

**New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets
Request for Proposals**

**Farmers' Market Grant Program
Round VII**

A Grow New York Program

Questions & Answers

1. **Q: How long do the fixed improvements to the Farmers' Market area have to be in place in order to qualify for the grant? Is it only until 2014? We are planning to make some improvements to the area now, but also hope to embark on a more large-scale renovation in a few years, which could alter these changes.**

A: The RFP states that improvements made using grant funds must stay in place until 2014. It is the intention of the grant program to fund permanent long-term capital improvements to farmers' markets.

2. **Q: Does fixed signage need to be fixed year-round, or only during the months that our farmers' market is open to the public?**

A: Permanent signage must be in place year-round..

3. **Q: We are looking into pricing for a storage shed for our market supplies. Is it permissible to use grant funds for labor costs?**

A: Yes, labor costs to construct the shed would be eligible costs.

4. **Q: We would like to use grant funds for a small portable building for our entertainment at the market. We would also like to use the funds to purchase a small wood bridge and deck to expand the market space. Are these allowable expenses?**

A: Yes.

5. **Q: We would be interested in applying for funding for better signs for our market. Is this an eligible expense?**

A: Pursuant to section 2.4 of the RFP, funds can be used for fixed permanent signage. However, the use of funds to purchase temporary signage is **not** an eligible activity.

6. Q: We are an S-Corporation, and run a market where we sell local products and produce for 10 different farms. We run the market, handle merchandising, maintain the building, and collect a 20 percent commission. Would we qualify as an eligible applicant?

A: Based upon the information provided, your organizations appears to be a for-profit entity, and therefore is not an eligible applicant as outlined in section 2.1 of the RFP.

7. Q: Are towns and villages considered municipalities?

A: Towns, villages, cities, and counties are all considered municipalities, and are therefore eligible applicants.

8. Q: Can we apply for funding to help start a farmers' market, for such things as a tent, signage, or other physical necessities?

A: Yes, funds can be used to help start a farmers' market as long as the proposed project meets the eligibility criteria set forth in section 2 of the RFP.

9. Q: Is the purchase of a building an allowable expense under the RFP?

A: No, grant funds cannot be used to purchase real estate (e.g. land and buildings). However if the market owns a site, funds can be used to put a building on that site, renovate or reconstruct a building, or rehabilitate a building that has been purchased, but only the portion of the building that is used for the farmers' market.

10. Q: How does a business become classified as a Farmers' Market? We own a produce stand and we sell produce that we purchase, we sell cookies, honey, flowers, maple syrup, and cheese, and more, all from local producers. It seems like we could be established as a Farmers' Market.

A: Pursuant to the RFP, "a Farmers' Market is any building, structure, or place, the property of a municipal corporation or under lease to or in the possession of a private or public agency, individual or business used or intended to be used by two or more producers for the **direct sale** of a diversity of farm and food products from producers to consumers and food buyers."

According to the information provided, your business is not a "farmers' market" for purposes of this RFP. Since you purchase the produce that you sell, your facilities are not used by producers for the **direct sale** of their own products.

11. Q: Is each Farmers' Market as an entity limited to \$25,000, or is each award/project limited to that amount?

A: An eligible applicant may submit more than one application, for 50 percent of the project costs, not to exceed \$25,000 for each application, as long as each application proposes projects that are separate, distinct, and not functionally dependent upon each other.

12. Q: Our market currently offers trolley service to senior and resident housing communities. Would the cost of operating the trolley be an eligible expense within the confines of this grant program?

A: No, the cost of operating the trolley would be a cost associated with the normal operation of the market.

13. Q: We are just starting up a farmers' market this year. Is it necessary for us to somehow become listed as an approved Farmers' Market with the Department of Agriculture and Markets before submitting a proposal?

A: No, there is no such requirement.

14. Q: I am part of a member owned cooperative that would like to install more coolers and climate controlled storage so that farmers can keep their products at the store in large quantities. The co-op is owned by both consumers and farmers who sell at the store. It is a not-for-profit cooperative corporation. Are we eligible to apply for this grant?

A: If your facilities meet the definition of a "farmers' market" your organization would be an eligible applicant as a not-for-profit corporation. However, based upon the information provided, the Department cannot make a determination regarding whether the facilities you propose to improve would meet the definition of a "farmers' market" as set forth in section 2.2 of the RFP. (Please See Question 10).