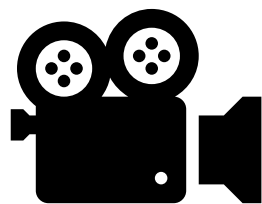


FY26 Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program (FSIG)

Informational Webinar
March 24, 2025





This recording and presentation slides are posted on the
FSIG application webpage:

www.mass.gov/ApplytoFSIG

WEBINAR OBJECTIVES

- I. FSIG priorities
- II. Grant timeline
- III. Overview of the FSIG FY26 RFR
- IV. Application and submission process
- V. Overview of review process
- VI. Guidance for submitting questions

MDAR's New Division of Food Security

Launched in Fall 2024 as a continuation of MDAR's interagency work to advance food security efforts. The Division's purpose is to:

- Support interagency implementation, evaluation and coordination of food security initiatives, policies and programs within state government
- Coordinate agency-wide alignment of efforts in food security, food access, and food justice
- Oversee the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program



Photo credit: MDAR

FSIG Program Overview



Photo credit: MDAR, Boston Public School EATS event

- Established in 2020 as part of the Governor's Food Security Taskforce to address supply chain disruptions and widespread food insecurity, the grant program has continued to be funded by state appropriations.
- FSIG has awarded \$108 million to 830+ projects.
- Previously managed by the Secretariat of Energy & Environment, as of 2024 FSIG is now under MDAR's Division of Food Security.

FSIG Program Overview



Photo credit: MDAR

The grant program aims to:

- Support food security infrastructure that provide more access to locally grown, raised, harvested and caught foods, by strengthening the Commonwealth's food supply chain.
- Expand resilience and supply chain connections in the middle-of-the-supply chain to aggregate, process, manufacture, store, distribute or wholesale local foods for the Commonwealth's residents;
- Increase the production and consumption of local foods;
- Expand and protect the physical infrastructure that keep locally raised foods fresh, safe and accessible, particularly during supply chain disruptions.

FY26 Grant Overview

- Capital infrastructure only – durable equipment (will last 5+ years) and, if necessary, contracted labor costs
- Reimbursement program
- Contracts through June 30, 2026
- 20% cash match requirement
- \$10,000 minimum award - \$1 million maximum award

Grant Timeline

	Dates
Questions submitted:	Monday April 14, 2025 by 4PM
Reasonable accommodation:	Monday April 14, 2025 by 4PM
Application due:	Monday May 5, 2025 by 4PM
Review period:	May – August 2025
Estimated award announcements:	August or September 2025
Estimated contract sent:	September 2025
Contract end date/project completed	June 30, 2026

Eligible Applicants

Eligible Entities	Examples of Eligible Applicant Types*	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For profit businesses• Nonprofit organizations• Public• Tribal entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agricultural operation• Seafood dealer and processor• Aquaculture• Food hub• School – K-12• School – college/university• Early childhood education center• Food bank or pantry• Farmer’s market• Food recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meat processing/ Slaughterhouse• Healthcare/Medical facility• Grocery store• Commercial kitchen• Value-added processor• Distributor/wholesaler• Medically tailored meals service

***Must be in operation a minimum of 3 years and have the ability to enter into a legally binding agreement with the Commonwealth.**

FY26 Project Types

Note that in FY26 projects will be evaluated based on IMPACT and PROJECT TYPE, not type of entity.

- Expansion of agriculture and seafood production
- Local and regional mid-supply chain expansion
- Food access and availability
- Emergency preparedness and resilience (for municipalities and Tribal governments only)

Expansion of Agriculture & Seafood Production

Project Purpose	Examples
Develop or enhance infrastructure on farms, community gardens or commercial fishing boats to increase the availability of a safer, resilient and sustainable food supply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Season extension equipment/infrastructure;• Equipment for fishing boats that support climate adaptation to new species;• On-farm equipment that increases efficiency or sustainability to expand cultivation of in-demand foods or contribute to a safer food supply;• Equipment to develop or enhance existing community gardens, vertical farming projects, and urban farms;• Aquaculture equipment;• Slaughterhouse infrastructure and equipment;• Facility construction or renovations;• Equipment or infrastructure to enhance biosecurity, such as wild bird exclusion from livestock to reduce the risk of HPAI contamination.



