

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

for State Assistance Payments for

AGRICULTURAL FAIRGROUNDS INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Revised 2/27/07

PLEASE NOTE: The funds for this program were expressly appropriated for payments to agricultural and horticultural corporations and county extension service associations that are eligible to receive premium reimbursement pursuant to section 286 of the Agriculture and Markets Law. Attachment 1 to this RFA is a list of the specific organizations that are eligible to apply for these funds. Any organization that is not listed in Attachment 1 is not eligible to apply for funds pursuant to this RFA.

The following are changes to the requirements of the RFA.

1. Part 1 of the Full EAF (Environmental Assessment Form) does NOT need to be submitted with the application. However, applicants should describe their project in sufficient detail to allow the Department to make a determination as to whether the project will be subject to further review under SEQRA (*i.e.* provide details regarding the size of the building(s) that will be constructed and/or modified; indicate whether the proposed improvements are consistent with local land use controls). If the Department determines that further review is required the applicant will be asked to complete Part 1 of the EAF.
2. Applicants whose fairgrounds are owned by a County do NOT need to provide a resolution from the County allowing the property to be used as a fairgrounds through the year 2017. (See Application Form, Question 3)
3. Applicants who do not own their fairgrounds and are applying for funds to purchase, repair and/or install temporary or portable structures or improvements do NOT need to provide a resolution from the property owner allowing the property to be used as a fairgrounds through the year 2017. (See Application Form, Question 3)

Questions and Answers

1. **Q.** Can the money be used to build a new track and grandstand on the fairgrounds?
 - A.** The money can be used to build a new track and/or grandstand on the fairgrounds if the primary use of those facilities is for activities that promote agriculture. (e.g., harness racing, horse pulls) The money cannot be used for a track and/or grandstand that is used primarily for activities such as demolition derby competitions, car races, etc.

- 2. Q.** Currently, the CCE does not own the fairgrounds and they are now looking for a new site. They are at the initial planning stages. The CCE is looking at land that the County owns and is willing to lease it to the CCE. The proposal they want to submit would not include any construction or renovations to an existing fairgrounds, so are they eligible to use these funds?

A. The applicant can use these funds for the construction and/or improvements of facilities located at the new site. If the applicant is leasing property from the County, they will need to provide the Department with a copy of a resolution from the County allowing the applicant to make improvements to the property and use it as a fairgrounds through the year 2017.
- 3. Q.** How long after submittal of the application can an applicant expect to see the money?

A. The timeframe for the application review process will vary depending upon the nature of the specific project. Once the application has been approved and the contract has been drafted it generally takes approximately four months before the Department can distribute the first payment to the contractor.
- 4. Q.** Can the money be used for electrical work on the campgrounds?

A. No, campgrounds are not buildings or facilities used to house and promote agriculture.
- 5. Q.** Will the grants be awarded all at once after March or will they be approved as they are submitted?

A. Applications will be reviewed and approved as they are submitted.
- 6. Q.** The Cooperative Extension holds the Youth Fair but they do not own the property or buildings. The County owns the property and buildings. Are they still eligible?

A. Yes, the Cooperative Extension can apply for funds for improvements to the County property provided that they obtain a resolution from the County allowing them to use the property as a fairgrounds through the year 2017.
- 7. Q.** Out of Field stock tractor pulls are reimbursable through the Agriculture and Markets premium reimbursement program and are an agricultural event. Can the grant money be used for upgrades for bleachers if they are used for out of field stock tractor pulls?

A. Yes, as long as the primary use of the bleachers is to provide seating for the Out of Field Stock tractor pulls and/or other agricultural events.

