



**Division of Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance**

## **Climate Smart for Agriculture Program (CSAP)**

**Includes funding opportunities for the following grant programs:**

- ACRE- Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies Program
- AEEP- Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program
- ENER- Agricultural Energy Program
- AFSIP- Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program
- ACIP- Agricultural Composting Improvement Program

**RFR Number: AGR-CSAP-FY26**

**For Fiscal Year 2026  
(July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026)**

**Applications must be received by  
4:00 pm on Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

**Proposals must be submitted as instructed in Section 5 to be considered for  
evaluation. Review this entire document before beginning the application.**



Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources  
30 Riverside Drive, Suite 202  
Lakeville, MA 02347

## GRANT OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

<b>Executive Office of Energy &amp; Environmental Affairs</b> <b>Rebecca L. Tepper, Secretary</b> <b>Climate Smart of Agriculture Program - RFR ID: AGR-CSAP-FY26</b>	
<b>Proposals Sought For</b>	The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (“MDAR”) invites Massachusetts agricultural operations to submit proposals for reimbursement grant funds to implement practices that address the agricultural sector’s vulnerability to climate change, mitigate climate change, safeguard natural resources, increase energy efficiency, promote renewable energy, improve on-farm food safety, and enhance economic resiliency.
<b>Overview &amp; Goals</b>	The <b>Climate Smart for Agriculture Program</b> (“Program”) links MDAR’s water, climate, energy, and food safety, grants into one streamlined application process. The goal of the Program is to help agricultural operations adapt and build resiliency while improving sustainability and increasing productivity. By providing reimbursement directly to agricultural operations that implement eligible projects, the program will contribute to the agricultural sector’s efforts to cultivate climate resiliency, mitigate climate change, safeguard natural resources, increase energy efficiency, promote renewable energy, improve on-farm food safety, and enhance economic resiliency.
<b>Eligible Projects</b>	Projects that help the agricultural sector reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts (adaptation), reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon (mitigation), safeguard the Commonwealth’s natural resources, and improve on-farm food safety. Proposals will be considered for projects that focus on improving soil health, enhancing water use efficiency and availability, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing carbon sequestration, improving energy efficiency, adopting clean energy technologies, and strengthening on-farm food safety.
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	Agricultural operations engaged in production agriculture as defined under Massachusetts law, M.G.L c. 128, Section 1A (See further detail on eligible applicants in Section 2). The property must be in active agricultural use and managed by the applicant for at least the three previous years to the date of the application.
<b>Application Deadline</b>	Applications must be <u>received</u> by 4:00 pm on Wednesday, June 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2025. (See further details 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 per project area to a maximum of \$150,000. (See further details on Funding Availability in Section 4).
<b>Match Requirement</b>	Minimum of 20% of total project costs including materials and off-farm contracted labor. (See further detail on the Match requirement in Section 4D).
<b>Duration of Contract</b>	Contract end date is June 30, 2026 with no extension.
<b>Contact Information</b>	Laura Maul – (857) 507-5972, <a href="mailto:Laura.Maul@mass.gov">Laura.Maul@mass.gov</a>

# DEFINITIONS

## **Agricultural Composting:**

The process of composting organic materials produced exclusively on a farm. Farms that engage in agricultural composting are exempt from registration with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), provided they compost only materials generated on the farm itself. Farms that import organic material from off-site for composting must be registered in MDAR's Agricultural Composting Program and comply with MDAR's Composting Program Regulations outlined in 330 CMR 25.00 in order to be eligible for funding under this program.

## **Applicant:**

Individual or organization requesting grant funding.

## **Conservation Plan:**

A voluntary plan developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that identifies the farm's conservation objectives and assesses and analyzes the natural resources issues on the land related to soil, water, animals, plants, air, energy, and human interaction.

## **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 uniq 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, soursop, 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 is non-exhaustive and does not include all covered produce.*

## **Energy Audit:**

Assessment of all the energy use of systems, equipment, and facilities for the agricultural operation. The assessment documents a typical year of the energy use required to operate the agricultural operation, and the strategies by which the operation can prioritize on-farm opportunities to increase energy efficiency and reduce energy use.

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

The 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.

## **Grantee:**

An individual or organization that has been awarded financial assistance under the Program that will enter into a contract with MDAR in order to receive funding.

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

The PSR is one of seven food safety regulations the 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>).

## **Production Agriculture:**

Farming as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A that focuses on agricultural production that will ultimately be sold in the retail market and not for subsistence purposes.

**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’.*

**Technical Assessment Energy Efficiency:**

A targeted energy efficiency assessment that focuses on the cost-benefit savings of an energy efficiency technology, including quotes, and system performance resulting in a system design and specifications using calculations and models that project energy consumption and savings and cost reduction for the operation.

**Technical Assessment Renewable Energy:**

An assessment that estimates the capacity, annual generation, and suitable area for the development of a renewable energy technology after accounting for topographic limitations, land-use constraints, and system performance resulting in a system design and specifications and quotes using calculations and models that project consumption, cash flows and cost reduction for the operation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

MDAR is pleased to announce the opening of the application period for the Climate Smart for Agriculture Program (“CSAP”). This program combines MDAR's three distinct grant categories, Food Safety, Environmental, and Energy, into a single, streamlined application process, offering applicants the opportunity to apply for funding through a single submission. The funding programs incorporated into this initiative are the Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (“AFSIP”), the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (“AEEP”), the Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies (“ACRE”) Program, the Agricultural Energy Program, and the Agricultural Composting Improvement Program (“ACIP”) (collectively referred to as the “Program”). By consolidating these grant categories, MDAR aims to simplify the application process and increase accessibility to funding opportunities, enabling agricultural operations to make impactful improvements in food safety, environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, and climate practices.

## 2. APPLICANTS

### 2A. Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be an agricultural operation, as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A, that is engaged in the business of production agriculture within the Commonwealth. The property included in the proposed project must be in active agricultural use and managed by the applicant for a minimum of the previous three years prior to the application date.

### 2B. Size of Operation

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

### 2C. Leased Property

If the proposed project is located on a property not owned by the applicant, the applicant must have a lease agreement demonstrating a long-term, legal right to use the property. This typically means a lease agreement for no less than three years from the date of submission. The proposed project must also be allowed under the terms of the lease agreement. MDAR may request a copy of the lease agreement as part of the review process.

### 2D. Previously Funded Applicants

Proposals from individuals or operations that have previously received funding under MDAR funding programs are eligible for funding. Previous applicants will be asked to summarize prior grant funding and the impacts on their operation. This information will be evaluated during the review process.

### 2E. Applicants with an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR)

Before applying to the program, APR landowners should consult with the APR Program to determine if there are any requirements applicable to the proposed project under the terms of their APR. APR applicants must obtain, or be in the advanced stages of receiving, all required approvals 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 comply will render the proposal ineligible. The APR Program cannot provide technical assistance with the development or drafting of any proposal. For assistance, contact Jill Ward at [jill.ward@mass.gov](mailto:jill.ward@mass.gov) or (413) 726-2011.

### 2F. Produce Farm Registration

All responses and information submitted in response to this RFR from applicants engaged in production agriculture are subject to registration under Produce Safety & Market Access 330 CMR 34.03, regardless of whether the farm is a Covered Farm or a Non-Covered Farm, as defined in the regulation. Registration will be a condition of funding in any contract. For more information on MDAR's Produce Safety Program, please visit: [www.mass.gov/produce-safety-program](http://www.mass.gov/produce-safety-program).

