



Farmers Market Promotion Program

Fiscal Year 2017 Request for Applications

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-TM-FMPP-G-17-0002

Publication Date: January 11, 2017

Application Due Date: 11:59 PM Eastern Time on March 27, 2017

Program Solicitation Information

Funding Opportunity Title: Farmers Market Promotion Program

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-TM-FMPP-G-17-0002

Announcement Type: Initial

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: [10.168](#)

Dates: Applications must be received before 11:59 pm Eastern Time March 27, 2017 through www.Grants.gov. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

Executive Summary: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), requests applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP). FMPP's purpose is to increase domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets, by developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs (CSA), agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Eligible applicants include agricultural businesses, agricultural cooperatives, CSA networks, CSA associations, economic development corporations, local governments, nonprofit corporations, producer networks, producer associations, public benefit corporations, regional farmers' market authorities, and Tribal governments. AMS will competitively award grants to eligible applicants for projects that meet the purpose of this grant program.

Approximately \$13 million is available to fund applications under this solicitation. In the FY 2016 application cycle, AMS received 434 applications and was able to fund 50 (12%) of the applications. To be competitive, applications must be complete and of high quality.

The minimum FY 2017 FMPP award per grant is \$50,000, and the maximum is \$500,000. An applicant is limited to one FMPP award in a funding year. FMPP funding will be available for use beginning September 30, 2017. Matching funds are not required.

This announcement provides information regarding eligibility criteria for applicants and projects, and the application forms and instructions needed to apply for an award.

Stakeholder Input: The AMS seeks your comments about this Request for Applications (RFA). We will consider the comments when we develop the next RFA for the program. Submit written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice via e-mail to: USDAFMPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are commenting on the **Farmers Market Promotion Program RFA**.

2017 Highlights and Changes

Below are highlights of major changes to the program since last year.

- Includes a definition for “partnership” and a definition for “collaborator” under sections **3.2 Partners and Collaborators** and **4.2.4 Letters of Commitment from Partner and Collaborator Organizations**.
- Defines the term “producer-to-consumer” under **1.2 Purpose**.
- Revises section **3.3 Limit on Number of Applications** to state that an organization that currently has an active (not closed-out) grant award from a previous year under either FMPP or LFPP may apply to receive an award under this RFA if the applicant closes out the previous award by the application due date mentioned in section **4.4 Submission Date and Time**.
- Revises the application requirements to only require the *Accounting Systems and Financial Capability Questionnaire* for applications evaluated in the Administrative Review Phase (Step 3) of the Selection Process.
- Requires that the Project Narrative is submitted to AMS in PDF format rather than MS Word.
- Adds clarifying language in sections **4.2 Content and Form of Application Submission** and in **4.7 Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures and Requirements** that explains how to attach AMS-specific forms in Grants.gov and that Grants.gov does not verify whether these required forms are submitted by the applicant at the time of submission.
- Simplifies the review criteria language in section **5.1 Project Evaluation Criteria**.
- Includes AMS’ policy on Late and Non-Responsive Applications under sections **4.3 Submitted Application Qualification** and **5.2 Review and Selection Process**.
- Revises AMS’ process for answering questions regarding this Request for Applications under section **7.0 Agency Contacts**.

Application Checklist

The application checklist below provides the required and conditionally required documents for an application package. AMS expects that applicants will read the entire RFA prior to the submission of their application to ensure that they understand the program’s requirements.

FMPP requires that **all application packages** include the following:

- SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- SF-424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- Project Narrative (limited to no more than 15 pages, excluding existing Project Narrative form content (14 Project Narrative form content + 15 pages of project information)) (PDF - Upload using the “**Add Attachments**” button under SF-424 item #15)
- Signed Letters of Commitment from Partner and Collaborator Organizations (PDF or MS Word - Upload using the “**Add Attachments**” button under SF-424 item #15)

When applicable, application packages are required to include the following documents:

- AD-3030 – Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants (PDF fillable in Grants.gov)
- AD-3031 – Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants (PDF fillable in Grants.gov)
- Signed HUD Form 50153 Promise Zone Certification Form (PDF - Upload using the “**Add Attachments**” button under SF-424 item #15))
- Signed Letter(s) Stating Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure (PDF or MS Word - Upload using the “**Add Attachments**” button under SF-424 item #15))
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF - Upload using the “**Add Attachments**” button under SF-424 item #15))

Timing to Obtain and Submit Grants.gov Required Elements

Required Action	<i>Timing to Obtain/Submit</i>
AMS Deadline to receive final application and all supporting materials	<i>March 27, 2017 – 11:59 p.m. [Eastern Time]</i>
Obtaining Your Organization’s DUNS Number (if you do not already have one)	1-2 business days
Establishing an <i>Active</i> SAM.gov Account (if you do not already have one)	7-10 business days
Obtaining an TIN/EIN (if you do not already have one)	Up to 2 weeks
Creating your Grants.gov profile and registering your AOR authorization	Up to 2 weeks

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1.0 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP) is authorized by the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976, as amended ([7 U.S.C. 3005](#)). FMLFPP is administered in two components, the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) and the Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP). This RFA is for FMPP.

1.2 PURPOSE

To increase domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products, **and** to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets, **by**:

- developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, **or** assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion **of**:
domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, CSA programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

Direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities are instances in which producers sell locally or regionally produced agricultural products directly to the consumer with minimal involvement with a middle-man such as an intermediary, a wholesaler, a retailer, an agent, a broker, or a reseller.

1.2.1 LOCALLY AND REGIONALLY PRODUCED FOOD

Locally or Regionally Produced Food: A food product that is raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed, and distributed in the locality or region where the final product is marketed to consumers, so that the total distance that the product travels between the farm or ranch where the product originates and the point of sale to the end consumer is at most 400 miles, or both the final market and the origin of the product are within the same State, territory, or tribal land.

FMLFPP recognizes that domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities and local and regional food businesses may source or market some of their food products outside of the defined locality or region. These enterprises are eligible to apply for FMLFPP, but award recipients may only use Federal award funds to build a business's capacity to develop, improve, and/or expand local or regional supply chain activities, and may not use award funds to support supply chain activities for food items originating from or being sold to areas outside the defined locality/region.

1.3 PROJECT TYPES

FMPP offers both **Capacity Building** and **Community Development, Training, and Technical Assistance** projects. An applicant may submit more than one application for competitive review; however, FMPP

will only make one Federal award per applicant if more than one of their applications is recommended for funding.¹

1.3.1 CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building (CB) projects are intended to assist applicants in the development, improvement, and expansion of domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, CSA programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. CB projects should demonstrate a direct benefit to farm and ranch operations serving local markets (including new and beginning farmers) and maximize the involvement of farmers and ranchers and community organizations. Projects can include, but are not limited to:

- Local farmer, rancher, or market manager training and education.
- Farmers market, roadside stand, CSA, or agritourism activity startup and/or expansion.
- Market analysis and planning for a direct producer-to-consumer market opportunity.
- Recruitment and outreach to new and beginning farmers and ranchers, as well as to consumers in support of direct producer-to-consumer markets.

1.3.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Community Development, Training, and Technical Assistance (CTA) projects are intended to support applicants' efforts to provide outreach, training, and technical assistance to farm and ranch operations serving local markets and other interested parties for developing, improving, and expanding domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, CSA programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. CTA projects should engage a diverse set of local and regional foods stakeholders, including farmers and ranchers, to illustrate a substantive effect on the local and regional food system and stakeholders. Projects can include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting statewide or regional farmer, rancher, or manager (i.e., farmers market manager) training and education in developing or maintaining their own direct producer-to-consumer enterprise.
- Assisting farmers and ranchers in advertising and promoting their locally and regionally produced agricultural products through training and technical assistance.
- Establishing or expanding producer-to-consumer networks and organizations on a state, regional, and national level, which includes efforts to develop sourcing channels using direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities with corporate, non-profit, and public institutions.
- Providing technical support for small- and mid-sized producers to become compliant with local, state, Federal, and/or industry specifications and standards in order to increase their direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

¹ See section [3.3 Limit on Number of Applications](#) for more information.

