



**Cranberry Renovation &  
Enhancement Program (CRAN)  
Fiscal Year 2026  
(July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026)**

Request for Response (RFR): RFR File: **AGR-CRAN-FY26**

**For practices that support cranberry growers in revitalizing and improving their operations.**

**This program provides funding for both renovation projects aimed at upgrading existing cranberry bogs, as well as enhancement initiatives that increase productivity, sustainability, and environmental stewardship.**

**Responses must be received by:  
11:59 PM on Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

Contact: Laura J. Maul  
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**Applications must be submitted as instructed on page 8  
or they will not be accepted.**



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

## GRANT OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

<p><b>Executive Office of Energy &amp; Environmental Affairs</b>  <b>Rebecca Tepper, Secretary</b>  <b>Grant Announcement</b>  <b>RFR ID: AGR-CRAN-FY26</b>  <b>Dated: May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>  <b>Cranberry Renovation &amp; Enhancement Program (CRAN)</b></p>	
<b>Proposals Sought For:</b>	This Cranberry Renovation and Enhancement program (“CRAN Program” or “Program”) provides funding for both renovation projects aimed at upgrading existing cranberry bogs, as well as enhancement initiatives that increase productivity, sustainability, and environmental stewardship. By investing in these critical areas, the Program seeks to foster long-term growth, innovation, and resilience within the cranberry industry, ensuring its continued success and competitive edge in the marketplace.
<b>Overview &amp; Goals</b>	This Program provides funding for renovation and enhancement projects that improve cranberry bog efficiency, productivity, and sustainability. By offering reimbursement grants for capital infrastructure upgrades, energy-efficient equipment, and environmental impact reduction, the Program supports both economic growth and environmental stewardship. Its goals are to enhance business sustainability, reduce environmental effects, and promote innovation within the cranberry industry.
<b>Eligible Projects</b>	<p>Cranberry bog renovations that result in more efficient bog design and production while adopting known conservation practices that help prevent impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water and other conservation benefits or promote other environmental goals.</p> <p>Projects that work towards increasing on-farm efficiencies, lower operating costs, increase revenue while enhancing environmental benefits.</p>
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	Cranberry operations engaged in production agriculture (See Section 2). The property must be in active agricultural use and managed by the applicant for at least the three years previous to the date of application. Renovations must be on bogs greater than one acre and must be active as defined by 310 CMR 10.04.
<b>Application Deadline</b>	Must be received by 11:59 <b>pm on Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b> (See Section 5).
<b>Funding Availability</b>	<p>Maximum funding is \$25,000 per acre up to a total of \$125,000 for renovations.</p> <p>Maximum funding for enhancement projects per applicant is 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000.</p> <p>(See further detail on funding availability in Section 4).</p>
<b>Match Requirement</b>	Minimum of 20% of total project costs including materials and labor (See Section 4D).
<b>Duration of Contract</b>	Contract end date is June 30, 2026 with no extensions.
<b>Contact Information</b>	<p>Laura Maul – (857) 507-5972  <a href="mailto:Laura.Maul@mass.gov">Laura.Maul@mass.gov</a>            30 Riverside Drive, Suite 202            Lakeville, MA 02347</p>

## DEFINITIONS

**Agricultural Preservation Restriction (“APR”):** A legal agreement that limits non-agricultural development on a property, preserving the land for agricultural use in perpetuity.

**Agricultural Use (310 CMR 10.04):** The use of land for farming activities as defined by Massachusetts regulations in Chapter 310 CMR 10.04, specifically including the cultivation of crops like cranberries.

**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.

**Cranberry Operation:** A farm or agricultural operation that produces cranberries as part of its business and meets the criteria set forth in M.G.L. Chapter 128, Section 1A.

**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.

**USDA/FSA Farm and Track Number:** The unique identification number assigned to a farm operation by the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) and the Farm Service Agency (“FSA”), which is used for tracking purposes.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (“MDAR”) is pleased to announce the opening of the application period for Program. This Program combines two distinct funding opportunities, renovation projects aimed at upgrading cranberry bogs and enhancement initiatives focused on increasing productivity, sustainability, and environmental stewardship, into a streamlined application process. By consolidating these funding categories into this Program, MDAR aims to simplify the application process and increase accessibility, enabling cranberry operations to make impactful improvements in both environmental sustainability and operational efficiency.

## 2. APPLICANTS

### 2A. Eligible Applicants

Applicant must be a cranberry operation as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A that is engaged in the business of production agriculture and the property must be in active agricultural use and managed by the applicant for a minimum of the previous three years to the date of the application.