### 2G. Environmental Justice Policy



For the purposes of this RFR, "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 is 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.

For more information, please review the [Environmental Justice Policy](#) in Attachment B of this RFR. We also encourage you to complete the [Environmental Justice Questions](#) form referenced in Attachment B and included in the online application.

### 3. PROJECTS

Project Areas are listed below. Projects that still meet program goals but are not listed below **will** be considered in the review process.

#### Food Safety

Project Area	Description	Equipment
<div>Produce</div> 	Practices and equipment to ensure the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and storage of on-farm produce to minimize contamination risks, meet regulatory standards, and improve market access.	<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>• Washing/Packing shed walls, ceilings, lighting fixtures, and upgrades</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>
<div>Aquaculture</div> 	Practices and equipment to ensure the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and storage of on-farm aquaculture products to minimize contamination risks, meet regulatory standards, and improve market access.	<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 time to temperature control and process efficiency</li><li>• Facility upgrades necessary to obtain or maintain a Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Division of Marine Fisheries Wholesale Dealer Permit</li></ul>

## Environmental

Project Area	Description	Equipment
Water Efficiency & Irrigation Systems	Install drip irrigation, smart irrigation, or rainwater harvesting systems to optimize water use, reduce runoff, and increase water-use efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drip irrigation</li> <li>• Smart irrigation controllers</li> <li>• Rainwater harvesting tanks</li> <li>• Soil moisture sensors</li> <li>• Water filtration systems</li> <li>• Irrigation pumps</li> </ul>
Water Storage & Management	Implement water storage systems to ensure a reliable water supply, especially during droughts or dry seasons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rainwater Collection Systems</li> <li>• Water Recycling Systems</li> </ul>
Soil Health	Implement cover cropping, no-till farming to improve soil fertility, reduce erosion, and increase carbon sequestration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No-till drills or planters</li> <li>• Cover crop seeders</li> <li>• Mulching equipment</li> <li>• Compost spreaders</li> </ul>
Agroforestry and Silvopasture	Develop agroforestry or silvopasture systems integrating trees into crop or livestock systems for enhance biodiversity, and carbon sequestration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree planting machinery</li> <li>• Mulchers or chippers</li> <li>• Fencing for silvopasture</li> <li>• Irrigation systems for tree establishment</li> </ul>
Climate-Resilient Infrastructure	Build or retrofit greenhouses or weather resistant farm structures to protect crops and livestock from extreme weather conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenhouses</li> <li>• Weather-resistant farm buildings</li> <li>• Roll-up side walls for ventilation</li> <li>• Insulated storage containers</li> <li>• Shade structures</li> <li>• Waters and feeders with cooling systems</li> </ul>
Composting & Organic Fertilizer Production	Purchase of equipment or facility upgrades which improve composting practices and facilitate on-farm compost use to improve agricultural soil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerated or in-vessel composting systems</li> <li>• Windrow turners</li> <li>• Compost/manure spreader</li> <li>• Compost pad construction or upgrade</li> </ul>
Advance Monitoring Systems	Install soil moisture sensors, weather stations, or precision agriculture tools to monitor farm conditions and make decisions regarding irrigation, planting, and harvesting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather stations</li> <li>• Soil moisture sensors</li> <li>• GPS enabled farm management systems</li> </ul>
Postharvest Loss Reduction	Reducing postharvest losses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by preserving the quality of crops after harvest, limiting spoilage and increasing shelf life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold storage</li> <li>• Controlled atmosphere systems</li> </ul>

## Energy

Project Area	Description	Equipment
On-Farm Renewable Energy	Projects aimed at reducing fossil fuel dependence and transitioning to renewable energy sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar photovoltaics (PV)</li> <li>• Solar thermal</li> <li>• Wind turbines</li> <li>• Electric and hybrid farm equipment (e.g., tractors, irrigation pumps)</li> <li>• Biomass energy systems (e.g., anaerobic digesters, biomass boilers)</li> </ul>
Energy Efficiency	Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower greenhouse gas emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heat Pumps</li> <li>• Transitioning farm equipment to lower emissions or no-emissions equipment or upgrading farm machinery to energy-efficient models</li> <li>• Energy-efficient lighting for barns, greenhouses, and storage facilities</li> <li>• High-efficiency irrigation powered by solar</li> <li>• Energy-efficient motors or pumps</li> <li>• Insulation or energy-efficient building improvements for farm buildings</li> <li>• Dairy plate coolers, variable speed vacuum pumps, refrigeration heat recover/fre-heaters</li> <li>• Maple high-efficiency evaporators, Reverse Osmosis (RO) systems, heat recovery &amp; steam enhanced units</li> <li>• Greenhouse thermal blankets/energy screens, envelope insulation, natural ventilation, root zone heating, or electronic temperature controls</li> </ul>



## 3B. Ineligible Expenditures

### Operational Costs

- **Routine Operating Expenses:** Day-to-day operational costs like fuel, seeds, feed, chemicals, and utilities.
- **Operational Salaries:** Salaries or wages for ongoing work related to farm operations, including non-labor costs (management) and fees for project oversight, consultations, and administration.
- **Labor Performed by the Agricultural Operation:** Labor performed by the agricultural operation in completing the proposed project.
- **Proposals for Establishing a New Organization/Business:** Proposals related to the establishment of a new organization or business.

### Maintenance and Equipment

- **Routine Maintenance and Repairs:** Costs for ongoing maintenance, repairs, or replacements that do not represent a capital improvement.
- **Short-Term or Non-Durable Equipment:** Expenditures for equipment with a short lifespan or non-capital nature.
- **Used Equipment & Materials:** Costs associated with purchasing used equipment or materials.

### Non-Agricultural Costs

- **Non-Agricultural Infrastructure:** Infrastructure not directly related to agricultural production (e.g., recreational or non-production buildings).
- **Marketing or Promotional Materials:** Costs related to advertising, marketing campaigns, or promotional events.
- **Planning & Development Costs:** Costs for audits or feasibility studies.
- **Subscription-Based Services:** Software or monthly service fees (e.g., subscriptions).
- **Extended Warranties Costs:** Costs related to purchasing extended warranties.
- **Non-Ag Related Equipment:** Equipment unrelated to agricultural production (e.g., office furniture, computers, non-agricultural vehicles).

### Financial and Legal Costs

- **Interest on Loans or Financing Fees:** Interest payments or any fees related to securing loans or financing.
- **Land Acquisition or Lease Payments:** Funding cannot be used for purchasing land or paying for ongoing lease payments.
- **Permits:** Fees for any permits required to complete the project.
- **Projects Requesting Reimbursement for Work Already Started or Completed:** Costs for projects where the work has been started or completed before a contract is in place with MDAR.
- **Legal Fees:** Fees charged for legal services or support.

### Eligibility and Compliance

- **Marijuana-Related Projects:** Projects involving marijuana are not eligible for funding. Projects involving hemp may be eligible if they comply with federal, state, and local requirements and are in good standing with MDAR's Hemp Program and otherwise meet all other Program requirements and conditions for funding.
- **Non-Compliance and Ineligibility Costs:** Costs associated with proposals from applicants whose operation is out of compliance with any laws or regulations, or proposals from applicants that do not meet eligibility requirements listed in Section 2A. Compliance is required at the time of application and throughout the duration of any award. Failure to maintain compliance may result in the loss of funding.