1.3.3 PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Projects are not eligible for funding if the proposed activities:

- Are not related to producer-to-consumer direct marketing.
- Are for production- related expenses, including the purchase of farm equipment, tools, materials, supplies and other related costs.
- Depend on the purchase or lease-to-own of a vehicle—vehicles can be leased, but not leased-to-own or purchased (see section [4.6.3](#)).
- Benefit only one farm vendor or individual.
- Depend upon a critical component (such as land and structures) not in place or useable at the time of application (see section [4.2.8](#)).
- Depend upon the completion of another project or the receipt of another grant.
- Duplicate activities in a project that has received a Federal award from another Federal award program, including the activities of another current FMLFPP project.

1.4 PRIORITY AREAS

Priority consideration will be given to projects that: (1) Benefit communities located in areas of concentrated poverty with limited access to supermarkets as defined in section [1.4.1 Low Income/Low Food Access](#), (2) Are implemented in and support agri-businesses located in rural areas or towns that have populations of 50,000 or less, or (3) Involve Promise Zone Lead Applicant Organizations. AMS will award at least 10 percent of its total funding to these projects.

AMS does not require that submitted projects be implemented in designated priority areas or involve Promise Zone partnerships. All applications, whether requesting consideration under the priority areas or not, will be given equal consideration in the evaluation process.

Promise Zone projects will be evaluated equally during the peer review process as well, but will receive five priority points in addition to the final score provided by reviewers.

1.4.1 LOW INCOME/LOW FOOD ACCESS

To be considered a limited access priority area, the project's implementation address must be in a low income/low food access (LI/LA) census tract as defined by the USDA. "Implementation address" refers to the street address or census tract location within the targeted community (LI/LA census tract) at which the applicant plans to conduct or deliver approved project activities.

The applicant is required to provide their census tract(s) for at least one LI/LA address (priority area). If your organization or business is located in and/or primarily serves at least one LI/LA community (as defined by one of the four major map layers on the [ERS Food Access Research Atlas map](#)), your application will be considered under this priority area.

Further information on how to provide the required information can be found in the in section [4.2 Content and Form of Application Submission](#) and the [FMLFPP Project Narrative](#).

1.4.2 PROMISE ZONE(S)

For applicants partnering with Promise Zone Lead Applicant Organizations, identify the specific [Promise Zone](#) area in which your project activities will be implemented. Then, include with your application, the [Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) Promise Zone Certification Form](#), signed by the Promise Zone Official authorized to certify that the project meets the qualifying criteria. Further information on how to provide the required information can be found in the in section [4.2 Content and Form of Application Submission](#) and the [FMLFPP Project Narrative](#).

For more information on current Promise Zones, visit the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Website: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/promise-zones/>.

2.0 AWARD INFORMATION

2.1 TYPE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

AMS will use a Grant Agreement to provide a Federal award to successful applicants.

2.2 TYPE OF APPLICATIONS

New application. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in section [5.0 Application Review Information](#).

Continuation application. These applicants have received prior FMLFPP funding, such as a LFPP planning grant or a previous FMPP grant. Such applications must contain the same information that is required for new applications, as well as a description – via the [FMLFPP Project Narrative](#) form – of how the newly proposed project builds on previous activities. Continuation applications will be evaluated according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications, in addition to considering the applicant’s performance during the previous FMFLPP grants and their apparent ability to improve upon that work.

2.3 AVAILABLE FUNDING

Approximately \$13 million will be available to fund applications in fiscal year 2017.

2.4 FEDERAL AWARD PERIOD DURATION

AMS expects applicants to complete their projects within the required timeframe. It is acceptable to complete a project before the scheduled performance period end date, however AMS encourages applicants to take the full allowable grant period to allow ample time to complete projects. The applicant must indicate the start date and end date on Block 17 of the SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance”.

The official performance period must begin on September 30, 2017. Both CB and CTA projects are awarded for up to 36 months (3 years) and are expected to be completed by September 29, 2020.

2.5 AWARD SIZE

2.5.1 CAPACITY BUILDING (CB)

Minimum grant award is \$50,000. Maximum award is \$250,000.

2.5.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (CTA)

Minimum grant award is \$250,000. Maximum award \$500,000.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

All applicants must be domestic entities owned, operated, and located within the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Tribal Governments, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Eligible applicants include:

Entity Type	Description
Agricultural Businesses	Business entities that provide, hold, deliver, transport, offer, or sell agricultural products or services.
Agricultural Cooperatives	Group-owned or member-owned entities or businesses that provide, offer, or sell agricultural products or services for the mutual benefit of their members.
Producer Networks	Producer group- or member-owned organizations or businesses that provide, offer, or sell agricultural products or services through a common distribution system for the mutual benefit of their members.
Producer Associations	Organizations or other businesses that assist, represent, or serve producers or producer networks.
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Networks	Formal groups of farms that work collectively to offer consumers regular (usually weekly) deliveries of locally-grown farm products during one or more harvest season(s) often on a subscription or membership basis. Customers have access to a selected share or range of farm products offered by the group of farmers based on partial or total advance payment of a subscription or membership fee.

Entity Type	Description
CSA Associations	Organizations or other businesses that assist, serve or represent CSAs or CSA networks.
Local Governments	Any unit of government within a state, including a county; borough; municipality; city; town; township; parish; local public authority, including any public housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937; special district; school district; intrastate district; council of governments, whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law; and any other agency or instrumentality of a multi-, regional, or intra-state or local government.
Nonprofit Corporations	Any organization or institution, including nonprofits with State or IRS 501 (c) status and accredited institutions of higher education, where no part of the net earnings of which inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.
Public Benefit Corporations	Corporations organized to construct or operate a public improvement, the profits from which inure to the benefit of a State(s) or to the people thereof.
Economic Development Corporations	Organizations whose missions are to improve, maintain, develop and/or market or promote a specific geographic area.
Regional Farmers Market Authorities	Entities that establish and enforce regional, State, or county policies and jurisdiction over State, regional, or county farmers markets. State agencies are eligible if the State’s regulatory statutes identify the specific State agency as a regional farmers market authority. For example, the state of Alabama has a Farmers Market Authority that is identified through the Alabama Administrative Code .
Tribal Governments	Governing bodies or governmental agencies of any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community (including any native village as defined in Section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 85 Stat. 688 (43 U.S.C. § 1602)) certified by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for the special programs and services provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

3.2 PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Applicants are required to show evidence of existing community or industry support and engagement. AMS will not award grant funds for projects that solely benefit one individual or entity.

Support may come from private or public, for-profit or nonprofit entities, including but not limited to:

- New and beginning farmers and ranchers (individuals or entities that have not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years and substantially participate in the operation);
- Rural enterprises (small and emerging private businesses in rural areas that have fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenue);
- Agri-businesses;
- Local government entities; and
- [Promise Zone](#) lead applicant/organization or implementation partners.

Only the applicant must meet the eligibility requirements. Project partners and collaborators need not meet these eligibility requirements. A partnership is a relationship involving close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities in the management of the project. A collaborator is a person or an organization unaffiliated with the applicant that cooperates with the applicant in the conduct of the project and is not immediately connected to the management of the project. An example of a partner or collaborator could be a non-profit or local producer that offers access to materials or services in support of the proposed project that would not otherwise be available.