- 8. Q.** Can the grant money be used for electrical work for the barns?
- A.** Yes, the grant money can be used for electrical work on any barns that are used to house and promote agriculture.
- 9. Q.** Can the money be used to put black top in the area around the cattle barns to divert rainwater away from the barns?
- A.** Yes.
- 10. Q.** Can the project be started now using the Fair's money and then reimburse the Fair when the check is received from the grant?
- A.** A project should not be started until the Department has approved the application. As explained on page 4 of the RFA, with the exception of certain costs incurred by fairs due to flood damage, any costs incurred prior to approval of funding by the Department shall not be eligible for reimbursement.
- 11. Q.** With regard to the definition of "livestock enclosures." Can these funds be used to purchase new pre-fabricated pens to enclose animals? Such as portable horse stall, sheep/goat pens, cattle ties.
- A.** Yes.
- 12. Q.** How long after the application is submitted can a Fair expect a response as to if the application is accepted?
- A.** Please see Question #3.
- 13. Q.** How long after the application is accepted can a Fair expect funds to begin the projects?
- A.** Please see Question #3.
- 14. Q.** In planning for a project if there are costs involved with professional architectural designs and drawings, are these expenses eligible as legitimate project costs, even though the contract is not yet approved?
- A.** No, however if these costs are incurred after the project has been approved by the Department they will be eligible for reimbursement.
- 15. Q.** The area around the livestock and dairy barns, the area where we house the goats, and the area around the equine barns and show rings get very muddy when we receive significant rainfall, to the point where fairgoers and participants must wade through mud and water to get to the barns. We also had to relocate some of our goats and send others home because the tent where they were

housed was flooded this year. Is establishing a drainage system included in the scope of the RFA?

A. Yes, in this case the drainage system is an eligible cost because it would be an improvement to facilities that are used to house and promote agriculture.

16. Q. One of our buildings on the fairgrounds also houses agencies that support agriculture, including Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Farm Service Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Soil and Water Conservation District. These agencies support and promote agriculture year round. Will improvements to this building, such as a roof, be eligible under this RFA?

A. No, the purpose of this grant program is to provide funds for improvements to facilities that are primarily used to house and promote agriculture during the fair.

17. Q. Can we use the funds for modifications to our milking parlor such as stalls setup and rehab or replacement of the milking parlor equipment, such as pumps, pipelines, bulk tank, compressors, etc.?

A. Yes.

18. Q. Can the funds be used for demolition costs?

A. The funds can be used for demolition costs if the demolition is a necessary component of a project that involves the construction of a new building that will be used to house or promote agriculture.

19. Q. In order to add a permanent swine pavilion to our livestock area as well as a future milking parlor and possible horse barn, we need to provide power to the livestock area which is separated from the main part of the fairgrounds by a ditch. This past year we could not adequately light the existing cattle and llama barns so the power is needed for current as well as future needs. In addition we are looking at the possibility of wiring or a generator. Does this sound like a project that will meet the requirement of the grant?

A. Yes.

20. Q. The applicant has a domestic arts building used to show and judge vegetable gardens. It also houses the Farm Bureau and Grange. Can they use money to make improvements to this building?

A. Yes.

21. Q. Can money be used on machinery, specifically on a tractor that is used to clean barns?

A. No.

22. Q. Does the applicant have to pay the prevailing wage for labor?

A. No.

23. Q. If the applicant is purchasing a building or portable pens, etc., is the freight or shipping charges approved as reimbursable in the infrastructure monies?

A. Yes.

24. Q. Do the applicants have to spend the money first and then get reimbursed?

A. Once the contract is fully executed, applicants will receive an advance payment equal to 90% of the contract amount. The Department will disburse the remaining 10% of the contract amount once the project is completed and the expenditure of the 90% advance has been accounted for.

25. Q. Does a separate application need to be submitted for each job (i.e. minor work in the horse barns and minor fencing repairs)?

A. No, applicants can include more than one project in the same application.

26. Q. An agricultural society plans on applying for the total amount that they are eligible to receive. They work closely with the local CCE office and offer 4-H exhibits at the fair, for which the agricultural society receives premium reimbursements. CCE has approached the fair board and has proposed the submission of a second application which would not be competitive with the application from the agricultural society, but would be included for consideration if grant funds were not totally allocated from the total state-wide pool. Is this possible in the grant procedure?

