

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

2014 Fresh Connect Program

Farmers' Market Projects

Questions & Answers

Q: I just received the 2014 Fresh Connect RFP and wanted to verify that there is just one RFP this year, as opposed to last year, where there were separate RFP's for Farmers' Markets, Youth Markets, and the Food Box Pilot Project.

A: Correct. There is only one RFP for 2014 for the Farmers' Market Projects.

Q: I currently own a transportation company which serves a county, specifically it's senior citizens, veterans, and low-income families. I would like to give these individuals transportation to local farmers' markets. A lot of our clients are already receiving government benefits, such as SNAP. Transportation is a big issue for our senior citizens who are most of the time wheelchair bound, as is grocery shopping in general. I also would like to propose a delivery service that would be extremely valuable to senior citizens and veterans who are housebound. Could you please let me know if this idea would be considered grant worthy?

A: Based on the information provided, it appears that your company would not be an eligible applicant, as per the Request for Proposals (RFP) on page 4 states that for-profit entities and individuals are not eligible applicants.

However, your company may partner with an eligible applicant.

Q: How many project RFPs per organization be submitted?

A: As stated in Section 1.2 "Funding Available" on page 3 of the Request for Proposals (RFP), applicants may apply for and receive funding for more than one project, but not more than two projects. A separate application must be submitted for each project for which funding is being requested.

Q: Can an applicant, if awarded a grant with the Department, be reimbursed for purchases made prior to the contract start date?

A: Pursuant to Section 2.7 "Ineligible Costs" on page 5 of the RFP, the last bullet "costs incurred prior to the award of a grant" are considered an ineligible cost, and therefore cannot be included as part of a project or application.

Q: Is there a way to fill out the Fresh Connect application electronically?

A: the only version of the Fresh Connect application available is the .pdf version, and that version is not electronically fillable.

Q: In the Fresh Connect RFP, I believe there is an error in one of the examples. In the portion where it discusses the necessary match, it says that the match has to be 25 percent of the grant. However, in the example, it lists a match of 33 percent (the maximum that can be applied for is \$10K, and \$3,333 is 33 percent of that, not 25 percent.

A: Please remember that the match must be 25 percent of the total value of the *project*, not 25 percent of the \$10,000 max you can request from the Department. Therefore, if your total project is projected to cost \$13,333, twenty-five percent of that would be \$3,333 (which would be the match), and the \$10,000 would be the grant funds requested – resulting in a total project cost of \$13,333.

Q: We are purchasing a property and would be adding a satellite farm market (of one that is currently in operation and meets the RFP requirement), and would be applying for monies to erect a pavilion for the 2015 year to house the market. We may not close on the property until May. Can we still apply?

A: It appears from the information provided, your organization meets the minimum criteria to apply for a Fresh Connect grant. When applying for the grant, please remember that documentation showing ownership and control must be provided, as outlined in Section 3.1 Farmers' Market Ownership & Control, on page 5 of the RFP, so although you may not close on the property until May, you must be able to prove authority to operate a farmers' market at the proposed location.

Q: We are a community college that is considering applying for the Fresh Connect grant in order to connect adult students in our non-credit training and literacy programs with local farmers' market, urban farms, and roof top farms. We would provide workshops to raise awareness among adult and young adult students in our workforce, high school equivalency, and ESL programs, and follow-up by taking students on walking tours, and subway trips to the organic farms and markets which are further afield. Funding would be used to develop a curriculum for the workshops, for expenses in connection with the trips and tours, and to develop relationships with farmers and markets. The project would create new partnerships to better connect low income and/or under-served communities with local food and food products at new and existing farmers' market locations. Would you let us know if we are eligible to apply for this funding?

A: It appears, based on the information provided, that your community college meets the minimum eligibility requirements to apply for a Fresh Connect grant.

Please be aware, that pursuant to Section 3.1 Farmers' Market Ownership & control on page 5 of the RFP, if the applicant is not proposing to operate a market, but to operate an eligible project in connection with a farmers market, the applicant shall submit evidence of the associated market's willingness to cooperate and participate in the proposed project through a formal written and executed agreement between the applicant and the farmers' market operator.

Q: I am a new Farmers' Market Manager this year for our fledgling market. We have never had a SNAP market or a SNAP farmer. However, I am working on recruiting a farmer who may be a SNAP vendor.

Since the grant point values are so weighted toward SNAP, the market stats and history of SNAP and SNAP experience, I'm questioning the validity of writing this grant this year."

A: You are correct in understanding that the SNAP component of the program is heavily weighted. However, based on the information provided, it appears you would be an eligible applicant *provided* you meet the criteria set forth in Section 3.2.2 Acceptance of Government Benefits, on page 6 of the RFP.