3.3 LIMIT ON NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS

An applicant may submit multiple project proposals to FMPP and LFPP. If recommended for multiple awards, applicants will be awarded at most one LFPP award and one FMPP award under this RFA. For example:

- For LFPP, this means that an applicant may be awarded one Planning **OR** one Implementation grant, but not both during the 2017 award cycle.
- For FMPP, this means that an applicant may be awarded one Capacity Building **OR** one Community Development, Training, and Technical Assistance grant, but not both during the 2017 award cycle.

If recommended for an award under both FMPP and LFPP, applicants may accept one FMPP and one LFPP award under this RFA. Program staff will contact the applicant to discuss the situation, if applicable.

An organization that currently has an active (not closed-out) grant award from a previous year under either FMPP or LFPP may apply to receive an award under this RFA if the applicant closes out the previous award by the application due date mentioned in section [4.4 Submission Date and Time](#).

AMS will evaluate the highest scoring applications to ensure there is no duplication of funding between LFPP and FMPP and base final funding decisions on this information and communicate any issues to applicants, if applicable.

3.3.1 FISCAL SPONSORS/AGENTS

FMLFPP eligible applicants may use fiscal sponsors/agents in their effort to attain and administer a grant award under FMLFPP. Such applicants seeking to implement an FMLFPP project may:

- Submit an application directly to AMS through Grants.gov and request to use funds to establish contractual relationship with a fiscal sponsor/agent to perform administrative or financial functions on behalf of the applicant; or
- Utilize a fiscal sponsor/agent to apply for an LFPP and/or FMPP award on behalf of the implementing organization. By doing so, the sponsor/agent accepts all financial and legal liabilities for that organization at the time the award is made. In the case of FMLFPP applications, fiscal sponsors/agents would submit the application as the applicant organization, and the Authorized Organizational Representative responsible for all grant decisions would be an employee of the fiscal sponsor/agent. Fiscal sponsors/agents are bound by the same requirements mentioned in this RFA as other applicant organizations.

An applicant organization cannot accept an award and later transfer the award to a fiscal sponsor/agent.

3.4 COST-SHARING AND MATCHING

FMPP does not require a cost-share or match.

4.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 ELECTRONIC APPLICATION PACKAGE

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to FMLFPP in response to this RFA. We urge organizations to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

FMPP is posted as a funding opportunity on www.Grants.gov. **Please make sure you apply for the correct funding opportunity.** This RFA contains the information needed to obtain and complete the required application forms and AMS-specific attachments.

You can find the opportunity under either the CFDA number “10.168,” or the FMPP Funding Opportunity Number “USDA-AMS-TM-FMPP-G-17-0002.”

4.2 CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

4.2.1 SF-424 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Required. The SF-424 is available via the opportunity at Grants.gov. Most information blocks on the required form are either self-explanatory or are adequately explained in the instructions. However, you must use the following supplemental instructions associated with specific blocks on form SF-424. This form is a fillable PDF form in Grants.gov.

Block	Instructions
#1 Type of Submission	Application

Block	Instructions
#2 Type of Application	New or Continuation
#4 through #7	Not required
#8c Organizational DUNS	Applicant DUNS# for the Organization submitting the application. See D&B Request a DUNS Number . NOTE: Applicants that apply for a grant must be capable of managing and monitoring Federal funds and project activities and outcomes. Recipients <u>cannot</u> transfer the award to another recipient organization once a grant is awarded (you may not apply under one DUNS number and switch to another later). Refer to section 4.7.2, <i>a. Obtain a DUNS</i> of this RFA.
#8d Address	Enter the organization street address as it appears in SAM.gov. P.O. Boxes will not be accepted. Enter a 9-digit zip code.
#10 Name of Federal Agency	AMS, USDA
#11 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number	10.168
#12 Funding Opportunity Number	USDA-AMS-TM-FMPP-G-17-0002 Please ensure you are applying for the correct grant program.
#13 Competition Identification Number	Not applicable
#14 Areas Affected by Project	Enter cities, counties, states affected by project
#15 Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project	Provide a short description of the project.
#16a Congressional Districts for Applicant	Enter the Congressional district where your main office is located.
#16b Congressional Districts for Program/Project	Enter the Congressional district where your project will be implemented. Write "All" if the projects will be implemented in more than one location.
#17 Proposed Project Start Date and End Date	The performance period cannot be more than 36 months (3 years) in length. CB and CTA projects begin September 30, 2017, and should be completed by no later than September 29, 2020.
#18 Estimated Funding - Federal	Total Federal award requested.
#18b Estimated Funding - Applicant	Not applicable.
#19 Is Applicant Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	This initiative is subject to intergovernmental review Consult this website (https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc) to determine applicability in your State.

4.2.2 SF-424B ASSURANCES FOR NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Required. The SF-424B is available as a PDF via the opportunity at Grants.gov. This form is a fillable form in Grants.gov.

4.2.3 PROJECT NARRATIVE

Required. Applicants are required to prepare and submit a narrative using the [FMLFPP Project Narrative](#) form. The form and instructions are available on program website at:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp/apply>.

All applicants must complete the FMLFPP Project Narrative form and convert it to PDF. This PDF document must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

Handwritten applications or applications in MS Word will not be accepted. The narrative must be typed, single-spaced, in 11-point font, not to exceed fifteen (15) 8.5 x 11 pages (excluding existing Project Narrative form content). For example, if the Project Narrative form is 14 pages before you begin entering your project information into the form, your narrative may be up to 29 pages (14 pages + 15 pages). DO NOT modify the margins of the FMLFPP Project Narrative form.

The supporting documents listed below do not count toward the 15-page limit. Prior to submitting your application to Grants.gov, make sure that it is in final form (i.e., if you used the “track changes” function, accept all changes before converting the document to PDF for final submission so that the mark-up is not visible).

In the Budget and Justification section of the FMLFPP Project Narrative, provide a justification of projected project costs.

4.2.4 LETTERS OF COMMITMENT FROM PARTNER AND COLLABORATOR ORGANIZATIONS

Required. Applicants must provide letters of commitment (in MS Word or PDF) from all project partners and collaborators. A partnership is a relationship involving close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities in the management of the project. A collaborator is a person or an organization that cooperates with the applicant in the conduct of the project but is not immediately connected to the management of the project.

The letter must state the partner or collaborator agrees to the project management plan presented in the Project Narrative. Emails will not be accepted.

Letter(s) must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

AMS has posted [A SUGGESTED PARTNER ORGANIZATION TEMPLATE LETTER](#) on the FMPP application website. We highly-encourage you to use this template. If you do not use this template, your document must minimally include the following:

- Project Applicant
- Project Title
- A short introduction describing the partnering organization’s mission and its interest in FMLFPP development
- What the organization commits to participating in and supporting

- The time period of the partnership
- Roles of the participating individuals, as applicable, and any individual time commitment
- A statement that these individuals and the organization agree to abide by the management plan contained in the application

Submit *Letters of Commitment* on letterhead and address them to the applicant (i.e., Project Director). Clearly indicate at the top of the documents that they are **LETTERS OF COMMITMENT**. Letters must accompany the proposal at the time of application. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

PLEASE NOTE: FMPP does not require Congressional letters of support nor do they carry any weight during the evaluation process.

4.2.5 AD-3030, REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING FELONY CONVICTION AND TAX DELINQUENT STATUS FOR CORPORATE APPLICANTS

Required if the applicant is a corporation. A corporation includes, but is not limited to, any entity that has filed articles of incorporation in one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or the U.S. territories. Corporations can include both for-profit and non-profit entities. The AD-3030 is a self-certification form. It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine if the AD-3030 needs to be completed and submitted. The applicant must submit the fillable PDF version of the form in Grants.gov. Most information blocks on the required form are self-explanatory; however, FMLFPP is providing further clarification below.