A. No, in this situation CCE is not eligible to receive funds under this appropriation since they do not receive premium reimbursement pursuant to section 286 of the Agriculture and Markets Law.

27. Q. Can the money be used for a perimeter fence around the fairgrounds?

A. No.

28. Q. Can the money be used to rebuild and re-roof the building that houses the rabbits and poultry and the Agricultural Education Center, even though it is used for other purposes off-season?

A. Yes.

29. Q. We are a junior fair only and our 4-H building that houses displays in horticulture, vegetables, field crops, vet science and our Incubation and Embryology display is in very bad need of a paint job. Can the money be used for improvements to this building?

A. Yes.

30. Q. Does an applicant need a long-term lease agreement with the property owner and/or a Certificate of Insurance if their project only involves the purchase of portable equipment?

A. No.

31. Q. If an applicant's bank will not allow them to open an interest bearing checking account can they open a savings account or a money market account and transfer the funds to their general account to cover payments as needed?

A. Yes.

32. Q. Do those fairs who sustained flood damage and will use the grant funds for reimbursement of payments already made need to open up a separate interest bearing account?

A. No, upon execution of the contract they can submit a voucher for payment of eligible expenses that they have already incurred.

33. Q. If an applicant's Secretary is not available to sign the resolution can the President sign instead?

A. Yes, as long as the President is authorized to sign such documents.

34. Q. Does the Department review the status of an applicant's Charities Registration and notify them if they need to file something?

A. The Department will confirm that each applicant is registered with the Attorney General's Charities Bureau and that their registration is in good standing before a contract is approved. However, the applicants are encouraged to check the status of their registration as soon as possible so that they can take any steps necessary to make sure they are registered and/or that their registration is in good standing so that the processing of their contract is not delayed. Applicants can check the status of their registration with the Charities Bureau at http://fairchild.oag.state.ny.us/online_forms/search_charities.jsp. NOTE: If an applicant is not registered with the Charities Bureau the Department will not be able to approve their contract unless the Department is otherwise advised by the Charities Bureau.

35. Q. Is there an annual fee for registration with the Charities Bureau? If so, does the Charities Bureau send out an annual reminder?

A. Every charitable organization registered or required to be registered with the Charities Bureau must file an annual financial report accompanied by a fee. The financial reporting requirements and the fee amounts vary depending upon the amount of gross revenue and support that an organization receives in a fiscal year. For more details about specific requirements applicants should go to the website referenced in Question 34 or they can contact the Attorney General's Charities Bureau at (212) 416-8401.

36. Q. How long will it take the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to conduct their review of the projects?

A. The length of time that it takes for SHPO to complete their review of a project is case specific, however SHPO generally completes their review within 30 days of their receipt of all of the relevant project information.

37. Q. Can the money be used to build a new area that will house flowers and produce during the fair?

A. Yes.

38. Q. Can the money be used for drainage improvements to the parking lot (including blacktop)?

A. No.

39. Q. If an applicant is going to use the money to buy some tents, can they also use some of the money to purchase a container to store the tents in?

A. Yes.

40. Q. Can an applicant use the money to run electricity to the horse show area and install a PA system?

A. Yes.

41. Q. If an applicant receives several estimates for work do they need to submit all of the bid figures or just the actual winning bid?

A. The application should only include the bid figures that the budget is based upon. Applicants should keep a record of any other estimates that they received in their files to support the reasonableness of project costs in the event the project is audited.

42. Q. Can the money be used to purchase tables and chairs?

A. Yes, the money can be used to purchase tables and chairs as long as they are going to be used in connection with any of the fair's agricultural shows and displays.

43. Q. If an applicant has another source of funding, e.g. a member item, can that money be used in conjunction with the money they receive under this RFA to complete a project?

A. Yes, an applicant can use the money received pursuant to this RFA in conjunction with other funding sources to complete a project.