### Specific Projects

- **Tile Drainage Systems:** Costs related to tile drainage systems.
- **Drones:** Either for spraying or seeding.
- **Composting Toilets or Septic Systems:** Costs associated with composting toilets or septic systems.
- **Food Safety Proposals for Value-Added Products:** Expenses related to food safety proposals that focus on value-added production.

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

### 4A. Maximum Funding

Each applicant must submit a proposal and budget requesting not more than the amount specified under the project category being applied for. If applying for all three categories, the maximum is \$150,000.

<b>Food Safety</b>	Maximum funding per applicant is 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000.
<b>Environmental</b>	Maximum funding per applicant is 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000.
<b>Energy</b>	Maximum funding per applicant is 80% of total project costs, up to \$50,000. Maximum funding for solar photovoltaics (PV) shall be \$2,000/kW without battery storage; and \$2,500/kW with battery storage.

- MDAR reserves the right to distribute the allocated funding between each project category based on the level and quality of respective responses. All funding is subject to appropriation.
- Awards are limited to one per agricultural operation using a unique tax identification number per section of funding;
- As MDAR would like to fund as many eligible projects as possible, MDAR encourages projects requesting less than the maximums stated.
- MDAR reserves the right to reallocate an application to any project category of the program based on the proposed project and may, at its sole discretion, determine from which grant funding an eligible project may be funded.
- MDAR reserves the right to offer an award amount different than the amount requested.
- Funding requests can be for specific components of a project. However, an applicant must demonstrate that the result of such a request will result in a complete functional and operable system and MDAR may require proof of such as a condition of reimbursement.

### 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. MDAR may lift the suspension if available funding is received. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, MDAR may terminate the contract.
- Funding for water management and water quality projects will be funded under amounts appropriated for AEEP. Funding for composting projects will be under amounts appropriated for ACIP. Funding for food safety aquaculture or produce projects will be under amounts allocated for AFSIP. Funding for soil health and adaptation specific projects will be under amounts appropriated for ACRE. Energy projects will be funded under the amounts appropriated for the Agricultural Energy Program and/or the ACRE Program. In the absence of funding for one of these programs, projects will be funded through allocated funds from the other programs at the sole discretion of MDAR.

## 4C. Budgeting Guidelines

- Proposals must include an adequate budget for the proposed project.
- Proposals must include quotes from vendors or contractors.
- MDAR has the option to negotiate the budget and award amount before entering into a contract with the applicant.
- 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 non-state grant funds for the project, or an executed loan will receive additional points in the review.
- Third party financial arrangements such as leases are acceptable for solar photovoltaic projects provided MDAR funds are used toward the initial total cost of materials and sub-contractor installation for the proposed project, prior to any financial or lease agreement, thereby reducing the project amount to be financed or leased, and subsequent loan or lease payments, and possibly term and buyout stipulations. MDAR funds shall not be used for lease, mortgage, or loan payments.
- New construction and new equipment incentives, i.e., not replacement of existing, shall be based on incremental costs from minimum code and standard efficiency baselines.

## 4D. Match

Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of the match required by project category being applied for. The ability to contribute the cost share commitment should be demonstrated as part of the response.

<b>Food Safety</b>	Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of 20% towards total project costs. In-kind is not an eligible match.
<b>Environment</b>	Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of 20% towards total project costs. In-kind is not an eligible match.
<b>Energy</b>	Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of 20% towards total project costs. In-kind is not an eligible match.

# 5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

## 5A. Application Submission Instructions

An application form **must** be completed in its entirety and submitted through the online application platform.

- **Applications and all support documents must be received by MDAR by 4:00PM on Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**
- Applications must be submitted through the CSAP website:  
[www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-apply-to-the-climate-smart-agriculture-program](http://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-apply-to-the-climate-smart-agriculture-program)
- Additional documentation must be sent by email to [MDARGrants@mass.gov](mailto:MDARGrants@mass.gov) – The subject heading should specify the name of the farm operation and the documents submitted – for example:  
**Subject:** “Smith Family Farm – Quotes & Budget Documents”

This RFR allows only for the submission of online proposals. All Bidders are advised to allow adequate time for submission of their proposal by considering 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, or for a Bidder's local hardware failures, such as computers or related networks, associated with bid compilation or submission. Additional documents 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.

**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.

## 5B. Additional Application Documentation

<b>All Projects</b>	<p>Vendor or contractor quotes (required).</p> <p>A completed budget for the project area(s) being applied to (required).</p> <p>Applicants should include balance of funding needed to implement the proposed project by providing bank credit reference letters, line of credit reference letters, demonstration of other non-state grant funds for the project, or an executed loan.</p> <p>Proposals should include a map or aerial photo with the property boundaries drawn and the exact location of the project described in the application.</p>
<b>Food Safety</b>	<p>Produce applicants that have are active Commonwealth Quality Program (CQP) participants should include a copy of their certificate.</p> <p>Produce applicants that have completed a Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) grower training course should include a copy of their certificate.</p> <p>Aquaculture applicants that have HACCP certification should include a copy of their certification.</p>
<b>Environment</b>	<p>Applicants that are eligible operations should provide proof of a Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") Conservation Plan. A copy of the entire plan is not required.</p>
<b>Energy</b>	<p>A project specific technical assessment, or energy audit with same detail for the project proposed, that provides back-up and supporting documentation required within the application.</p> <p>The completion of a general energy audit for the agricultural operation.</p> <p>Proposed projects should include quantification of equivalent CO<sub>2</sub> greenhouse gas savings calculations in the project's respective energy audit or technical assessment, or as a separate calculation.</p>

## 5C. Review Process

MDAR cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications. In order to maintain integrity of the competitive grant process, MDAR 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 5D.

**Step II:** All projects which are favorably reviewed in Step 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:

- To verify the information presented in the proposal;
- To view the agricultural operation and assess the project request;
- To verify the operation is engaged in commercial agriculture;
- To determine the appropriateness of the practice proposed for the farm;
- To confirm the ability to implement and maintain the practice;
- To explore other items deemed necessary; and
- To develop a basis for future 'before and after' comparisons.

MDAR staff may modify the scope of the proposed project to more effectively achieve program goals. MDAR may request additional project information.

## 5D. Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal will receive a point score based on assigned values to Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, and No Evidence as defined.

**Very Good** - The application is specified and comprehensive. There is complete, detailed, and clearly articulated information as to how the criteria are met. The ideas presented are innovative, well-conceived, and thoroughly developed.

**Good** - The application is reasonably comprehensive and includes sufficient detail. It contains many of the characteristics of a response that is very good even though it may require additional specificity, support, or elaboration in places.

**Fair** - The application is non-specific, and lacks focus and detail. The response addresses some of the selection criteria, but not all. Some ideas presented are sound, but others are not responsive to the purpose of the grant. Additional information is needed in order to be reasonably comprehensive and meet the criteria of a response that is good.

**Poor** - The application does not meet many criteria; provides inaccurate information or provides information that requires substantial clarification as to how the criteria are met; lacks meaningful detail; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issue in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.

**No Evidence** - The application does not address the criteria or simply re-states the criteria.

## **1. Applicant Information & Operation Details – 10%**

Overview of the Business: The extent to which the applicant provides relevant context about their farm or agricultural operation, including the scale, type of operation, and any existing infrastructure.

Organizational Alignment: The extent to which the applicant describes how the project aligns with their business goals and addresses specific operational challenges, including region-specific challenges.