Block	Instructions
#1 Applicant’s Name	Enter the name of the individual or authorized representative that is submitting the application on behalf of the applicant organization.
#2 Applicant’s Address	Enter the address of the applicant organization.
#3 Tax ID No.	Enter the last four digits of the applicant organization’s Tax Identification number.
#4A, 4B, 4C Questions	Address these questions by checking the Yes or No boxes. For question 4B, see below for what is meant by “acting on behalf of.” If the action of the official or agent resulted in a benefit to the corporation, then the official or agent was “acting on behalf” of the corporation. If the action of the official or agent resulted in a benefit to the official or agent, then the official or agent was not acting on behalf of the corporation.
#5A Applicant’s Signature (By)	The individual or authorized representative that is submitting the application on behalf of the applicant organization must sign the form.

#5B Title/Relationship of the Individual if Signing in a Representative Capacity	Enter the title of the individual or authorized representative that is submitting the application on behalf of the applicant organization.
#5C Date Signed	Date the form.

4.2.6 AD-3031, ASSURANCE REGARDING FELONY CONVICTION OR TAX DELINQUENT STATUS FOR CORPORATE APPLICANTS

Required if the applicant is a corporation. A corporation includes, but is not limited to, any entity that has filed articles of incorporation in one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or the U.S. territories. Corporations can include both for-profit and non-profit entities.

The applicant must submit the fillable PDF version of the form in Grants.gov. AD-3031 is a self-certification form. It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine if the AD-3031 needs to be completed and submitted.

4.2.7 HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) PROMISE ZONE CERTIFICATION FORM

Required if the proposal involves a Promise Zone Implementation Partner. If the proposal involves a [Promise Zone Implementation Partner](#), the [HUD Promise Zone Certification Form](#) must accompany the proposal at the time of application. This form is also available on the FMPP website. Unsigned forms will not be accepted. This PDF form must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

4.2.8 EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Required if critical resources and/or infrastructure are necessary for the completion of the proposed project. Applicants are required to submit evidence (as PDFs or MS Word) that critical resources and infrastructure that the initiation and completion of a project depend on are in place, meaning in working condition or usable, at the time of proposal submission. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The letter must indicate the critical resources that are necessary for initiation and completion of the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the project. Letter(s) must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

AMS has posted [A SUGGESTED EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TEMPLATE LETTER](#) on the FMPP application website. We highly encourage you to use this template. If you do not use this template, your letter must include the following:

- Project Applicant
- Project Title
- A statement about committing/approving/granting permission, etc. of the critical resource or infrastructure to the project for the time period
- Describe the approved use of the critical resource or infrastructure approved for the project, any costs associated with its use, and any qualifying circumstances for its use.

Submit Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure on letterhead and address them to the applicant (i.e., Project Director). Clearly indicate at the top of the documents that they are **EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**. The evidence must accompany the proposal at the time of application. **PLEASE NOTE: Do not include letters of support in place of this document.**

4.2.9 NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA)

Required if the applicant has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Refer to section [4.6.1 Indirect Costs](#) for more information. The NICRA must be in PDF format and attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15.

4.3 SUBMITTED APPLICATION QUALIFICATION

Your application will not be accepted if it:

- Is received by Grants.gov after the submission deadline (see [AMS’ Policy on Late Applications](#)).
- Is submitted via any method other than through www.Grants.gov.

Your application will be rejected if it:

- Is not responsive to the requirements of this RFA (See [AMS’ Policy on non-Responsive Applications](#)).

AMS will also not accept an application (after submission or prior to award) if FMLFPP determines that:

- An applicant or recipient has committed fraud, including inclusion of materially misleading or incorrect information on the application (such as misrepresentation of DUNS registration or false identity statements).
- An applicant or recipient has mismanaged Federal funds.
- The proposal is funding the same activities as another Federal grant program.
- An applicant is found to be ineligible for a Federal award.

4.4 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

The deadline for submitting FY 2017 applications is 11:59 pm Eastern Time, March 27, 2017.

Applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov. Ensure that all components of the application are complete before submission. Allow enough time for the application process, as it may take more than one attempt before your application is successfully submitted. AMS encourages organizations to submit applications at least 2 weeks prior to the application deadline to ensure all certifications and registrations are met.

Only applications submitted and validated by 11:59 pm EDT on March 27, 2017 to Grants.gov will be accepted. See [AMS’ Policy on Late Applications](#).

4.5 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

FMLFPP is subject to [Executive Order 12372](#), “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” Refer to https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc.

4.6 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

4.6.1 INDIRECT COSTS

Indirect costs (also known as “facilities and administrative costs”—defined at [2 CFR §200.56](#)) are those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.

As stated in the regulation ([2 CFR §§200.413](#) and [414](#)) any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except State and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC), which may be used indefinitely. As described in [2 CFR §200.403](#), costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a recipient chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the recipient may apply to do at any time.

All applicants who elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent must use the modified total direct cost as the base. Modified total direct costs are defined in [2 CFR §200.68](#) as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

If an applicant has a negotiated indirect cost rate approved by their cognizant agency, the applicant must submit a copy of its approved *Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement* with its application. Entities that would like to negotiate an indirect cost rate must contact their cognizant agency. For assignments of cognizant agencies see [2 CFR §200.19](#).

4.6.2 SUBAWARD RESTRICTION

The applicant is expected to perform the major portion of the project; however, subawards or subcontracts with partners, collaborators, or other parties that provide additional knowledge, expertise, or resources for the purposes of the proposed project that are not otherwise available within the applicant’s organization are allowable. Using grant funds to competitively “re-grant” funds in mini-grant programs or to activities that are not central to the purpose of the project or for unknown costs are unallowable.

4.6.3 ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS AND ACTIVITIES

The following information discusses allowable and unallowable costs in common proposal budget categories. This section is not intended to be all-inclusive. The applicant should consult [Subpart E-Cost Principles of 2 CFR part 200](#) for the complete explanation of the allowability of costs. Applicants that have questions concerning the allowability of costs after reviewing the associated cost should contact AMS staff using the contact information listed under section [7.0 Agency Contacts](#).

Item	Description
<p>Buildings and Land - Construction</p>	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for the acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land or to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations or alterations of an existing building or facility (including site grading and improvement, and architecture fees). This also includes construction and construction-related materials, which may include, but are not limited to the purchase of building materials such as wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall, or plumbing.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for rental costs of land and building space. However, lease agreements to own (i.e., lease-to-own or rent-to-own) are not allowable. The lease or rental agreement must terminate at the end of the grant cycle.</p> <p>A <i>building</i> is any permanent structure designed or intended for support, enclosure, shelter or protection of people, animals or property having a permanent roof supported by columns or walls.</p> <p>Greenhouses and hoop houses are <i>unallowable</i>.</p>
<p>Conferences</p>	<p><i>Unallowable</i> if the project solely consists of conference/workshop costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.432. A conference must be part of a larger project. The applicant should clearly indicate the purpose and target audience for any conference or workshop, and explain how the activity will be funded. Also indicate if registration fees will be collected and if so, show the fees as program income in the Budget and Justification section of the Project Narrative form.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> to rent a building or room for training; however, where appropriate, AMS encourages the use of technologies such as webinars, teleconferencing, or videoconferencing as an alternative to renting a building or a room. If renting a building or a room is necessary, the most cost-effective facilities such as State government conference rooms should be utilized.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for meal costs (breakfast, lunch and dinner) unless the applicant justifies that to do so would otherwise impose arduous conditions on the continuity of a meeting and its participants. Breakfasts for conference attendees are usually considered unallowable as it is expected that individuals will have sufficient time to dine on their own before the conference begins.</p>

