro         | <input type="checkbox"/> Mushroom       | <input type="checkbox"/> Turnips       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumber         | <input type="checkbox"/> Mustard greens | <input type="checkbox"/> Sage          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries     | <input type="checkbox"/> Berry currant    | <input type="checkbox"/> Nectarine      | <input type="checkbox"/> Scallions     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bok Choy        | <input type="checkbox"/> Endive           | <input type="checkbox"/> Onions         | <input type="checkbox"/> Shallot       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boysenberries   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dandelion        | <input type="checkbox"/> Oregano        | <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fava Beans      | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring salad mix | <input type="checkbox"/> Parsley        | <input type="checkbox"/> Sprouts       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli        | <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic           | <input type="checkbox"/> Parsnips       | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brussel Sprouts | <input type="checkbox"/> Gooseberries     | <input type="checkbox"/> Peas/snow peas | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer squash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burdock         | <input type="checkbox"/> Grapes           | <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches        | <input type="checkbox"/> Swiss chard   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese Cabbage | <input type="checkbox"/> Green beans      | <input type="checkbox"/> Pears          | <input type="checkbox"/> Thyme         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbages        | <input type="checkbox"/> Honeydew         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet peppers  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cantaloupes     | <input type="checkbox"/> Huckleberries    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot peppers    | <input type="checkbox"/> Turnip greens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots         | <input type="checkbox"/> Kale             | <input type="checkbox"/> Plums          | <input type="checkbox"/> Walnuts       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower     | <input type="checkbox"/> Leek             | <input type="checkbox"/> Quince         | <input type="checkbox"/> Watercress    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celeriac        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce          | <input type="checkbox"/> Radicchio      | <input type="checkbox"/> Watermelon    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celery          | <input type="checkbox"/> Marjoram         | <input type="checkbox"/> Radish         |  |

**Acres:** Owned  Leased  In Production

**Activity Type(s):**  Growing  Harvesting  Packing  Holding  Processing

**Irrigation type:**  Overhead  Drip  N/A

**Irrigation water source:**  Surface  Well  Municipal  N/A

**Post-harvest water source:**  Surface  Well  Municipal  N/A

**Pump type:**  Portable  Permanent/Fixed  N/A

**Type of soil amendments used:**  Ag Tea  Animal Based Compost  Biosolids  Raw manure  N/A

**Have you participated in a Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) training course?**  Yes  No

**If yes, what was the date of the course:**  Please include a copy of your certificate

**Has your produce operation had a third-party audit?**  Yes  No

**If yes, who conducted the third-party audit and when?**

**Is this proposed project the result of a concern identified by Produce Safety Staff?**  Yes  No

**Are you in production year-round?**  Yes  No

**Do you have a greenhouse?**  Yes  No

**Season start date:**

**Season end date:**



## Aquaculture Operations

Acreage Leased?

When does the lease end?

HACCP Certified?  Yes  No

Have you been farming less than five years?  Yes  No

Wholesale Dealer?  Yes  No

Species Grown:

License Number

### 3. Marketing

Farm Purpose:  Primary Enterprise  Secondary Enterprise

Annual sales averaged over the previous 3 years:  \$0 - \$24,999  \$25,000 - \$249,999

\$250,000 - \$499,999  \$500,000 +

Annual total food sales averaged over the previous 3 years?  < \$500,000  \$500,000 +

Do you buy product from another operation?  Yes  No

How is your produce marketed?  Wholesale  Direct Market  Both

Are more than 50% of sales either (1) Direct to Consumer or (2) Retail or Restaurant?  Yes  No

If yes, are most of the sales within Massachusetts?  Yes  No

### 4. Involvement with Department Programs

My operation has an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR):  Yes  No

APR Contact Person:

This project will be implemented on APR Restricted Land:  Yes  No

I have contacted the APR Program to determine if this proposal needs a Certificate of Approval (COA):  Yes  No

This project needs an approval from the APR Program:  Yes  No

Year the APR was recorded:  Name on APR:

My operation has been accepted into or completed other MDAR funding programs:  Yes  No

ACRE  AEEP  ENER  AIP  FVEP  MEGA  SARA  Other \_\_\_\_\_

My operation has received an audit/inspection from the Commonwealth Quality Program (CQP)?  Yes  No

Please include a copy of your certificate. Date:

## 5. Project Details

Project: State what you are requesting funding for.