Previous Grant Funding: The applicant's history of receiving and utilizing grant funding will be considered, ensuring they have the capacity to manage project funds effectively.

## **2. Project Details – 30%**

Project Description: The extent to which the project is clearly defined. This should address the issue being solved, the proposed solution, and why the applicant chose this specific project.

Project Goals: The clarity and specificity of the project short-term objectives and goals. The project should outline how it will improve farm sustainability, reduce costs, mitigate climate change, and/or address food safety or energy use in measurable ways. The goals should focus on what the project aims to achieve during or shortly after completion.

Impacts: The measurable short-term outcomes, which should focus on quantifiable changes in environmental, operational, and financial performance. Impacts reflect the actual results achieved from implementing the project goals.

## **3. Feasibility of the Project Plan – 25%**

Timeline: A clear, achievable timeline that outlines milestones, project phases, and completion dates.

Team Members: The qualifications, roles, and responsibilities of the team members. This should demonstrate the applicant's ability to execute the project effectively.

Permits & Regulatory Compliance: Evaluation of the applicant's ability to secure necessary permits and approvals, ensuring compliance with all relevant federal, state, or local regulations.

Budget: The completeness and accuracy of the budget, including clarity on how the project funds will be allocated.

## **4. Sustainability & Long-Term Impacts – 20%**

Sustainability: How the project contributes to long-term sustainability of the agricultural operation, including energy efficiency, promoting environmental stewardship, and supporting farm profitability. This includes the proposed project's durability and ability to maintain the positive effects over time.

Metrics to Track Impacts: The applicant should define how they will measure the long-term impacts of the project. Metrics should track continued success and the enduring benefits of the project, including impacts on environmental performance, energy use, water use, production efficiency, and food safety over time.

Post-Project Sustainability: A clear plan for maintaining the project's success after completion, ensuring that the impact is sustained beyond the grant period.

Warranties and Guarantees: The inclusion of product warranties, service guarantees, or any other long-term support for the project.

Operation & Maintenance: The applicant's ability to maintain the project after completion. This includes ongoing operation, maintenance, and ensuring that the system remains functional and effective in the long term.

## **5. Project Financing & Support Documents – 15%**

Demonstration of Financing: How the applicant will finance the project upfront and manage the required match. The applicant should demonstrate the ability to cover the remaining project costs and how the match requirement will be met. This includes any financial documentation such as bank reference letters, executed loans, or grant funds from other sources.

Support Documents: The completeness of all required supporting documentation, including any financial references, quotes from vendors or contractors, and proof of available financing.

## 6. PROJECT TERMS

### 6A. 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. Inter-connection Service Agreements (ISAs) for solar PV projects may be initiated prior to an executed contract although the costs for doing such will not be reimbursable.
- Project modification requests for new items, activities, or objectives not included in the original proposal are not permitted and non-compliance may result in the termination of funding.

### 6B. Additional Contract Documentation

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

- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form with Commonwealth Terms & Conditions filled out and signed by the Respondent
- Scope and Budget Form
- Commonwealth W-9 tax information form filled out and signed by the Respondent
- 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.

### 6C. Duration of Contracts

All projects must be completed by June 30, 2026, with no options for extensions.

### 6D. Public Records

All records provided to MDAR under this RFR shall be subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, Section 10 and may be subject to disclosure unless otherwise exempt in accordance with M.G.L. c. 4, Section 7(26).

## 7. DELIVERABLES, OWNERSHIP, AND CREDIT DUE

### 7A. Installation Standards & Permits

- Funded projects must use USDA-NRCS Standards & Specifications as installation standards when receiving funding under both NRCS and MDAR, or when required by MDAR.
- 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 MDAR. Failure to obtain or remain in compliance with any federal, state, or local approvals (including but not limited to, permits, licenses, regulations, ordinances, bylaws, or regulations) necessary for the project may result in termination of the contract.
- All construction shall be completed and installed in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local codes, ordinances, and regulations. Equipment and materials must be considered new and shall meet relevant IEEE certifications and must be UL listed. All equipment must be provided with at least a 1-year warranty.
- Solar PV, Solar Thermal, Renewable Energy Heating and Cooling, Wind, Hydro and Woody Biomass projects shall meet any applicable Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) equipment and installation program requirements, the applicable Regulations and Guidelines of the Renewable Portfolio and Alternative Portfolio Standards, as administered by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and all relevant regulations administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (MADPU), and shall be installed by contractors engaged, licensed and certified in the relevant technology and meet the same contractor requirements for installing these technologies as originally or currently established by DOER and MassCEC.
- All wind turbine products shall comply with and be certified under American Clean Power (ACP) Standard 101-1.
- Funding for replacing older, inefficient equipment, with new higher efficiency equipment will require that the old equipment be taken out of use and scrapped for recycling of components. Old equipment cannot be resold.
- New maple syrup evaporators must be installed in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and satisfy any local permitting or other requirements.
- All Solar PV projects, e.g. ground-mounted, Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units (dual use), etc., must comply with all requirements set forth under DOER's SMART Program Regulations and Guidelines.
- New irrigation engines must replace a stationary or portable in-use agricultural irrigation engine with a new electric motor, propane engine, or with a new nonroad diesel engine meeting current model-year Tier 4 emissions certification.
- New irrigation engines for cranberry operations must be stationary. Old engine either must be destroyed and scrapped, or used as back-up, but cannot be resold. Priority will be given to destroyed and scrapped.
- Equipment must be new and be covered under the manufacturer's warranty.
- Equipment must be purchased in-full and owned by the applicant by the contract deadline. Equipment cannot be financed or leased.
- High Efficiency Advanced Gasification Biomass - thermal boilers or furnaces intended for indoor and outdoor use utilizing wood pellets, wood chips, or cordwood, shall meet all current federal, state and/or local construction laws and regulations.
- Any Woody Biomass System must meet the eligibility criteria and requirements for qualifying a Woody Biomass system in the Alternative Portfolio Standard. [www.mass.gov/service-details/qualifying-woody-biomass-in-the-aps](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/qualifying-woody-biomass-in-the-aps)
- Utility-scale and large-scale renewable energy projects shall be considered those that are greater than 500kW D.C. and/or generate more than 200% of average annual or projected agriculturally related energy usage. Higher priority will be given to non-utility scale or non-large scale commercial energy projects that demonstrate predominately behind-the-meter agricultural related renewable energy usage.



## 7B. Reporting

Reporting requirements will be outlined in the Scope of Services.

## 7C. Invoicing

- Disbursement of funds under this RFR will be done on a reimbursement basis and will require that acceptable documentation be submitted to MDAR prior to any payment. **Only expenses incurred during the period of the contract are eligible for reimbursement. Any costs incurred prior to an executed contract, regardless of whether they were included in a proposal and associated with the project, are NOT eligible for reimbursement from MDAR.**
- The funded contractual activity will be evaluated prior to full reimbursement. Work will be evaluated for satisfactory completion and compliance to standards. Spot inspections may be conducted at MDAR'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 MDAR shall be eligible for reimbursement.
- Satisfactory documentation in the form of cancelled checks, receipts, invoices, etc. for costs associated with approved projects must be submitted to MDAR and approved prior to reimbursement.
- Funded projects will be limited to a number of reimbursements based on the total of awarded projects and the maximum award amounts. The reimbursement schedule will be outlined in the Scope & Services as part of the contract documents.