Item	Description
	<i>Allowable</i> for meals consumed while in official travel status. They are considered per diem expenses.
Contingency Provisions	<i>Unallowable</i> for miscellaneous and similar rainy-day funds for events the occurrence of which cannot be foretold with certainty as to the time or intensity, or with an assurance of their happening. <i>Unallowable</i> for working capital for activities/items not already in place.
Contributions or Donations	<i>Unallowable</i> for contributions or donations, including cash, property, and services, made by the recipient to other entities. <i>Unallowable</i> to purchase food or services to donate to other entities and/or individuals.
Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Machines	<i>Unallowable</i> for the purchase/lease of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT equipment. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has existing funding to expand the availability of SNAP EBT equipment and services at farmers markets to the Farmers Market Coalition (FMC) and State SNAP agencies. Please review the below options to determine which is most appropriate for your purpose. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMC provides EBT equipment to SNAP-authorized farmers markets and direct marketing farmers. You can find more information at http://farmersmarketcoalition.org/programs/freesnapebt/. • State SNAP agencies offer free SNAP EBT equipment to newly authorized farmers markets and direct marketing farmers. Contact your State’s SNAP agency or farmers market association to learn more. • FNS SNAP and Farmers Markets resources
Entertainment Costs	<i>Allowable</i> for costs related to the project. Entertainment costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.438 must not represent all or a majority of the project costs. <i>Unallowable</i> entertainment costs include amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sporting events and gratuities), regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives.
Equipment	<i>Unallowable</i> for acquisition costs of general purpose equipment. <i>Allowable</i> for rental costs of general purpose equipment. Vehicles may be leased, but not purchased. The lease or rental agreement must terminate at the end of the grant cycle.

Item	Description
	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for equipment lease agreements to own (i.e., lease-to-own or rent-to-own).</p> <p>Unallowable for the purchase of trucks that are commercially available for rent. An example of an unallowable truck purchase includes a refrigerated truck that can be rented as-is (without making modifications or retrofitting). This truck is considered general purpose equipment and can be rented, but <u>not</u> purchased.</p> <p>For vehicle and equipment leases or rentals with an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$5,000, rates should be in light of such factors as rental costs of comparable vehicles and equipment, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the vehicle or equipment leased.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for acquisition costs and rental costs of special purpose equipment provided the following criterion is met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Necessary for the research, scientific, or other technical activities of the grant award; 2) Not otherwise reasonably available and accessible; 3) The type of equipment is normally charged as a direct cost by the organization; 4) Acquired in accordance with organizational practices; 5) Must only be used to meet the legislative purpose of the grant program and objectives of the grant award; 6) More than one single commercial organization, commercial product, or individual must benefit from the use of the equipment; 7) Must not use special purpose equipment acquired with grant funds to provide services for a fee to compete unfairly with private companies that provide equivalent services; and 8) Equipment is subject to the full range of acquisition, use, management, and disposition requirements under 2 CFR part 200.313 as applicable. <p>NOTE: If special-purpose equipment is purchased, the recipient is subject to the full range of acquisition, use, management, and disposition requirements of 2 CFR §§200.313 (c) through (e) and 200.314 (b) even after the grant ends.</p> <p><i>Equipment</i> is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit</p>

Item	Description
	<p>acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000.</p> <p><i>Acquisition cost</i> means the cost of the asset including the cost to ready the asset for its intended use. Acquisition cost for equipment, for example, means the net invoice price of the equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired.</p> <p><i>General Purpose Equipment</i> means equipment that is not limited to technical activities. Examples include office equipment and furnishings, modular offices, telephone networks, information technology equipment and systems, air conditioning equipment, reproduction and printing equipment, and motor vehicles.</p> <p><i>Special Purpose Equipment</i> is equipment used only for research or technical activities. FMLFPP examples include mobile markets; specialized equipment for mobile markets; walk-in coolers; cooler storage units, mobile slaughter unit components, a trailer to be retrofitted into a mobile market or food truck and other equipment that requires modification <u>that is not already available and readily usable in its current form.</u></p>
Farm, Gardening, and Production Activities and Supplies	<i>Unallowable</i> for farm, gardening, and production activities, materials, supplies, and other related costs. Example items may include soil, seeds, shovels, and gardening tools. Additionally, greenhouses and hoop-houses are unallowable.
Fines, Penalties, Damages and Other Settlements	<i>Unallowable</i> for costs resulting from violations of, alleged violations of, or failure to comply with, Federal, state, tribal, local or foreign laws and regulations.
Fundraising and Investment Management Costs	<i>Unallowable</i> for organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions, regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used. This includes salaries of personnel involved in activities to raise capital.
Goods or Services for Personal Use	<i>Unallowable</i> for costs of goods or services for personal use of employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees.
Insurance and Indemnification	<i>Allowable</i> as indirect costs for insurance and indemnification.

Item	Description
Memberships, Subscriptions, and Professional Activity Costs	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs of membership in any civic or community organization.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for costs of membership in business, technical, and professional organizations.</p>
Organization Costs	<p><i>Allowable</i> for organization costs per 2 CFR 200.455.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs of investment counsel and staff and similar expenses incurred to enhance income from investments.</p>
Participant Support Costs	<p><i>Allowable</i> for support costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid on behalf of lead conferences or training session organizers.</p>
Pre-Award Costs	<p><i>Allowable</i>, if such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of the project work. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award.</p> <p>A potential recipient may incur pre-award costs 90 calendar days before award. These costs and associated activities must be included in the applicant’s Project Narrative and budget justification. All costs incurred before the award are at the potential recipient’s risk. The incurrence of pre-award costs in anticipation of an award imposes no obligation on AMS to award funds for such costs.</p>
Rearrangement and Reconversion Costs	<p>Rearrangement and reconversion costs are those incurred in restoring or rehabilitating the recipient’s facilities to approximately the same condition existing immediately before the start of the grant agreement, less costs related to normal wear and tear.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> as indirect costs incurred for ordinary and normal rearrangement and alteration of facilities.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> as direct costs for special arrangements and alteration costs incurred specifically for the award.</p>
Selling and Marketing Costs	<p><i>Allowable with conditions (see specific costs below)</i> for marketing activities directly related to the funded project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising media costs to promote a producer-to-consumer direct marketing effort. Advertising media is newspaper; radio; television; direct mail; bus, signs, or other advertisement wraps; and other electronic and computer transmittals.

Item	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional items such as point-of-sale materials, promotional kits, billboard space, signs or streamers, automobile stickers, table tents, and place mats, or promotional items of a personal nature. Public relations activities utilizing advertising media to promote a direct producer-to-consumer marketing to the public or a specific and FMPP approved audience.
Selling and Marketing Costs – Coupons, Incentives or Other Price Discounts	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs of coupon/incentive redemptions or price discounts. Costs associated with printing, distribution, or promotion of coupons/tokens or price discounts (i.e., a print advertisement that contains a clip-out coupon) are allowable only if they solely promote the locally and regionally produced agricultural products rather than promote or benefit a program or single organization.</p>
Selling and Marketing Costs – Food for Displays, Tastings, Cooking Demonstrations	<p><i>Allowable</i> for food for displays, tastings, and cooking demonstrations with prior approval if the project’s expected outcome indicator is an increase in sales. The applicant must include quantitative metrics for an increase in sales in the Project Narrative and in Interim Performance Reports and the Final Performance Report.</p>
Selling and Marketing Costs – General Marketing Costs	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for general marketing of the health value of food products. (i.e., “Vegetables keep you healthy!”)</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs designed solely to promote the image of an organization, general logo, or general brand rather than locally and regionally produced agricultural products.</p>
Selling and Marketing Costs – Sponsorships	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs associated with sponsorships. A sponsorship is a form of advertising in which an organization uses grant funds to have its name and/or logo associated with certain events and where the organization does not necessarily know how the funds associated with sponsorship costs will be used. These costs also only benefit the organization offering funding. This limits the beneficiaries to the sponsor organization.</p>
Travel Costs	<p><i>Allowable</i> for domestic travel costs when travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; in the case of air travel, the lowest reasonable commercial airfares must be used.</p> <p>Applicants that do not have formal travel policies and for-profit applicants’ allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by GSA, including the maximum per diem and subsistence</p>