### 5A. Overview of Business:

Please provide a basic description of your business, including a brief history, products, ownership and management, and markets sold to.

**5B. Proposed Project Description:**

**Please describe the proposed investment (project) for which you are seeking funding and how the project will improve your food safety system.** If the project is associated with a recommendation identified during an audit or an inspection, please describe how this project will comply with the issue raised.

**5C. Proposed Project Outcomes:**

**Please explain how the proposed investment will allow you to improve your market access and maintain or create jobs.** Please also include information on projected financial returns to your business and how this investment will help your business to retain markets and become more profitable.

**5D. Contingencies & Permits:**

Provide a list of any other applications upon which your project is contingent (i.e. other grants or bank loans). Please list any state, local, or federal permits or approvals that will be necessary for you to implement this project and their status.

**5E. Timeline:**

Provide a project schedule. Assuming successful funding, when do you expect to complete this project?

**5F. Warranties, Ongoing Operations & Maintenance:**

Provide a list of all project warranties and guarantees. Identify any on-going operation & maintenance and/or periodic replacement needs and how they will be accomplished to ensure project longevity.

**5G. Team Members:**

List team members and their capacity to achieve the goals of the proposed project.

## 6. Budget:

AFSIP may reimburse Applicants up to 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000. Produce Applicants may request up to 80% of total project costs up to \$200,000 specifically for the new construction, retrofitting, or expansion of a washing and packing facility. A minimum contribution of 20% towards the total project costs must come from the Applicant. The Department has the option to negotiate the budget before entering into a contract with the Applicant. Preliminary budgets are acceptable for the evaluation process but upon request Applicants must receive quotes from vendors or contractors before a contract will be given. The Department will decide if an Applicant has adequately addressed this requirement. Applicants who provide quotes from a vendor or contractor with their application will receive a higher evaluation.

Project	Description	Qty.	Estimated Hours	Hourly Rate	Total
<b>Total Project Costs</b>					<b>\$</b>
<b>Applicant's Contribution Towards Project (minimum 20%)</b>					<b>\$</b>
<b>Eligible Project Costs (80% of Total Project Costs)</b>					<b>\$ _____</b>

## 7. Amount Requested:

Please state your requested AFSIP funding request. MDAR has the option to negotiate the requested amount before entering into a contract with the Applicant. Any project costs incurred prior to an executed contract with MDAR are not eligible for reimbursement .

**Total Requested for Funding Through AFSIP Grant:**

**\$**

## 8. Attestation:

By signing this application, you attest all statements herein are accurate and true. By signing this application, you give permission to have a site visit by MDAR staff which may be necessary before a funding decision is made. All site visits will be arranged with you in advance.

**Signature**

**Date**

**Print Name**

## Attachment B

### RFR - REQUIRED SPECIFICATIONS FOR COMMODITIES AND SERVICES

Revision Date: June 6, 2016

In general, most of the required contractual stipulations are referenced in the *Standard Contract Form and Instructions* and the *Commonwealth Terms and Conditions*. However, the following RFR provisions must appear in all Commonwealth competitive procurements conducted under 801 CMR 21.00.

The terms of *801 CMR 21.00: Procurement of Commodities and Services* are incorporated by reference into this RFR. Words used in this RFR shall have the meanings defined in 801 CMR 21.00. Additional definitions may also be identified in this RFR. Other terms not defined elsewhere in this document may be defined in OSD's [Glossary of Terms](#). Unless otherwise specified in this RFR, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, all measurements must be provided in feet, inches, and pounds and all cost proposals or figures in U.S. currency. All responses must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this RFR.

#### Of Special Note:

*All state agencies are subject to 815 CMR 2.00, State Grants, Federal Grant Awards, Federal Sub-grants and Subsidies as well as the [Office of the Comptroller's policy on State Grants, Federal Sub-Grants, and Subsidies](#). Departments must use COMMBUYS to publicly post the availability of a discretionary Grant or Grant Program and publish the results of grantee selections. Use of COMMBUYS to receive electronic quotes for grant opportunities is optional; however, state agencies are encouraged to require grantees to register and submit quotes (applications) through COMMBUYS, which provides a central repository for receipt of electronic applications. As more grantees use COMMBUYS to identify grant opportunities, they will have a single location to apply for grants from multiple state agencies, resulting in efficiencies for both the grantees and the state agencies.*

COMMBUYS Market Center. COMMBUYS is the official source of information for this Bid and is publicly accessible at no charge at [www.commbuys.com](http://www.commbuys.com). Information contained in this document and in COMMBUYS, including file attachments, and information contained in the related Bid Questions and Answers (Q&A), are all components of the Bid, as referenced in COMMBUYS, and are incorporated into the Bid and any resulting contract.

Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining all information distributed for this Bid via COMMBUYS. Bid Q&A supports Bidder submission of written questions associated with a Bid and publication of official answers.

It is each Bidder's responsibility to check COMMBUYS for:

- Any amendments, addenda or modifications to this Bid, and
- Any Bid Q&A records related to this Bid.

The Commonwealth accepts no responsibility and will provide no accommodation to Bidders who submit a Quote based on an out-of-date Bid or on information received from a source other than COMMBUYS.

COMMBUYS Registration. Bidders may elect to obtain a free COMMBUYS Seller registration which provides value-added features, including automated email notification associated with postings and modifications to COMMBUYS records. However, in order to respond to a Bid, Bidders must register and maintain an active COMMBUYS Seller account.

All Bidders submitting a Quote (previously referred to as Response) in response to this Bid (previously referred to as Solicitation) agree that, if awarded a contract: (1) they will maintain an active seller account in COMMBUYS; (2) they will, when directed to do so by the procuring entity, activate and maintain a COMMBUYS-enabled catalog using Commonwealth Commodity Codes; (3) they will comply with all requests by the procuring entity to utilize COMMBUYS for the purposes of conducting all aspects of purchasing and invoicing with the Commonwealth, as added functionality for the COMMBUYS system is activated; (4) Bidder understands and acknowledges that all references to the CommPASS website or related requirements throughout this RFR, shall be superseded by comparable requirements pertaining to the COMMBUYS website; and (6) in the event the Commonwealth adopts an alternate market center system, successful Bidders will be required to utilize such system, as directed by the procuring entity. Commonwealth Commodity Codes are based on the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC).

The COMMBUYS system introduces new terminology, which bidders must be familiar with in order to conduct business with the Commonwealth. To view this terminology and to learn more about the COMMBUYS system, please visit the [COMMBUYS Resource Center](#).

**Multiple Quotes.** Bidders may not submit Multiple Quotes in response to a Bid unless the RFR authorizes them to do so. If a Bidder submits multiple quotes in response to an RFR that does not authorize multiple responses, only the latest dated quote submitted prior to the bid opening date will be evaluated.

**Quote Content.** Bid specifications for delivery, shipping, billing and payment will prevail over any proposed Bidder terms entered as part of the Quote, unless otherwise specified in the Bid.

**Supplier Diversity Program (SDP).** Massachusetts [Executive Order 565](#) reaffirmed and expanded the Commonwealth's policy to promote the award of state contracts in a manner that develops and strengthens certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), Minority and Women Nonprofit Organizations (M/WNPOs), Veteran Business Enterprises (VBEs), Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises (SDVOBEs), Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBEs), and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBEs).

**Partnerships with certified diverse businesses:** All bidders are **required** to make a significant financial commitment to partner with certified M/WBEs, M/WNPOs, VBEs, SDVOBEs, DOBEs and/or LGBTBEs certified or verified by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO). Bidders must identify a commitment in the form of a specific percentage of sales made under the resulting contract that will be spent with an SDP Partner(s) on a Massachusetts fiscal year basis, using SDP Plan Form #1 – SDP Plan Commitment. This percentage commitment will extend for the life of any resulting contract.

This requirement extends to all bidders regardless of their certification status, and no bidder will be awarded a Contract unless and until the above requirement is met. Bidders may not list themselves or affiliates as SDP Partners. In order to ensure compliance with this section and encourage bidder participation, SDP Plans will be evaluated at 10% or more of the total evaluation score for all for Large Procurements (those with a total value of greater than \$150,000). SDP Plan submission is encouraged but not required for Small Procurements (those with a total value equal to or less than \$150,000).

Once an SDP commitment is approved, the agency will monitor the Contractor's performance, and use the Contractor's reported expenditures with M/WBEs, M/WNPOs, VBEs and SDVOBEs to fulfill their own SDP expenditure benchmarks. The Commonwealth reserves the right to contact SDP Partners at any time to request that they attest to the amounts reported to have been paid to them by the Contractor.