## 8. DEADLINES & PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

<b>Release of RFR</b>	<b>Tuesday, April 22, 2025</b>
<b>Question Deadline</b>	Applicants may submit questions regarding this RFR and application process. Questions must be submitted by email to MDARGrants@mass.gov. The deadline for questions is 4:00PM on Thursday, May 29, 2025. All questions and answers will be posted at <a href="http://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-apply-to-the-climate-smart-agriculture-program">www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-apply-to-the-climate-smart-agriculture-program</a> .
<b>Application Due Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, by 4:00pm.</b>
<b>Estimated Award Date</b>	October, 2025.
<b>Estimated Contract Start Date</b>	October 2025. 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 only by MDAR.
<b>Request for Single or Multiple Contractors</b>	Multiple Contractors
<b>RFR Distribution Method</b>	<p>This RFR has been distributed by MDAR'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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Application Form</li> <li>B. Environmental Justice Policy &amp; Questions</li> <li>C. RFR Required Specifications</li> </ul>

# ATTACHMENT A

## CLIMATE SMART FOR AGRICULTURE PROGRAM (CSAP) - APPLICATION FORM (FY2026)

### OPERATION INFORMATION

APPLICANT FIRST NAME		APPLICANT LAST NAME	
OPERATION NAME		YEAR ESTABLISHED	
MAILING ADDRESS			
CITY, STATE, ZIP		COUNTY	
PHONE		EMAIL ADDRESS	
WEBSITE		LEGAL STRUCTURE	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietor <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> LLC <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> 501 (C)(3)	
SITE ADDRESS		SITE CITY, STATE, ZIP	
PROPERTY LEASED:		LEASE IN WRITING:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
YEAR LEASE ENDS		OWNER OF PROPERTY	
FARMER AS IDENTIFIED IN MA GENERAL LAWS 128. Sec.1A:		NUMBER OF YEARS APPLICANT OPERATING THE BUSINESS	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			

## OPERATION DETAILS

TYPE OF OPERATION:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Produce	<input type="checkbox"/> Beef	<input type="checkbox"/> Dairy	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse	<input type="checkbox"/> Nursery	<input type="checkbox"/> Cranberry
<input type="checkbox"/> Vineyard	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Livestock	<input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Horse	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
ACREAGE OWNED		ACREAGE LEASED		ACREAGE IN PRODUCTION	
ESTIMATED SALES					
<input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$24,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 - \$249,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$250,000 - \$499,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$500,000 +					
APPLICANTS PRIMARY INCOME FROM SALES OF AG PRODUCTS					
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
Current breakdown between wholesale and retail sales:					
WHOLESALE %			RETAIL %		
HOW PRODUCTS ARE MARKETED:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Distributor <input type="checkbox"/> Farmstand or farm store <input type="checkbox"/> Stores <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants <input type="checkbox"/> Pick-Your-Own <input type="checkbox"/> CSA <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers markets					

## OTHER PROGRAMS

OPERATION HAS AN AG PRESERVATION RESTRICTION (APR):		PROJECT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED ON APR:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
APR HAS BEEN CONTACTED TO DETERMINE IF PROJECT NEEDS A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL (COA):		PROJECT NEEDS APPROVAL FROM APR:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
YEAR APR WAS RECORDED	NAME ON APR		
APR CONTACT PERSON			
OPERATION HAS A CONSERVATION PLAN FROM NRCS:		YEAR CONSERVATION PLAN WAS CREATED	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A			
NRCS CONTACT PERSON			
I HAVE APPLIED TO OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT			
NAME(S) OF OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS			

## BUSINESS BACKGROUND

### Overview of Business:

Provide a brief description of your agricultural operation including products and services, years in business, and how you market your products.

## PROJECT

PROJECT CATEGORY:	EQUIPMENT/PROJECT:	AMOUNT REQUESTED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Food Safety		
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment		
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy		

## FOOD SAFETY

### Agricultural Operation Details



#### Produce Operations

Have you participated in a Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) training course?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what was the date of the course:

Include a copy of your certificate

My operation has received an audit/inspection from the MDAR Produce Safety Division?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what was the date:

Include a copy of your certificate

Is this proposed project the result of a concern identified by Produce Safety Staff?

☐ Yes ☐ No



#### Aquaculture Operations

Acreage Leased?

When does the lease end?

HACCP Certified?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Wholesale Dealer?

☐ Yes ☐ No

License Number

Species Grown:

REFERENCE ONLY - ONLINE SUBMISSION

**Project Description:**

Describe the food safety project you are proposing. What specific food safety practices or equipment will be implemented or improved?

**Project Goals:**

What are the primary goals of this food safety project? How will it improve on-farm food safety for your operation?

**Project Impacts:**

What impacts will this proposed food safety project have in terms of meeting best management practices or regulatory requirements and/or increasing market access?

## FOOD SAFETY BUDGET:

Materials				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Contractual Costs/Labor (expenses for services performed by someone other than the applicant)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment (Equipment to be purchased under the CSAP grant)				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment Rental (Rented equipment required to complete the project)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
Other Costs				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Total Project Costs:				\$
Applicant Amount (20% minimum):				\$
Eligible Project Costs (80% of Total Project Costs up to \$50,000)				\$



## ENVIRONMENT

### Project Description:

Describe the environmental project you are proposing.

### Project Goals:

Describe the specific environmental issue your project will address. (e.g., water conservation, soil health, waste management, habitat preservation, climate adaptation, etc.)

### Environmental Impacts:

What are the expected impacts of the proposed project and how will you measure them?

**ENVIRONMENT BUDGET:**

Materials				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Contractual Costs/Labor (expenses for services performed by someone other than the applicant)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment (Equipment to be purchased under the CSAP grant)				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment Rental (Rented equipment required to complete the project)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
Other Costs				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Total Project Costs:				\$
Applicant Amount (20% minimum):				\$
Eligible Project Costs (80% of Total Project Costs up to \$50,000):				\$

## ENERGY

### Project Description:

Describe the energy project you are proposing. What specific energy efficiency measures or renewable energy technologies will be implemented?

### Project Goals:

What are the primary goals of this energy project? How will it improve energy efficiency or reduce energy consumption for your operation?

## Project Impacts

Was a general efficiency audit conducted for this site?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, name of auditor:

Was a specific technical assessment conducted for the proposed energy project (either renewable energy or energy efficiency)? If yes, attach it to the application.

☐ Yes ☐ No

For renewable energy projects: What is the proposed annual renewable energy generation (e.g., kWh, gallons of hot water, etc.) for the project?

For energy efficiency projects: What is the total annual agricultural energy use associated with the proposed project (e.g., kWh, therms, gallons of fuel, cords of wood, etc.)?

What is the current annual energy consumption relevant to the proposed project for the operation (e.g., kWh, therms, gallons of fuel, cords, etc.)?

What amount of existing energy will be saved by the proposed project (e.g., kWh, therms, gallons of fuel, etc.)?

What percentage of energy currently used by the operation or component will be saved by implementing the proposed project?

## Project Economics

**A** Total Project Costs (from Budget):

\$

**B**

**Expected Annual Cost Saving or Energy Generation:**

For **energy efficiency projects**, calculate the amount of money saved per year from reduced energy consumption.

For **renewable energy projects**, estimate the energy generated (e.g., kWh, gallons of hot water) and the value of that energy based on current utility rates or offset costs.