Item	Description
	<p>rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at http://www.gsa.gov. If an applicant organization has no formal travel policy, those regulations will be used to determine the amount that may be charged for travel costs.</p> <p>Applicants are strongly encouraged to take advantage of discount fares for airline travel through advance purchase of tickets if travel schedules can be planned in advance.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the use of alternative technologies such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing if they are available, appropriate for the project, and less costly.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for travel costs of government officials per 2 CFR 200.444.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for international travel.</p>

4.7 GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND RECEIPT PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

Grants.gov provides a single site on which to find and apply to funding opportunities, and AMS requires applicants to submit their applications electronically through the system. Grants.gov provides step-by-step instructions on how to apply for opportunities on its website:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

When you reach the site, use the “apply” feature to begin, and read the five “Get Registered” steps. Registration instructions are found at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>.

Read the instructions on the Grants.gov website carefully and completely to ensure proper submission. Applications not submitted properly by the deadline will not be accepted regardless of the circumstances.

The website also contains registration [checklists](#) to guide you through the process. **AMS recommends that you download the checklists and prepare the information requested BEFORE beginning the registration process to alleviate last-minute searches for required information.**

Grants.gov provides customer support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed on Federal holidays) via a toll-free number (1-(800)-518-GRANT) or email (support@grants.gov). For questions related specifically to the FMLFPP RFA requirements (not the Grants.gov website), contact AMS staff (see section [7.0 Agency Contacts](#)).

Grants.gov also provides iPortal (see <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>): Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. ET). **Get help now! The deadline is too late to get assistances.**

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- Specific area of concern

4.7.1 TIMING REQUIREMENTS

Organizations must fully upload their application and Grants.gov must successfully receive it by the deadline (11:59 p.m. [Eastern Time] March 27, 2017). Many of the registration steps may take multiple days or even weeks to complete.

It is imperative that you REGISTER EARLY in Grants.gov to provide your organization ample time to complete the application process—DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DEADLINE! If you hit the submit button on the deadline, your application is not necessarily submitted and/or accepted. The rate of transmission, the size of your application, your internet connection, and firewalls within your organization may delay or impede a successful transmission. In some cases, the system may look like it is “spooling (i.e., it appears nothing is happening)—do not abort your transmission if this is the case! The system may need time to process the application, especially if you are uploading and transmitting many and/or large files. Electronic forms with associated XML schemas take time for Grants.gov to process.

4.7.2 COMPONENTS OF THE GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION

a. Obtain a DUNS Number

All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number must be included in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. **It takes approximately 1-2 days to obtain a DUNS number.**

Instructions for obtaining a DUNS number are located at:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>. Authorized Organizational Representatives (see below) will need to know the organizational DUNS number to complete the application submission process.

Applicants that apply for an FMLFPP grant must be capable of managing and monitoring Federal funds and project activities and outcomes. Recipients cannot transfer the award to another recipient organization once a grant is awarded (you may not apply under one DUNS number and switch to another later). Please consider the status of your organization’s identity prior to submitting your application.

b. Register with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

In addition to having a DUNS number, applicants applying through Grants.gov must register with the Federal System for Award Management (SAM.gov). In addition to maintaining your organization’s registration as a Federal recipient, SAM.gov is also how you will enter financial information necessary to

be paid (by EFT) should your organization be awarded. Failure to register with SAM.gov will delay and/or prevent your application from Grants.gov submission.

NOTE: SAM.gov registration is FREE. Some websites exist that look like SAM and claim to offer their services for a fee. **If you are asked to pay a fee to register with SAM.gov, you are at the wrong website.** Additionally, any communication regarding your SAM.gov account will come directly from the website. Be suspicious if you receive unsolicited email notifications regarding your account (i.e., check the email address and/or call SAM.gov (866-606-8220) to verify that the communication is legitimate).

To create a SAM.gov account, you will need to designate your organization's E-Biz Point of Contact (E-Biz POC). This individual is the main contact for your organization in the SAM.gov system. The E-Biz POC may be the same person as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). See below for more information.

SAM.gov can take 7-10 days to create an active account, with an additional 1-2 days for Grants.gov to recognize the information. Immediately register your organization in SAM.gov (i.e., before your entire Grants.gov application is ready) to ensure you are able to submit your application to Grants.gov on time. Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM are located at:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

NOTE: Each organization must have a Taxpayer ID Number (TIN/EIN) and taxpayer name. If your organization does not have a TIN/EIN, **allow an additional 2 weeks to request and obtain an EIN from the IRS (visit their website for details on obtaining this important piece of information).**

Additionally, each applicant must ensure that their respective organization's SAM.gov registration is up-to-date and active. SAM.gov accounts must be updated annually, and your organization must have an *active* SAM.gov account to submit your application to Grants.gov.

c. Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) Authorization

To apply through Grants.gov, an AOR must create a username, password and profile. The AOR is the individual who is able to make legally-binding commitments for the applicant organization. The AOR may be the same person as the E-Biz POC. See "NOTE" below for more information. For detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, visit:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-3-username-password.html>.

At any time, you can track your AOR status on the Grants.gov website:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-5-track-aor-status.html>

NOTE: This next step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submission. After creating a profile on Grants.gov, the E-Biz Point of Contact (i.e., the E-Biz POC listed as your contact in SAM.gov) will receive an email granting the AOR permission to submit applications on behalf of your organization. The E-Biz POC will then log on to Grants.gov and approve the applicant as the AOR, thereby giving him or her

permission to submit applications. You will be able to submit your application online any time after AOR authorization.

Organizations cannot usually complete the profile and AOR authorization registration process in a single day. **Applicants that are not already registered should allow at least 2 weeks to complete this one-time process. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DAY OF THE APPLICATION DEADLINE TO REGISTER.** The validation time depends upon the responsiveness of your e-Biz point of contact.

To learn more about AOR Authorization, visit:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-4-aor-authorization.html>

d. Electronic Signature

Applications submitted through Grants.gov are considered electronically signed. The registration and account creation process, with the E-Biz POC approval, establishes the AOR authorization needed for the electronic signature. When you submit the application through Grants.gov, your AOR's name will be inserted into the signature line of the application.

4.7.3 HOW TO SUBMIT AN ELECTRONIC APPLICATION TO AMS VIA GRANTS.GOV

Grants.gov allows applicants to download the application package, instructions and standard required forms to work offline. AMS-specific required documents are found as links in this RFA and on the FMPP website at www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp. Agency-specific required attachments must be uploaded using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15. Do NOT use the "paperclip" icon in Adobe. The forms are provided in a variety of formats including Microsoft Office products and fillable Adobe PDFs. Please make sure you follow the requirements for formatting, length, and submission as required in this RFA.

Grants.gov also allows applicants to collaboratively apply online by creating a workspace. Please note that AMS agency-specific forms are not compatible with Grants.gov Workspace.

NOTE: Grants.gov currently checks each submitted application to ensure that required standard Grants.gov forms are included in the application package when applying for a grant. For FMPP, this includes the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance and the SF-424B, Assurance, Non-Construction forms.