Photo credit: MDAR

Local & Regional Mid-Supply Chain Expansion

Project Purpose	Examples
Develop or strengthen middle-of the supply chain capacity to increase availability of more and diverse local foods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cold storage and distribution expansion;• Expansion of value-add processing and packaging facilities to bring new products to market;• Technology or digital infrastructure for tracking local purchasing or more efficient inventory management;• Meat, fish, or dairy processing, packing, packaging, and labelling equipment;• Construction of processing facility.



Photo credit: MDAR

Food Access & Availability

Project Purpose	Examples
Develop or enhance programs that increase the consumption of local food. This includes emergency food assistance providers and organizations providing food service such as early childhood centers, schools, hospitals, and correctional facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cold food storage to extend fresh food availability;• Kitchen equipment to enhance scratch cooking of locally grown, fresh and culturally-relevant foods;• Equipment that promotes consumption of fresh, local and nutritious foods;• Equipment that expands food recovery and donation programs;• Facility renovations or expansions.



Photo credit: MDAR

Emergency Preparedness & Resilience*

Project Purpose	Examples
Strengthen critical food supply chain infrastructure that contribute to long-term food security by addressing food supply chain risks including but not limited to biological, environmental, weather-related and economic risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equipment or adaptive infrastructure that ensures critical infrastructure keeps working during emergency such as a power outage or flooding;• Coastal port infrastructure that supports fishing industry.

**For municipalities and tribal entities only*

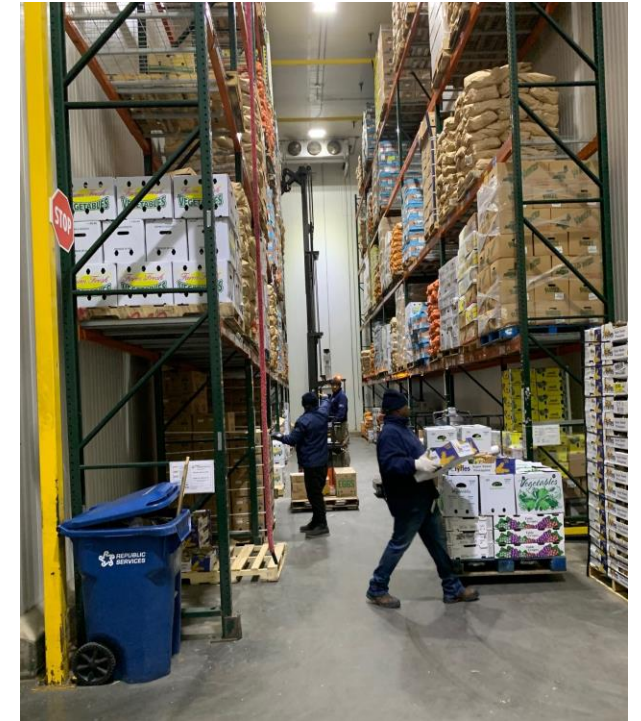


Photo credit: MDAR

Match

- Based on the project TOTAL eligible under FSIG
- Required 20% cash match for all applicants
- Total project cost MUST include eligible expenses only
- Must be a cash match. No in-kind.

How the Match Works Example

Equipment (Equipment to be purchased under the FSIG grant)				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1	Convection Steamer	\$21,861	1	\$21,861
2	Tilting Kettle	\$22,501	1	\$22,501
3	Freezer	\$7,156	2	\$14,321
4	Heated Cabinet	\$3,548	2	\$7,096
5	Freight	\$675	-	\$675
Total FSIG Project Cost:				\$ 66,454
20% Applicant Match:				\$ 13,291
FSIG Request (Total Project Costs minus Applicant Match):				\$ 53,163

Evaluation Criteria

Background/ project need	35%
Impacts	30%
Feasibility of the project plan	25%
Sustainability	10%
100%	

Remember, FY26 proposals will be evaluated by “Project Type” and how they will have impact on food security and supply chain resilience.