### 2B. Size of Operation

Bogs must be greater than one acre in size and in agricultural use within the meaning set forth in 310 CMR 10.04. Grower and acreage must be defined based on individual USDA/FSA farm and track number.

### 2C. Leased Property

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

### 2D. Previously Funded Applicants

Proposals from individuals/operations that have been previously funded under MDAR funding programs are eligible for funding under this Program.

### 2F. Applicants with an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (“APR”)

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

### 2G. 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).

## 2H. 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 also contained in Attachment B.

## 3. PROJECTS

### 3A. Projects

Project examples are listed below. These are not the only projects that are eligible under the program. Projects that still meet program goals but are not listed below **will** be considered in the review process.

#### Renovation:

Projects must result in a completed renovation of a cranberry bog. Proposals can be for the entire renovation or components that will allow the applicant to complete a renovation. Projects that will not result in a completed bog renovation are not eligible.

Eligible Costs:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cranberry Vines</li><li>• Sand and Leveling</li><li>• Water Management Structures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excavation Equipment or Services</li><li>• Infrastructure Costs</li><li>• Other Equipment Rentals</li></ul>

#### Enhancement:

Example Projects:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spraying Rigs</li><li>• Bog Efficiency Upgrades (ramps, ditch alteration, routing pipes, etc.)</li><li>• Pruning Equipment</li><li>• Sanding Equipment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harvest Equipment/ Fruit Containment Booms</li><li>• Irrigation Upgrades</li><li>• Fertilizer Equipment</li><li>• Fruit Handling &amp; Screening Technology</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.
- **Drones:** Costs associated with purchasing, maintaining, or operating drones used for agricultural purposes.

### 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 costs:** Fees charged for legal services or support.

### Eligibility and Compliance

- **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 2. 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.
- **Minimum Acreage:** Proposals for bogs less than one acre.
- **Cranberry Renovation Projects:** Proposals for renovations must result in a completed renovation for the acreage – partial renovations are not eligible.
- **Non-Cranberry Proposals:** Proposals from applicants who are not engaged in commercial cranberry production or who are not engaged in “farming” or “agriculture” as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A.

## 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 to both categories, the maximum is \$175,000.

Renovation	Maximum funding is \$25,000 per acre up to \$125,000.
Enhancement	Maximum funding per applicant is 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000.

- All funding is subject to appropriation as set forth in Section 4B.
- As MDAR would like to fund as many eligible projects as possible, MDAR encourages projects requesting less than the maximum stated.
- MDAR reserves the right to offer an award amount different than the amount requested, including amounts lower or higher in its sole discretion.
- Awards are limited to one per agricultural operation using a unique tax identification number.

### 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.

### 4C. Budget 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 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, or an executed loan will receive additional points in the review.

### 4D. Match

Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of a 20% cash-match towards the project.

## 5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

### 5A. Application Submission Instructions

#### Create a User Profile:

To access and submit the application, applicants must first create a user profile through **MyMassGov**. This is a secure portal that allows users to access participating Massachusetts state services using a single login.

Follow the steps below to create your profile:

1. **Create a MyMassGov Account:**

Visit [MyMassGov | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/my-massgov) to obtain a username and password.

- Select the **business account** option.

**Note:** MyMassGov system may prompt you for a tax ID number or social security number. Skip this step without entering this information. It is **NOT** required for the Grant Management System.

2. **Verify Your Email & Enable Multifactor Authentication:**

Follow the instructions provided to verify your email and complete the multifactor authentication setup process.

3. **Access the Grant Management System:**

After logging into your MyMassGov account, navigate to the **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Grant Management System** ([greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal](https://greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal)). If prompted, select the "Log in/Register" link. Do not select "State Users Login" link.

4. **Validate Your Profile:**

The system will prompt you to provide additional information to validate your user profile. Access to the application will not be granted until this validation is complete.

**Note:** Profile validation may take one or more business days. Early registration is strongly recommended to avoid submission delays.

#### Submit an Application:

Applicants are **required** to submit their application using the **online application form and upload tool** available through the Commonwealth's new grant management system: [greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal](https://greenhub.appianportals.com/applicants-portal). This includes both creating a user profile (instructions above) and submitting the full application through the online portal.

**Paper applications will not be accepted.** Applications submitted by email, fax, or any other electronic means outside of the designated portal will also not be accepted.

All application materials — including the online form and supporting documents — must be **submitted by 11:59 PM (ET) on Thursday, July 24, 2025**. At that time, the online portal will close and no further submissions will be permitted. All submissions are digitally time-stamped.

**Important:** Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances. Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring that their materials are successfully submitted before the deadline. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) will not consider claims of technical issues or user error as grounds for exceptions.