Grants.gov **does not** check for AMS required attachments. For FMLFPP, this includes the Project Narrative, Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (if applicable), and Letters of Commitment from Partners and Collaborators. These documents **must** be completed outside of Grants.gov and then attached to the application package within Grants.gov using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15.

Grants.gov supports Adobe Reader version 9.0.0 and higher. Adobe Reader forms can be downloaded and saved to your hard drive, network drive(s), or to a flash or external drive. Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page to download the latest version of the software:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

Once you complete the SF-424 form in Grants.gov, the system will transfer much of your information to subsequent forms, such as the applicant name, address and DUNS number, on all subsequent Adobe Reader forms. Some fields will appear with a background color—these fields are mandatory and must be completed to successfully submit your application.

4.7.4 TIMELY RECEIPT REQUIREMENTS AND PROOF OF TIMELY SUBMISSION

After you submit your application to Grants.gov, you will receive an automatic notification of receipt from the system that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. This notification **ONLY** indicates receipt by Grants.gov and does not indicate receipt by AMS. Grants.gov may also send you an error message if your application was not submitted correctly.

AMS will retrieve your application from Grants.gov, triggering a second electronic acknowledgment of receipt sent to the AOR. This email, which will be triggered shortly after the application deadline, indicates that the application was submitted to AMS. This notification means that AMS *received* the application; it does **NOT** mean that AMS *accepted* the application. If you do not receive this second notification, you did not successfully upload your organization’s application—contact Grants.gov to identify the issue if it is not already apparent.

AMS will send a third email to inform applicants that either:

- a) Their application was successfully submitted and will be forwarded to the peer reviewers for evaluation.
- b) Their application did not meet the basic requirements and therefore will not undergo peer review.

All applications must be submitted through Grants.gov. AMS will not accept applications packages by fax, email or postal mail. AMS cannot waive these submission requirements. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by AMS. See [AMS’ Policy on Late Applications](#).

4.7.5 TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

- Register and submit applications early. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DAY OF THE APPLICATION DEADLINE.**
- Thoroughly read this RFA and follow all of the instructions provided by AMS.
- Apply for the correct grant program
 - CFDA number “10.168” and Funding Opportunity Number “USDA-AMS-TM-FMPP-G-17-0002.”
- Make sure you have the most recent copy of Adobe Reader installed on your computer and that it is compatible with [Grants.gov](#) software. Grants.gov supports Adobe Reader version 9.0.0 and higher.
- Limit Application File Size/ File Name Characters (50 or less).

- When uploading attachments, click the “Add Attachments” button (do NOT use the “paperclip” icon in Adobe Reader)
- Do not password-protect your documents and make sure all tracked-changes are “accepted”.
- Avoid Special Characters in File Names (\$, %, &, *, Spanish "ñ", etc.).
- Input the correct DUNS number on the SF-424 cover page.
- Review the Grants.gov Applicant User and Registration Guides: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html> and FAQs: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>

5.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

5.1 PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each application will be reviewed competitively using the following criteria and scoring:

Alignment and Intent **25 Points**

- 1) The extent to which the application provides a clear and concise description of the specific issue, problem, or need and objectives for the project.
- 2) The extent to which the project increases domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products and develops new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets, by:
 - a. Developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of:
domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.
- 3) The extent to which the applicant identifies the intended beneficiaries and how they will benefit including, the number of beneficiaries.

Technical Merit **25 Points**

- 1) The extent to which the application presents a clear, well-conceived, and overall suitable methodology to fulfilling the goals and objectives of the proposed project.
- 2) The extent to which the application presents a realistic schedule for implementing the proposed project during the award project period.
- 3) If the project or entity was previously funded, the extent to which the previous lessons learned are incorporated into the proposed project.

Achievability **15 Points**

- 1) The extent to which the Outcomes and Indicator(s) is/are feasible for the scale and scope of the project including:

- a. how indicator numbers were derived with a clear means to collect feedback to evaluate and achieve each relevant Outcome indicator;
- b. the anticipated key factors that are predicted to contribute to and restrict progress toward the applicable indicators, including action steps for addressing identified restricting factors.

2) The extent to which the proposed project can be easily adaptable to other regions, communities, or agricultural systems.

3) The extent to which the applicant provides a comprehensive plan to disseminate the project’s results (both positive and negative) electronically and in-person to target audiences, stakeholders, and interested parties.

Expertise and Partners **25 Points**

1) The extent to which the proposed project represents a substantial and effective diverse array of relevant partnerships and collaborations to accomplish the project’s goals and objectives and to meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries including:

- a. Commitment from the key staff demonstrated through Letters of Commitment from Partner and Collaborator Organizations;
- b. the key staff who will be responsible for managing the projects and the individuals (name and title) who comprise the Project Team;
- c. the expertise and experience of the Project Team necessary to successfully manage and implement the proposed project.

2) The extent to which the application describes plans for coordination, communication, data sharing and reporting among members of the Project Team and stakeholder groups, both internal applicant personnel **and** external partners and collaborators.

3) The extent to which the application describes how the project, and its partnerships and collaborations, will be sustained beyond the project’s period of performance (without grant funds).

Fiscal Plan and Resources **10 Points**

1) The extent to which the application budget narrative or justification provides a clear, detailed, narrative description for each budget line item including:

- a. budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project;
- b. budget relates logically to the narrative describing the project.

2) The extent to which the application provides evidence that critical resources and infrastructure are currently in-place that are necessary for the initiation and completion of the proposed project.

5.1.1 PROMISE ZONE PRIORITY POINTS

Applications implemented in Promise Zone and submitted with a signed [Promise Zone Certification Form \(HUD Form 50153\)](#) will receive five (5) priority points in addition to the final score provided by the reviewers.

5.2 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Step 1: Initial Qualification Screening

To meet the basic eligibility requirements, each submitted proposal must be responsive to the Request for Applications. Non-responsive applications are applications that: 1) do not contain the properly completed, required documentation in the correct format listed in section 4.2; 2) have been submitted to the wrong grant program (LFPP or FMPP); 3) are submitted by an applicant that is not eligible; 4) text in the project narrative suggests that the project does not meet the scope or of the grant program; or 5) does not meet the requirements in this RFA.

Please see [AMS' Non-Responsive Application Policy](#) for more information.

Step 2: Technical Review

Each application is evaluated by peer reviewers. To eliminate bias, AMS assigns reviewers to projects that are not in their geographic area or associated with their business in any way. Each reviewer also signs a conflict of interest and confidentiality agreement regarding any assigned proposals. The reviewers are not permitted to apply for FMLFPP grant funds, or receive financial benefit from any submitted application during the year in which they serve on the review panel.

Selected peer reviewers will have diverse expertise, representing agricultural businesses, cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, CSA networks and associations, local governments, non-profit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers market authorities and tribal governments, and others. AMS makes every attempt to match reviewers with applications in their areas of expertise.

The peer review panel evaluates each proposal using instructions prepared by AMS officials. Individual reviewers evaluate and score their assigned proposals and then confer with other team members to derive a consensus score. The consensus review serves as the basis for awarding and allocating grant funds and focuses on strengths and weaknesses of each proposal.

Step 3: Administrative Review

AMS will conduct a final administrative evaluation of each review panel's top rankings and recommendations. In addition to the rank and scores, AMS reviews each application to ensure that potential recommended projects align with the program's scope, allowability of budget items, accuracy of documents, available funding, geographic diversity, and USDA priorities. Projects that do not rank or score high enough to make the final evaluation will not undergo the final administrative review.