\$

**C**

**Other Funding (other grants, incentives, rebates)**

1

List

\$

2

List

\$

3

List

\$

**C. Total (1+2+3)** \$

**D**

**MDAR Ag Energy Request (\$50,000 or less)**

\$

**Simple Payback Years = [Total Project Costs (A) – (Other Funding + Ag-Energy Request (C+D))] / (Annual Cost Savings or Energy Generation (B))**

\_\_\_\_\_

Simple Payback Years = (A) – (C+D) / B

**ENERGY BUDGET:**

Materials				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Contractual Costs/Labor (expenses for services performed by someone other than the applicant)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment (Equipment to be purchased under the CSAP grant)				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment Rental (Rented equipment required to complete the project)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
Other Costs				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Total Project Costs:				\$
Applicant Amount (20% minimum):				\$
Eligible Project Costs (80% of Total Project Costs up to \$50,000):				\$

## ALL APPLICANTS

### Timeline:

Assuming successful funding, provide a timeline demonstrating how you will complete the proposed project(s) by the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026 deadline.

### Team Members:

List the people who will be responsible for implementing this project including farm team members and contractors involved. List their roles in the project. If you plan to work with any external consultants or organizations, list their roles as partners.

**Permits:**

Provide a list of all necessary permits and when they will be secured for this project.

**Warranties:**

Provide a list of all project warranties and guarantees.

**Operation & Maintenance:**

How will the proposed project(s) be maintained for maximum longevity?

**SUSTAINABILITY & LONG-TERM IMPACT:**

How will your proposed project(s) contribute to the long-term sustainability of your agricultural operation? How will these impacts be measured?

**PREVIOUS GRANT FUNDING:**

Have you received any other grant funding from MDAR for agricultural projects in the past five years? If so, describe the project(s) and their impacts.

**PROJECT FINANCING:**

This program is a reimbursement grant requiring that the costs be paid for upfront and then reimbursed upon project completion. Demonstrate how the proposed project will be financed and how the match requirement will be met.



## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

All Projects	<p>Vendor or contractor quotes (required).</p> <p>A completed budget for the project area(s) being applied to (required).</p> <p>Applicants should include balance of funding needed to implement the proposed project by providing bank credit reference letters, line of credit reference letters, demonstration of other non-state grant funds for the project, or an executed loan.</p> <p>Proposals should include a map or aerial photo with the property boundaries drawn and the exact location of the project described in the application.</p>
Food Safety	<p>Produce applicants that are active Commonwealth Quality Program (CQP) participants should include a copy of their certificate.</p> <p>Produce applicants that have completed a Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) grower training course should include a copy of their certificate.</p> <p>Aquaculture applicants that have HACCP certification should include a copy of their certification.</p>
Environment	<p>Applicants that are eligible operations should provide proof of a Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") Conservation Plan. A copy of the entire plan is not required.</p>
Energy	<p>A project specific technical assessment, or energy audit with same detail for the project proposed, that provides back-up and supporting documentation required within the application.</p> <p>The completion of a general energy audit for the agricultural operation.</p> <p>Proposed projects should include quantification of equivalent CO<sub>2</sub> greenhouse gas savings calculations in the project's respective energy audit or technical assessment, or as a separate calculation.</p>

## Amount Requested:

State the total amount you are requesting. 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 from MDAR.

Total Amount Requested under FY26 CSAP:

\$

**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

**APR Landowners:**

I have contacted the APR Program to determine if I need a Certificate of Approval (COA): ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Signature

Date

REFERENCE ONLY - ONLINE SUBMISSION

# ATTACHMENT B

## Environmental Justice Policy

For the purposes of this RFR, “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 is 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.

While encouraged, the following questions are voluntary and will not impact eligibility. Answers to these questions help MDAR track progress towards the goals set forth in the [2021 Environmental Justice Policy](#), and the [2022 Environmental Justice Strategy](#), which require MDAR to a) report the amount of public funds used in Environmental Justice Communities, and b) track the number of new applicants for grant programs from Environmental Justice Communities and BIPOC Farmers. More information can be found in below. MDAR encourages stakeholders to provide feedback on the Environmental Justice Policy and Strategy, by visiting [mass.gov/environmental-justice](https://mass.gov/environmental-justice).

### Environmental Justice Questions *Answers to the following questions are optional. This information will not in any way affect your eligibility for MDAR programs and is used for statistical purposes only.*

Has the applicant applied for MDAR funding programs before this current application?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Has the applicant received funding from any MDAR funding programs?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

#### Questions for Farmer or Individual Applicants:

A. Select one or more of the racial categories below:

☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native/Indigenous ☐ Black or African American ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander ☐ White  
☐ Asian/South Asian ☐ Middle Eastern or North African ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Please state with the understanding that the races above may not be reflective of everyone.

B. Select one or more of the ethnic categories below:

☐ Not Hispanic or Latino ☐ Hispanic or Latino ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Please state with the understanding that the races above may not be reflective of everyone.

C. Are any applicants a Historically Underserved Farmer? Please check any of the following categories that apply based on these USDA definitions:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/underserved-farmers-ranchers>

☐ Limited Resource Farmer (With direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous two years, and who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years. A Self-Determination Tool is available to the public and may be completed on-line at: <https://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>.) ☐ Socially Disadvantaged Farmer (Individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. A socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.) ☐ Beginning Farmer (Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years)  
☐ Veteran Farmer (Served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve component thereof; was released from service under conditions other than dishonorable; and has not operated a farm or ranch, or has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years; or Who first obtained status as a veteran during the most recent 10-year period.)  
☐ N/A

**Question for Organization/Collective-Applicants** For organizations, regardless of formal legal status, or other collective applicants – does the majority of your board membership, majority owner (or owners), majority of your leadership team, fall into one or more of these groups? MDAR has adapted USDA's definition of Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers to allow organizations or entities representing multiple applicants to respond.

☐ Limited Resource Farmer, Low-Income Individuals, or Individuals with Lived Experience Relevant to the Organization's Mission ☐ Socially Disadvantaged Groups (American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous, Asian/South Asian, Black or African American, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islands, Hispanic or Latino) **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_ Please state with understanding that the races and ethnicities above may not be reflective of everyone  
☐ Beginning Farmers  
☐ Veteran Farmers  
☐ N/A

If you feel that this application did not allow you to fully explain the diversity of the applicant for this grant (whether you are applying as an individual or on behalf of an entity), please explain here:

If you have any input on this form, please complete [this feedback form](#). The review team will not see this information, and responses will not affect eligibility

# ATTACHMENT B

## RFR - Further Information on MDAR's Environmental Justice Goals

Revision Date: February 23, 2024

MDAR strives to promote and integrate EJ considerations across their programs, policies, and activities to ensure the equal access and meaningful involvement of all people residing in the Commonwealth with respect to agricultural economic and environmental sustainability and the equitable development, implementation, and accessibility to information and resources.

Among the priorities and goals outlined in the [2021 Environmental Justice Policy](#), and the [2022 Environmental Justice Strategy](#), EEA agencies are tasked with ensuring that Environmental Justice neighborhoods benefit from positive impacts of environmental programs, grants and investments.

### A. Environmental Justice Populations

EJ populations are those segments of the population that EEA has determined to be most at risk of being unaware of or unable to participate in environmental decision-making or to gain access to state environmental resources, or are especially vulnerable.