Evaluation Criteria

Background &
Project Need
35%

- Sufficient background context of the organization/business.
- Based on the project type/purpose that the applicant selected, proposal should demonstrate how the proposed project will meet FSIG goals. Response should explain how the project will positively impact the Commonwealth's food system, will increase the availability of nutritious food, and contribute to a more secure food supply.
- Demonstrate who the primary project beneficiaries will be and other stakeholders who support the need for this project.
- Demonstrate how the project will incorporate multi-sector collaboration or innovative partnerships.
- Projects that seek to achieve the objectives identified in the [Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan](#).
- There will be additional consideration for applicants who have never been awarded funding in past FSIG rounds

Evaluation Criteria

Impacts – 30%

- Applicant provides 2-3 measures of success for the project. Measures of success should demonstrate how the project's success will be determined and quantified based on measurable and specific outcomes within 3 years after project is complete.
- Applicant demonstrates how the project will incorporate climate resilience, waste reduction, or energy efficiency measures. If the project aligns with any of the objectives outlined in [ResilientMass](#), please demonstrate.
- Applicant demonstrates how the project will increase equitable access to food for residents of the Commonwealth who have historically experienced food insecurity and lack access to nutritious, local food options and culturally relevant food particularly for marginalized communities, communities of color, Gateway Cities, low-income residents, and [environmental justice neighborhoods](#).
- Applicants could also share if their organization or business itself is located **within** an Environmental Justice neighborhood and if the project has any direct benefits for groups such as historically underserved farmers and middle-of-the-supply chain small businesses owned by [socially disadvantaged individuals](#) (as defined by the Small Business Administration).
- Applicant demonstrates how the project (especially larger projects with more financial investments) will have a long term, positive economic impact for the Commonwealth.

Evaluation Criteria

Feasibility of the Project Plan – 25%

- The project should be realistic and well-justified, with clear, cost-effective measures for achieving project goals. The budget should be well defined.
- If there are any permitting requirements associated with the project, applicant adequately addresses them.
- Demonstrated ability to provide a sufficient match and ability to fund up-front project costs, given that this is a reimbursement program.
- The project should have a clear, achievable timeline, including completion dates.
- Extent to which the applicant identified their capacity and ability to administer the project. Includes details about key personnel, their responsibilities, and qualifications.
- Given the knowledge of the applicant's overall operation in combination with the proposed project details and RFR priorities, is the project a good investment. Consideration will be given to projects that provide benefits in-line with the amount requested in relation to their annual operating budget/size, if they previously received FSIG funding and had an impactful project, and how the operation aligns with MDAR's Environmental Justice policy.

Evaluation Criteria

Sustainability – 10%

- Applicant demonstrates how their project will be maintained for maximum longevity. This includes up-keep/maintenance costs of the equipment/infrastructure and sustaining partnerships/collaborations.

Documentation

Required	Optional
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project budget – include total project cost, match, and total funding request from FSIG*• Quotes from vendors or contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letters of support• Letter of a match• Business plan created or updated within the last 3 years

*applicant cash match + total funding request from FSIG = total project cost

Application Submission

- Application must be submitted through online portal. Link is in the RFR and on the FSIG webpage.
- A copy of the application is provided in Attachment A.
- No hard copies or emails will be accepted.
- Allow adequate time for submission – consider any potential delays.
- Applications submitted after deadline won't be considered.
- Only 1 application per operation.
- **Due by 4:00PM on Monday May 5, 2025.**

Review Process

1. Administrative review
 - Eligibility
 - Completeness of application & required documentation
 - Risk for noncompliance
2. Technical review
 - Applications receive point scores based on evaluation criteria
3. Potential site visit if additional verification is required (a site visit does not guarantee funding)

Post Award:

Project Terms & Deliverables

- Applicants selected to receive a FSIG award will be subject to project terms and required to enter into a legally binding agreement with the Commonwealth.
- Read through Section 6. and Section 7. of the RFR for information on contracting, reporting, and reimbursements.

Questions & Support

- Questions must be submitted by email to FSIGgrant@mass.gov.
- The deadline for questions is 4:00PM on Monday April 14, 2025.
- All questions and answers will be posted on the FSIG webpage so that all applicants can review.

Resources on FSIIG Application Webpage

- RFR

- Attachment A – Application

- Attachment B – Budget Template

- Attachment C – Optional Environmental Justice Questionnaire

- Q&A

- Informational Webinar Recording and Slides

<http://www.mass.gov/ApplytoFSIG>

Thank you!