**SDP Forms:** Unless otherwise specified in the RFR, the following SDP forms are required to be submitted by the deadlines noted below in order to meet the mandatory participation requirements of the SDP:

SDP Plan Form #/Name	Submitted By	When Submitted
SDP Plan Form #1 – SDP Plan Commitment	All Bidders	With Bid Response
SDP Plan Form #2 – Declaration of SDP Partners	Newly Awarded Contractors	Within 30 days of contract execution
SDP Plan Form #3 – SDP Spending Report	Contractors	Within 45 days of the end of each quarter

In addition to the requirements above, all bidders must follow the requirements set forth in the Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Plan Section of the RFR. During the life of the contract, the Commonwealth reserves the right to expand the range of certified business categories available for SDP partnerships to all those mentioned above and/or request reports on the Contractors' spending with such certified business categories.

**Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Resources:** Bidders may refer to the [SDP Resources for Vendors and Contractors](#) webpage for additional program information, training and compliance resources.

Agricultural Products Preference (only applicable if this is a procurement for Agricultural Products) - Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006 directs the State Purchasing Agent to grant a preference to products of agriculture grown or produced using locally grown products. Such locally grown or produced products shall be purchased unless the price of the goods exceeds the price of products of agriculture from outside the Commonwealth by more than 10%. For purposes of this preference, products of agriculture are defined to include any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products, the raising of livestock, including horses, raising of domesticated animals, bees, fur-bearing animals and any forestry or lumbering operations.

Best Value Selection and Negotiation. The Strategic Sourcing Team or SST may select the response(s) which demonstrates the best value overall, including proposed alternatives that will achieve the procurement goals of the department. The SST and a selected bidder, or a contractor, may negotiate a change in any element of contract performance or cost identified in the original RFR or the selected bidder's or contractor's response which results in lower costs or a more cost effective or better value than was presented in the selected bidder's or contractor's original response.

Bidder Communication. Bidders are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring department or any member of the SST regarding this RFR except as specified in this RFR, and no other individual Commonwealth employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question or inquiry concerning this RFR. Bidders may contact the contact person for this RFR in the event this RFR is incomplete or the bidder is having trouble obtaining any required attachments electronically through COMMBUYS.

Contract Expansion. If additional funds become available during the contract duration period, the department reserves the right to increase the maximum obligation to some or all contracts executed as a result of this RFR or to execute contracts with contractors not funded in the initial selection process, subject to available funding, satisfactory contract performance and service or commodity need.

Costs. Costs which are not specifically identified in the bidder's response, and accepted by a department as part of a contract, will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFR. The Commonwealth will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders responding to this RFR.

Electronic Communication/Update of Bidder's/Contractor's Contact Information. It is the responsibility of the prospective bidder and awarded contractor to keep current on COMMBUYS the email address of the bidder's contact person and prospective contract manager, if awarded a contract, and to monitor that email inbox for communications from the SST, including requests for clarification. The SST and the Commonwealth assume no responsibility if a prospective bidder's/awarded contractor's designated email address is not current, or if technical problems, including those with the prospective bidder's/awarded contractor's computer, network or internet service provider (ISP) cause email communications sent to/from the prospective bidder/awarded contractor and the SST to be lost or rejected by any means including email or spam filtering.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). All bidders responding to this RFR must agree to participate in the Commonwealth Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) program for receiving payments, unless the bidder can provide compelling proof that it would be unduly burdensome. EFT is a benefit to both contractors and the Commonwealth because it ensures fast, safe and reliable payment directly to contractors and saves both parties the cost of processing checks. Contractors are able to track and verify payments made electronically through the Comptroller's Vendor Web system. A link to the EFT application can be found on the [OSD Forms](#) page ([www.mass.gov/osd](http://www.mass.gov/osd)). Additional information about EFT is available on the [VendorWeb](#) site ([www.mass.gov/osc](http://www.mass.gov/osc)). Click on MASSfinance.

Successful bidders, upon notification of contract award, will be required to enroll in EFT as a contract requirement by completing and submitting the *Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form* to this department for review, approval and forwarding to the Office of the Comptroller. If the bidder is already enrolled in the program, it may so indicate in its response. Because the *Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form* contains banking information, this form, and all

information contained on this form, shall not be considered a public record and shall not be subject to public disclosure through a public records request.