"Environmental Justice Population" is defined by the Environmental Justice Policy, issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in 2017, and updated in June, 2021, as

- A. a neighborhood that meets 1 or more of the following criteria:
  - i) the annual median household income is not more than 65 per cent of the statewide annual median household income;
  - ii) minorities comprise 40 per cent or more of the population;
  - iii) 25 per cent or more of households lack English language proficiency; or
  - iv) minorities comprise 25 per cent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 per cent of the statewide annual median household income; or
- B. a geographic portion of a neighborhood designated by the Secretary as an environmental justice population in accordance with law.

### B. MA Environmental Justice Map Viewer

The [MA Environmental Justice Map Viewer](#) was designed to map Environmental Justice populations as census block groups in Massachusetts.

Please note - The data submitted in your application will be used to determine whether your project falls within an Environmental Justice block group, and will be used to design a map, available on the MDAR website, to show the positive impact of its grant awards, demonstrating the reach of its programs in EJ communities.

For more information on MDAR's Environmental Justice Program, or to provide feedback, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mdars-environmental-justice-program>.



## Attachment C

### RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

Revision Date: July 10, 2024

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 departmental 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 also may 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.

**1. 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 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.

**2. COMMBUYS Registration.** Bidders may elect to register for a free COMMBUYS Seller account which provides value-added features, including automated email notification associated with postings and modifications to COMMBUYS records. However, 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; and 4) in the event the Commonwealth adopts an alternate e-procurement platform, 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).

COMMBUYS uses terminology with which bidders must be familiar to conduct business with the Commonwealth. To view this terminology and to learn more about COMMBUYS, please visit the [Learn about COMMBUYS Resources](#) page on mass.gov.

**3. 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.

**4. 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.

**5. Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) Programs.** Pursuant to [Executive Order 599](#), the Commonwealth supports the use of diverse and small businesses through the Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) and the Supplier Diversity

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

Program (SDP). Based on the estimated value of the procurement, one of the above-mentioned programs shall be applicable to this RFR. For more information on the program that applies to this solicitation, see the body of this RFR.

### **6. Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP)**

**Program Background.** The Massachusetts [Small Business Purchasing Program](#) (SBPP) was established pursuant to [Executive Order 599](#) to increase state contracting opportunities with small businesses having their principal place of business within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Pursuant to the SBPP, it is the intention of the issuing department to award this Small Procurement to one or more SBPP participating business(es) as described below.

**SBPP Award Preference.** While all businesses, no matter the size or principal place of business, may submit responses to this solicitation, should an SBPP participant respond and meet the best value criteria described in this solicitation, the SBPP participant shall be awarded the contract. The Strategic Sourcing Services Team (SST) will not evaluate submissions from non-SBPP participants unless no SBPP Bidder meets the SST's best value evaluation criteria.

**SBPP Participation Eligibility.** To be eligible to participate in this procurement as an SBPP participant, an entity must meet the following criteria, and be marked as an SBPP-registered business in [COMMBUYS](#):

1. Have its principal place of business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;
2. Been in business for at least one year;
3. Employ a combined total of 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees in all locations, or employees work less than a combined total of 26,000 hours per quarter; and
4. Have gross revenues, as reported on appropriate tax forms, of \$15 million or less, based on a three-year average.

Non-profit firms also must be registered as a non-profit or charitable organization with the MA Attorney General's Office and be up to date with all filings required by that office and be tax exempt under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**SBPP Compliance Requirements.** It is the responsibility of the Bidder to ensure that their SBPP status is current at the time of submitting a response and throughout the life of any resulting contract. Misrepresentation of SBPP status will result in disqualification from consideration, and may result in debarment, contract termination, and other actions. To learn more about the SBPP, including how to apply, visit the SBPP webpage, <http://www.mass.gov/sbpp>.

**Program Resources and Assistance.** Bidders and Contractors seeking assistance regarding SBPP may visit the [SBPP Webpage](#), or contact the SBPP Help Desk at [sbpp@mass.gov](mailto:sbpp@mass.gov).

### **7. Supplier Diversity Program (SDP)**

**Program Background.** Pursuant to [Executive Order 599](#), the Commonwealth's [Supplier Diversity Program](#) (SDP) promotes business-to-business relationships between awarded Contractors and diverse businesses and non-profit organizations ("SDP Partners") certified or recognized (see below for more information) by the [Supplier Diversity Office \(SDO\)](#).

All Bidders and Contractors are strongly encouraged to create a profile on the SDO's Supplier Diversity Hub to access the Commonwealth's supplier diversity resources and tools.

**Financial Commitment Requirements.** All Bidders responding to this solicitation are required to make a significant financial commitment ("SDP Commitment") to partnering with one or more SDO-certified or recognized diverse business enterprise(s) or non-profit organization(s). This SDP Commitment must be expressed as a percentage of contract sales resulting from this solicitation that would be spent with the SDP Partner(s).

After contract award (if any), the Total SDP Commitment shall become a contractual requirement to be met annually on a Massachusetts fiscal year basis (July 1 – June 30) for the duration of the contract. The minimum acceptable Total SDP Commitment in response to this solicitation shall be 1%. Bidders shall be awarded additional evaluation points for higher SDP Commitments.

No contract shall be awarded to a Bidder without an SDP Commitment that meets the requirements stated herein. This requirement extends to all Bidders regardless of their own supplier diversity certification.

### **Eligible SDP Partner Certification Categories**

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

SDP Partners must be business enterprises and/or non-profit organizations certified or recognized by the SDO in one or more of the following certification categories:

- Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Minority Non-Profit Organization (M/NPO)
- Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Women Non-Profit Organization (W/NPO)
- Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VBE)
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVOBE)
- Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Business Enterprise (LBGTBE)

**Eligible Types of Business-to-Business Relationships.** Bidders and Contractors may engage SDP Partners as follows:

- **Subcontracting**, defined as a partnership in which the SDP partner is involved in the provision of products and/or services to the Commonwealth.
- **Ancillary Products and Services**, defined as a business relationship in which the SDP partner provides products or services that are not directly related to the Contractor's contract with the Commonwealth but may be related to the Contractor's own operational needs. These may include but are not limited to the following examples: professional services (e.g., IT, legal, advertising, HR, accounting etc.), maintenance services (e.g., cleaning, landscaping, tradespersons services, etc.), office expenses (e.g., office supplies, furniture, IT supplies, etc.). Anything declared as a business expense in which a certified vendor is used would qualify.

Other types of business-to-business relationships are not acceptable under this contract. If subcontracting is proposed, it must meet all the subcontracting provisions (if any) listed in this RFR.

**Program Flexibility.** The SDP encompasses the following provisions to support Bidders in establishing and maintaining sustainable business-to-business relationships meeting their needs:

- SDP Partners are **not** required to be subcontractors.
- SDP Partners are **not** required to be Massachusetts-based businesses.
- SDP Partners **may be changed or added** during the term of the contract, provided the Contractor continues to meet its SDP Commitment.

**SDP Plan Form Requirements.** All Bidders must complete the SDP Plan Form included in this solicitation and attach it to their bid response. In addition to proposing an SDP Commitment, each Bidder must propose one or more SDP Partner(s) to utilize to meet its SDP Commitment. Certified diverse Bidders may not list their own companies, their subsidiaries, or affiliates as SDP Partners and may not meet their SDP Commitment by spending funds internally or with their own subsidiaries or affiliates.