All files uploaded must be in one of the following formats:

- Microsoft Office-compatible files (e.g., Word, Excel)
- Unlocked Adobe Acrobat PDF files

Once the deadline has passed, applicants will no longer be able to modify or upload additional materials to their submission.

## 5B. Additional Application Documentation

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

- Applicants must provide a completed budget for the proposed project(s).
- Applicants must provide quotes from vendors and/or contractors.
- Applicants should include balance of funding documents. This can be bank credit reference letters, a line of credit reference letter, demonstration of other grant funds for the project, or an executed loan.
- Applicants can provide an upload of any design or installation plans for proposed projects.
- Applicants should provide proof of a Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") Conservation Plan.
- Applicants should provide a map of their farm property with their bogs clearly outlined.

## 5C. 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.

**Proposals will be evaluated based on the following 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's goals and objectives. The goals should be clearly outlined and state the objectives of the project and what is hoped to be achieved by completing it. This can include reducing costs, improving sustainability, increasing profitability, etc.

Impacts: The specific, measurable short-term outcomes of the project that should address environmental, operational, or financial improvements and should be quantifiable. This can include actual reductions in energy costs, specific water savings, improvements in crop yields, etc. 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. This includes ensuring that the project outcomes are durable and can be maintained over time, supporting long-term impacts. This can include enhancing the farm's resilience to climate change, sustainable land use, etc.

Metrics to Track Impacts: The applicant should define how they will measure the long-term impacts of the project, including the metrics used to track success after the project is completed. This can include monitoring water use over a specified time, increased production efficiency, such as higher yields per acre, or other measurable impacts.

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

- 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.
- No project may commence until a contract has been executed by all parties.
- 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 a Final Scope of Services.

### 6B. Additional Contract Documentation

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

- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form including Terms and 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; and
- 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.

## 7. DELIVERABLES, OWNERSHIP, AND CREDIT DUE

### 7A. Installation Standards & Permits

- The funded contractual activity will be evaluated prior to full reimbursement. Work will be evaluated for satisfactory completion and compliance with standards. Spot inspections may be conducted at 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.
- 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.

### 7B. Reporting

- A final Project Summary Report may be required forty-five days after close of the Fiscal Year (June 30, 2026);
- MDAR may reach out periodically over the next five years for additional information to gauge funding impact and efficacy of this Program.

## 7C. Invoicing

- Funds will be disbursed strictly on a reimbursement basis. Payments will be made upon project completion in accordance with the contract terms and conditions. Project completion is defined as the successful completion of tasks, deliverables, and outcomes as specified in the executed contract, scope of services, and budget including technical specifications, timelines, reporting requirements, and other obligations outlined by MDAR. **Only expenses incurred during the period of the contract are eligible for reimbursement. Any incurred project costs that occur prior to an executed contract are NOT eligible for reimbursement from MDAR.**
- Satisfactory documentation for eligible costs and payments associated with approved projects must be submitted to MDAR and approved prior to reimbursement. Applicant must clearly provide invoices for items purchased and labor hired, as well as proof of payment in the form of cancelled checks, credit card receipts, and/or bank checks.
- All charges must have occurred by June 30, 2026.

## 8. DEADLINES & PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

Release of RFR	Tuesday, May 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
Application Due Date	Must be received by 11:59 pm on Thursday, July 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2025.
Estimated Award Date	October 2025.
Estimated Contract Start Date	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

Type of Procurement	Grant
Use of This Procurement by Single or Multiple Departments	This RFR is a single department procurement. All contracts awarded under this RFR will be utilized by MDAR.
Request for Single or Multiple Contractors	Multiple.
Information Session	<p>Applicants may submit questions regarding this RFR and application process. Questions must be submitted by email to <a href="mailto:MDARGrants@mass.gov">MDARGrants@mass.gov</a>. The deadline for written questions is Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025. All questions and answers will be posted at <a href="http://www.mass.gov/how-to/cranberry-bog-renovation-grant-program">www.mass.gov/how-to/cranberry-bog-renovation-grant-program</a> so that all applicants can review.</p> <p>An informational webinar will be held for interested applicants at 10am on Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025. To access the webinar, register at <a href="http://www.mass.gov/how-to/cranberry-bog-renovation-grant-program">www.mass.gov/how-to/cranberry-bog-renovation-grant-program</a>. This webinar will be not be recorded.</p>
RFR Distribution Method	<p>This RFR has been distributed by the Department's Farm and Market Newsletter, and posted to the program's website at <a href="http://www.mass.gov/agr">www.mass.gov/agr</a>.</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>
List of Attachments	<p>A. Application Form</p> <p>B. Environmental Justice Policy &amp; Questions</p> <p>C. RFR Required Specifications</p>

# ATTACHMENT A

## CRANBERRY RENOVATION & ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CRAN) - GRANT RESPONSE FORM (FY 2026)

### 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			

# ATTACHMENT A

## OPERATION DETAILS

ACREAGE OWNED	ACREAGE LEASED	ACREAGE IN PRODUCTION
List any other agricultural products produced by your operation in addition to cranberries.		
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		
Describe any water resource areas that the operation is located within, including drinking water protection zones, overlying an aquifer, etc.		