The requirement to use EFT may be waived by the SST on a case-by-case basis if participation in the program would be unduly burdensome on the bidder. If a bidder is claiming that this requirement is a hardship or unduly burdensome, the specific reason must be documented in its response. The SST will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis and communicate the findings with the bidder.

Executive Order 509, Establishing Nutrition Standards for Food Purchased and Served by State Agencies. Food purchased and served by state agencies must be in compliance with Executive Order 509, issued in January 2009. Under this Executive Order, all contracts resulting from procurements posted after July 1, 2009 that involve the purchase and provision of food must comply with nutrition guidelines established by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The nutrition guidelines are available at the Department's website: [Tools and Resources for Implementation of Executive Order 509](#).

HIPAA: Business Associate Contractual Obligations. Bidders are notified that any department meeting the definition of a Covered Entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) will include in the RFR and resulting contract sufficient language establishing the successful bidder's contractual obligations, if any, that the department will require in order for the department to comply with HIPAA and the privacy and security regulations promulgated thereunder (45 CFR Parts 160, 162, and 164) (the Privacy and Security Rules). For example, if the department determines that the successful bidder is a business associate performing functions or activities involving protected health information, as such terms are used in the Privacy and Security Rules, then the department will include in the RFR and resulting contract a sufficient description of business associate's contractual obligations regarding the privacy and security of the protected health information, as listed in 45 CFR 164.314 and 164.504 (e), including, but not limited to, the bidder's obligation to: implement administrative, physical, and technical safeguards that reasonably and appropriately protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the protected health information (in whatever form it is maintained or used, including verbal communications); provide individuals access to their records; and strictly limit use and disclosure of the protected health information for only those purposes approved by the department. Further, the department reserves the right to add any requirement during the course of the contract that it determines it must include in the contract in order for the department to comply with the Privacy and Security Rules. Please see other sections of the RFR for any further HIPAA details, if applicable.

Minimum Quote (Bid Response) Duration. Bidders Quotes made in response to this Bid must remain in effect for at least 90 days from the date of quote submission.

Prompt Payment Discounts (PPD). All bidders responding to this procurement must agree to offer discounts through participation in the Commonwealth Prompt Payment Discount (PPD) initiative for receiving early and/or on-time payments, unless the bidder can provide compelling proof that it would be unduly burdensome. PPD benefits both contractors and the Commonwealth. Contractors benefit by increased, usable cash flow as a result of fast and efficient payments for commodities or services rendered. Participation in the Electronic Funds Transfer initiative further maximizes the benefits with payments directed to designated accounts, thus eliminating the impact of check clearance policies and traditional mail lead time or delays. The Commonwealth benefits because contractors reduce the cost of products and services through the applied discount. Payments that are processed electronically can be tracked and verified through the Comptroller's Vendor Web system. The PPD form can be found as an attachment for this Bid on [COMMBUYS](#).

Bidders must submit agreeable terms for Prompt Payment Discount using the PPD form within their proposal, unless otherwise specified by the SST. The SST will review, negotiate or reject the offering as deemed in the best interest of the Commonwealth

The requirement to use PPD offerings may be waived by the SST on a case-by-case basis if participation in the program would be unduly burdensome on the bidder. If a bidder is claiming that this requirement is a hardship or unduly burdensome, the specific reason must be documented in or attached to the PPD form.

Public Records. All responses and information submitted in response to this RFR are subject to the Massachusetts

Public Records Law, M.G.L., c. 66, s. 10, and to c. 4, s. 7, ss. 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes, including marking by bidders of information as confidential during the quote submission process in COMMBUYS, shall be disregarded.

Reasonable Accommodation. Bidders with disabilities or hardships that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of RFR information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to the contact person. Requests for accommodation will be addressed on a case by case basis. A bidder requesting accommodation must submit a written statement which describes the bidder's disability and the requested accommodation to the contact person for the RFR. The SST reserves the right to reject unreasonable requests.

Restriction on the Use of the Commonwealth Seal. Bidders and contractors are not allowed to display the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Seal in their bid package or subsequent marketing materials if they are awarded a contract because use of the coat of arms and the Great Seal of the Commonwealth for advertising or commercial purposes is prohibited by law.

Subcontracting Policies. Prior approval of the department is required for any subcontracted service of the contract. Contractors are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Human and social service subcontractors are also required to meet the same state and federal financial and program reporting requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as contractors.