**Bidders may propose SDP Partners that are:**

- **Certified or recognized by the SDO:** Such partners appear in the [SDO Directory of Certified Businesses](#) or in the [SBA Veteran Small Business Certification \(VetCert\)](#) directory. After contract award (if any), spending with such partners will contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment.
- **Certified by one of SDO's recognized third-party certification bodies but not yet listed in the SDO Directory of Certified Businesses:** Such partners must be certified in eligible categories by one of SDO's recognized third-party certification bodies, which include the [City of Boston](#), the [Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council \(GNEMSDC\)](#), the [Center for Women & Enterprise \(CWE\)](#), [Disability: IN](#), [National LGBT Chamber of Commerce \(NGLCC\)](#), or the [National Veteran Owned Business Association \(NaVOBA\)](#) but have not yet opted to be listed in the SDO Directory of Certified Businesses. In order to opt into SDO's Directory of Certified Businesses, the SDP partner must follow the applicable expedited instructions on SDO's Apply for Recognition as a Third-Party Certified Business webpage. Self-certification is not acceptable. While Bidders may list such proposed SDP Partners on their SDP Plans, spending with such partners will not contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment unless they apply for and are granted SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition. If proposed SDP Partners do not receive SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition, the Contractor must find alternative SDP Partners to meet the SDP Commitment.
- **Not yet certified or recognized by the SDO or one of SDO's recognized third-party certification bodies:** Such partners must be certified in eligible categories by other third-party certification bodies that are not yet recognized by the SDO, such as another city or state supplier diversity certification office, the [National Minority Supplier Development Council](#), or the [Women Business Enterprise National Council](#), but are not listed in the above-mentioned directories. Self-certification is not acceptable. While Bidders may list such



## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

proposed SDP Partners on their SDP Plans, spending with such partners will not contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment unless they apply for and are granted SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition. If proposed SDP Partners do not receive SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition, the Contractor must find alternative SDP Partners to meet the SDP Commitment.

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure that their proposed SDP Partners obtain such certification or recognition by the SDO after contract award (if any). The issuing department and the SDO will not conduct outreach to proposed SDP Partners to ensure their certification. Furthermore, no guarantee may be made that a proposed SDP Partner will be certified, or regarding the time it may take to process a proposed SDP Partner certification. Contractors may direct partners to the SDO's homepage, [www.mass.gov/sdo](http://www.mass.gov/sdo) and the [Certification Self-Assessment Tool](#) for guidance on applying for certification.

It is **desirable** for Bidders to provide a description of supplier diversity businesses practices. Specifically, listing contact information for the individual or unit responsible for establishing and maintaining supplier diversity relationships, and including a written policy for establishing and maintaining supplier diversity relationships.

It also is **desirable** for Bidders to use the SDP Plan Form to describe additional creative initiatives (if any) related to engaging, buying from, and/or collaborating with diverse businesses. Such initiatives may include but not be limited to:

- Serving as a mentor in a mentor-protégé relationship.
- Technical and financial assistance provided to diverse businesses.
- Participation in joint ventures between nondiverse and diverse businesses.
- Voluntary assistance programs by which nondiverse business employees are loaned to diverse businesses or by which diverse business employees are taken into viable business ventures to acquire training and experience in managing business affairs.

**Evaluation of SDP Forms.** To encourage Bidders to develop substantial supplier diversity initiatives and commitments as measures valuable to the Commonwealth, at least 25% of the total available evaluation points for this bid solicitation shall be allocated to the evaluation of the SDP Plan submissions. Because the purpose of the SDP is to promote business-to-business partnerships, the Bidders' workforce diversity initiatives will not be considered in the evaluation.

**SDP Spending Reports.** After contract award, Contractors must submit reports at least annually to demonstrate compliance with the agreed-upon SDP Commitment. To submit SDP spending reports using the Hub, Contractors must first create a profile in the Hub. Once registered, awarded contractors must report information such as, but not limited to, SDO or SDO-recognized SDP partner(s), spend with SDO partner(s), and total contract sales. Contractors must follow report submission instructions from the issuing department and the SDO.

**SDP Spending Compliance.** Only spending with SDP Partners that appear in the [SDO Directory of Certified Businesses](#) or in the [SBA Veteran Small Business Certification \(VetCert\)](#) directory shall be counted toward a Contractor's compliance with their SDP Commitment. Spending with SDP Partners that do not appear in the directories above shall not be counted toward meeting a Contractor's SDP Commitment.

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure they meet their SDP Commitment, and the SDO and the issuing department assume no responsibility for any Contractor's failure to meet its SDP Commitment.

**SDP Spending Verification.** The SDO and the contracting department reserve 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.

**Program Resources and Assistance.** Contractors seeking assistance in the development of their SDP Plans or identification of potential SDP Partners may visit the SDP webpage, [www.mass.gov/sdp](http://www.mass.gov/sdp), or contact the SDP Help Desk at [sdp@mass.gov](mailto:sdp@mass.gov).

**8. 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, and/or fur-bearing animals; and any forestry or lumbering operations.



## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

**9. Best Value Selection and Negotiation.** The Strategic Sourcing Services Team or SSST may select the response(s) which demonstrates the best value overall, including proposed alternatives that will achieve the procurement goals of the department. The SSST 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.

**10. Bidder Communication.** Bidders are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring department or any member of the SSST 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.

**11. 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.

**12. 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.

**13. 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 SSST, including requests for clarification. The SSST 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 SSST to be lost or rejected by any means including email or spam filtering.

**14. 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 is able to 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 may track and verify payments made electronically through the Comptroller's [Vendor Web system](#). A link to the EFT application may be found on the [OSD Forms](#) page ( [www.mass.gov/lists/osd-forms](http://www.mass.gov/lists/osd-forms)). 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 already is 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 SSST 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 SSST will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis and communicate the findings to the bidder.

**15. 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](#).

**16. 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

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

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.

**17. 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.

**18. Prompt Payment Discounts (PPD).** All bidders responding to this procurement must agree to offer discounts through participation in the Commonwealth's Prompt Payment Discount (PPD) initiative for receiving early and/or on-time payments, unless the bidder provides 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 (EFT) 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 may be tracked and verified through the Comptroller's Vendor Web system. The PPD form may 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 SSST. The SSST 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 SSST 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.

**19. 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.

**20. 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 SSST reserves the right to reject unreasonable requests.

**21. 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.

**22. 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.

### **23. Acceptable Forms of Signature**

Effective June 15, 2021, for all 1) CTR forms, including the Standard Contract Form, W-9s, Electronic Funds Transfer

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

(EFT) forms, ISAs, and other CTR-issued documents and forms, or 2) documents related to state finance and within the statutory area of authority or control of CTR (i.e. contracts, payrolls, and related supporting documentation), CTR will accept signatures executed by an authorized signatory in any of the following ways: 1. Traditional “wet signature” (ink on paper); 2. Electronic signature that is either: a. Hand drawn using a mouse or finger if working from a touch screen device; or Page 2 b. An uploaded picture of the signatory’s hand drawn signature 3. Electronic signatures affixed using a digital tool such as Adobe Sign or DocuSign. If using an electronic signature, the signature must be visible, include the signatory’s name and title, and must be accompanied by a signature date. Please be advised that typed text of a name not generated by a digital tool such as Adobe Sign or DocuSign, even in computer-generated cursive script, or an electronic symbol, are not acceptable forms of electronic signature.