AMS staff will work with top-ranked applicants to negotiate any revisions if necessary and possible. AMS will also assess an organization's ability to account for the use of Federal funds and monitor the performance associated with these monies. This assessment will consider an organization's:

1. Financial stability—AMS staff will send the *Accounting System and Financial Capabilities Questionnaire* to top-ranked applicants during the Administrative Review and use this completed form as a basis to determine monitoring strategies for each potential recipient organization;
2. Financial verification in SAM.gov;
3. Recent history of performance with AMS grant programs (any open grants and grants closed within last five years); and
4. Reports and findings from audits performed under Subpart F—Audit Requirements of 2 CFR 200 or the reports and findings of any other available audits.

If AMS anticipates that the total Federal share of the award will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000 - see [2 CFR §200.88](#) Simplified Acquisition Threshold) over the grant period of performance:

- AMS will review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see [41 U.S.C. 2313](#));
- The applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered;

AMS will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards.

6.0 AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

6.1 AWARD NOTICES

Upon announcement of the Federal awards, AMS will prepare and email a Notice of Award and Grant Agreement to each recipient for signature by the appropriate official. Grant Agreements consist of a 1-page Agreement Face Sheet (AMS-33) that will be signed by AMS and the AOR.

The Grant Agreement sets forth pertinent information about the Federal award, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Federal Agreement Identification Number (FAIN) or “agreement number;”
- Statutory authority for the award and any applicable program regulations;
- Name of Recipient organization;
- Name of the Recipient Project Coordinator;
- Approved period of performance start and end dates;
- Amount of Federal funds authorized for obligation by the recipient;
- Name of the Federal Agency Project Manager; and
- Terms and Conditions of Award, by either reference or inclusion.

Once an organization signs this agreement, it cannot transfer the grant to another organization. Should there be a reason the organization cannot carry out the remainder of the grant work, the Recipient Authorized Representative named on the AMS-33 must contact the assigned grant specialist to terminate the grant early.

6.2 UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by AMS via email as soon as possible after the FMLFPP awards are announced to inform them of the results. AMS will email unsuccessful applicants anonymous review panel consensus comments regarding their proposals as feedback.

6.3 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to Federal awards under this program. These include, but are not limited to the ones listed below.

[2 CFR part 25](#) – *System for Award Management and Universal Identifier Requirements*

[2 CFR part 170](#) – Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information

[2 CFR part 175](#) – *Award Term for Trafficking in Persons*, which is the implementation of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended ([22 U.S.C. 7104\(g\)](#))

[2 CFR part 180](#) and [part 417](#) – *OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)* and *USDA Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension*

[2 CFR part 200](#) – *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*

[2 CFR part 400](#) – *USDA implementation of 2 CFR part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*

[2 CFR part 415](#) – *USDA General Program Administrative Regulations*

[2 CFR part 416](#) – *USDA General Program Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments*

[2 CFR part 418](#) – *USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying* - Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

[2 CFR part 421](#) – *USDA Implementation of Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)*

[7 CFR part 1, subpart A](#) – *USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act*

[7 CFR part 1b](#) – *USDA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969*, as amended

[7 CFR part 3](#) – *USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection*

[7 CFR part 15, subpart A](#) – USDA implementation of Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, as amended
[7 CFR part 331](#) and [9 CFR part 121](#)—USDA implementation of the *Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002*

[37 CFR part 401](#) – *Rights to Inventions made by Nonprofit Organizations and Small Business Firms under Government Grants, Contracts, and Cooperative Agreements*. The implementation of the *Bayh Dole Act* ([35 U.S.C. 200 et seq.](#)) controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally-assisted programs.

[41 CFR part 301-10.131 to 301-10.143](#) – *Use of United States Flag Air Carriers*, which implements the *Fly America Act* ([49 U.S.C. 40118](#))

[48 CFR part 25](#) – *Foreign Acquisition*, which implements the *Buy American Act* ([41 U.S.C. Ch. 83](#))

[48 CFR subpart 31.2](#) – *Contracts with Commercial Organizations*

[44 U.S.C. 3541 et seq. \(Pub. L. 107-347\)](#) – *Federal Information System Security Management Act of 2002* (FISMA), an Act designed to improve computer and network security within the Federal Government. Applies to recipients if it will collect, store, process, transmit, or use information on behalf of AMS.

Motor Vehicle Safety –

- Highway Safety Act of 1966, as amended ([23 U.S.C. 402 & 403](#));
- Government Organization and Employees Act, as amended ([5 U.S.C. 7902 \(c\)](#));
- Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, as amended ([29 U.S.C. 668](#));
- Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended ([40 U.S.C. 101, et seq.](#));
- Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States ([E.O. 13043](#));
- Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving ([E.O. 13513](#))

Federal statutes and regulations found on the SF-424B “Assurances –Non-Construction Programs” (this form is submitted through Grants.gov with your application package)

6.4 REPORTING

Recipients are required to submit interim reports throughout the grant’s period of performance as well as one final report.

6.4.1 INTERIM REPORTS (PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL)

An Interim Performance Report and SF-425 “Federal Financial Report” are due within 90 calendar days after each one-year period of performance.

For 2017 Awards (both CB and CTA projects), the 3-year period of performance begins September 30, 2017, and ends September 29, 2020. Recipients must submit two annual interim reports.

Annual Report Number	One-Year Marker (Report Due w/in 90 Days of this Date)	Due Date
1	September 30, 2018	December 29, 2018

6.4.2 AWARD CLOSEOUT

To officially close out an FMLFPP award, the following items are due within 90 days following the award's period of performance (no later than December 28, 2020):

1. Final Performance Report
2. Final Payment Request (SF-270), if applicable
3. Final SF-425, "Federal Financial Report" and if applicable, payment of unobligated balance
4. Tangible Personal Property Report, if applicable
5. A refund of any unused grant funds (checks made out to the *Agricultural Marketing Service*), if applicable.

Recipients should submit these items to AMS as required in the Award Terms and Conditions. Once the project is successfully closed, AMS will issue a closeout letter as the Agency's official notification. The timely closeout of an award helps ensure future grant application eligibility.

7.0 AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact the FMPP staff by e-mail at USDAFMPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov.

Questions submitted to this inbox will be reviewed by AMS staff and considered for entry into the FMPP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) published to the Grant Opportunity Profile in Grants.gov. This FAQ document will be published approximately every 3 weeks (21 calendar days). To receive notifications of the publication of these FAQs, select "send me change notification emails" in the Grant Opportunity Profile's Synopsis.

All questions regarding Grants.gov technical assistance must be directed to Grants.gov's [Applicant Support](#).

Website address:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp>

8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (i.e., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

8.2 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of 1966 ([5 U.S.C. 552](#)) and the Privacy Act of 1974 ([5 U.S.C. 552a](#)), as implemented by USDA's regulations ([7 CFR part 1, Subpart A](#)) govern the release or withholding of information to the public in connection with this Federal award. The release of information under these laws and regulations applies only to records held by AMS and imposes no requirement on the recipient or any subrecipient to permit or deny public access to their records.

FOIA requests for records relating to this Federal award may be directed to USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, FOIA/PA Officer, Room 3943-S, Mail Stop 0202, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0273, Telephone: (202) 720-2498; or email: AMS.FOIA@usda.gov.

8.3 PROHIBITION ON USING FUNDS UNDER GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES THAT REQUIRE CERTAIN INTERNAL CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS

By submission of its proposal or application, the applicant represents that it does not require any of its employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting those employees, contractors, or subrecipients from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information. Note that: (1) the basis for this representation is a prohibition in sections 743, 744 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Pub. L. 114-113, (Division E, Title VII, General Provisions Government-wide) and any successor provisions of law on making funds available through grants and cooperative agreements to entities with certain internal confidentiality agreements or statements; and (2) section 744 states that it does not contravene requirements applicable to Standard Form 312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

8.4 PAPERWORK REDUCTION

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0240. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.