## 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			
NRCS CONTACT PERSON			
I HAVE APPLIED TO OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT			
NAME(S) OF OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS			

## ATTACHMENT A

### 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.

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIRED

### PROJECT

PROJECT CATEGORY:	EQUIPMENT/PROJECT:	AMOUNT REQUESTED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Renovation		
<input type="checkbox"/> Enhancement		

## RENOVATION

### Project Description:

Describe the proposed renovation project including the design and installation and how it will result in a completed bog renovation. Explain how the project follows relevant UMass Cranberry Station Best Management Practices (BMPs) for renovations.

### Project Goals:

What are the primary goals of this renovation project?

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIRED

## ATTACHMENT A

### Renovation Details:

How many acres do you plan to renovate under this grant program?

What is the variety of the vines to be planted under this renovation?

What is the current variety of the vines on the acreage to be renovated?

What are the current production levels on this acreage?

What are the long-term projected production levels for this acreage by completing this renovation?

Are you renovating any additional acreage outside of the proposed acreage for this grant?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many acres?

### Project Impacts:

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

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIRED

# ATTACHMENT A

## RENOVATION BUDGET:

Maximum per acre is \$25,000 up to \$125,000.

Materials				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1	Vines			
2	Irrigation			
3	Drainage			
4	Sand			
5	Other			
6	Other			
Contractual Costs/Labor (expenses for services performed by someone other than the applicant)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	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 (Maximum of \$125,000):				\$

## ENHANCEMENT

### Project Description:

Describe the project you are proposing.

### Project Goals:

Describe the primary goals of this project.

### Impacts:

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

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIRED

# ATTACHMENT A

## ENHANCEMENT 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 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.

## ATTACHMENT A

### 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.

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIRED

## ATTACHMENT A

### 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?

## ATTACHMENT A

### 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.

ONLINE SUBMISSION REQUIRED

## ATTACHMENT A

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

#### All Projects

Vendor or contractor quotes (required).

A completed budget for the project category being applied to (required).

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 (optional).

Proposals should include a map or aerial photo with the property boundaries drawn and the exact location of the project described in the application (optional).

Applicants should provide proof of a Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") Conservation Plan (optional).

### 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 Through the Cranberry Renovation & Enhancement Program:

\$

### Attestation:

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

Signature

Date

Print Name

# ATTACHMENT B

## 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.)  
☐ N/A  
☐ 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.)

**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  
☐ Beginning Farmers  
☐ Veteran Farmers  
☐ N/A  
☐ 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

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>.



OPERATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

Revision Date: July 13, 2023

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

The terms of 801 CMR 21.00: *Procurement of Commodities and Services* are incorporated by reference into this RFR. Words used in this RFR shall have the meanings defined in 801 CMR 21.00. Additional definitions 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 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.

Sensitivity level - low

# ATTACHMENT C

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

**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**

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.

Other types of business-to-business relationships are not acceptable under this contract. All provisions of this RFR applicable to subcontracting shall apply equally to the engagement of SDP Partners as subcontractors.

# ATTACHMENT C

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

**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.
- **Not yet certified or recognized by the SDO:** Such partners must be certified in eligible categories by a third-party certification body, such as another city or state supplier diversity certification office, the [National Minority Supplier Development Council](#), the [Women Business Enterprise National Council](#), [Disability: IN](#), or the [National LGBT Chamber of Commerce \(NGLCC\)](#), but are not listed in the above-mentioned directories. 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.

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 an SDP Focus Statement that describe the bidder's overall approach to increasing the participation of diverse businesses in the provision of products and services under this proposal/contract (subcontracting) and in the Bidder's general business operations (ancillary products and services). Such a description may include but not be limited to:

- A clearly stated purpose or goal.
- Specific types of diverse and small businesses targeted.
- Which departments/units within the business are responsible for implementing supplier diversity.
- Types of opportunities for which diverse and small businesses are considered.
- Specific measures/methods of engagement of diverse and small businesses.
- An existing internal supplier diversity policy.
- Public availability of the Bidder's supplier diversity policy.

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 create a profile in the Hub. 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.

# ATTACHMENT C

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

**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.

**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](#).

# ATTACHMENT C

## RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

**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 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 (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.