Program Overview:
Equipment Only Grants, part of the Resilient Food System Infrastructure (RFSI) Program

The NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food is requesting proposals for the Equipment Grant Program, part of the USDA's Resilient Food System Infrastructure (RFSI) Program.

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Applications will be accepted December 1, 2024-January 29, 2025

Available Funds and Maximum Awards
The Equipment Grant program has $1 million in funding available. The maximum award per project is $100,000, and minimum is $10,000. There is no match funding requirement.

Proposal Priorities
The purpose of the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) program is to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain, defined as everything after production and before direct retail. In New Hampshire, the program has a strong focus on collaborative sales, marketing and distribution through shared-use equipment and infrastructure.

A strong proposal will include:

- A focus on infrastructure or equipment that supports the priorities identified in the NH statewide needs assessment, which are:
    - Cold storage
    - Transportation and distribution
    - Cooperative commercial kitchens and other shared valued added facilities
    - Light processing, culinary grain processing, or dairy processing
    - Packaging and labeling equipment
    - Food waste composting
    - Inventory management and/or Point of Sales management systems
- An explanation as to how the equipment will benefit multiple farms and/or food businesses.
- Letters of support from farms and food businesses that will benefit from the equipment purchase.
- Quote(s) that support the proposal budget

Example Proposal #1: ABC Berry Farm submits a proposal to purchase a new flash freezer that will allow them to freeze more of their blueberry crop to be sold all year round. ABC Berry Farm includes in their proposal that they will offer fee-for-service use to neighboring farms XYZ Berry Farm and 123 Berry Farm. They have letters of support from XYZ Berry Farm and 123 Berry Farm that articulate an interest in utilizing the flash freezer at the fee suggested and expressing that it will benefit their product sales and expand market reach.

Example Proposal #2: CW Food Hub submits a proposal for a new refrigerated vehicle to widen the distribution of their vegetable delivery. CW Food Hub includes in their proposal that all farm businesses they work with will benefit from the expanded routes, which will reach schools and other wholesale markets, along with a letter of support from at least one of those farms.

Example Proposal #3: PJ Processors submits a proposal for a dehydrator to expand their line of products into dehydrated organic herb mixes. This will support the 15 NH farms that supply herbs to PJ Processors by expanding their market access and increasing the volume and consistency of their sales.

Eligibility

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture [Resilient Food System Infrastructure (RFSI) Program](), entities eligible for grants made by states will be:

- Agricultural producers or processors, or groups of agricultural producers and processors;
- Nonprofit organizations operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products;
- For-profit entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products, whose activities are **primarily focused** for the benefit of local and regional producers, and that meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards are eligible.
- Local government entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Tribal governments operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products.
- Institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals bringing producers together to establish cooperative or shared infrastructure or invest in equipment that will benefit multiple producers middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural product.

What are examples of equipment that is NOT eligible for this program?

Production focused equipment, such as tractors and rototillers, are not eligible for this program. Equipment or infrastructure for direct retail, such as a refrigerated truck that is used primarily to deliver to customers' homes, are not eligible.

Is there a match funding requirement?
No, there is no match funding requirement for the Equipment Grant program.

HOW TO APPLY

Application materials will be live by December 1, 2024 at the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food website. Access them here: Agricultural Development Grant Program | Agricultural Development | NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Recipients of RFSI Equipment Only Grants will be required to submit annual reports for the duration of their project and a final report upon completion. These reports will include performance and financial indicators for activities, outcomes, and budget goals.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

After submitting your proposal, it will be:

1. Reviewed by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food to ensure it meets the minimum requirements;
2. Reviewed and selected by a committee convened by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food;
3. Submitted to the USDA for review and approval; and
4. Submitted to the Governor's Office and Executive Council for approval and funding.

Do you have questions about the grant? You can learn more and apply here, or email Josh Marshall with the Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food (joshua.k.marshall@agr.nh.gov) or Seth Wilner, UNH Extension Agricultural Business Management Field Specialist with questions at Seth.Wilner@unh.edu with "RFSI application question" in the subject line of the email.