

Request for Information (RFI) – Minnesota Local Food Purchase Assistance Program Draft Application

Key dates and submission instructions

- **RFI posted on:** November 18, 2022
- **Who may respond?** All interested stakeholders are welcome to respond to this RFI.
- **RFI responses due by:** 5:00 p.m. on December 12, 2022
- **Questions about this RFI should be submitted no later than:** 8:00 a.m. on December 12, 2022
- **Submit questions about this RFI to:** LFPAGrant.MDA@state.mn.us or 651-895-0315
- **Document for public review:** [Minnesota Local Food Purchase Assistance Program draft application](#)
- **Format for responses:** Via [a Microsoft Form](#) or through participation in a virtual input session.
 - November 30, 2022, 4:30-5:30 p.m. [Register](#).
 - December 1, 2022, 12-1 p.m. [Register](#).
 - December 7, 2022, 10:30-11:30 a.m. [Register](#).
 - December 8, 2022, 1-2 p.m. [Register](#).

Objective of RFI

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is looking for public input on a **draft** application for the Minnesota Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Program. Feedback shared during this process will inform the final application process for this competitive grant program, which is expected to be released in winter 2023.

Background and overview

The goal of the LFPA program is to purchase local food from socially disadvantaged farmers and distribute this food to underserved communities throughout the state. The draft application outlines the proposed requirements and application process for this program and funding. Feedback is welcome from potential applicants to the program along with others interested in community food systems, including farmers, food hubs, economic development agencies, and hunger relief networks.

Minnesota's \$3.82 million LFPA funds are available as part of a cooperative agreement program that the MDA has signed with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service. The LFPA program is authorized by the American Rescue Plan to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency.

Information requested

Stakeholders are asked to review the [Minnesota LFPA draft application](#) and provided feedback via [a Microsoft Form](#) or through participation in one of four virtual input sessions. The survey includes 13 questions and is estimated to take 10 -15 minutes to complete, depending on the amount of feedback you choose to provide. It includes questions asking respondents to identify what they like and don't like about the draft application, opportunities to share feedback in response to specific questions MDA staff have included on the draft application, and demographic questions. All questions are optional.

Disclaimer

1. By responding to the RFI, the Responder acknowledges that they have read, understand, and agree with all content in the Disclaimer.
2. Responses to the RFI will not be returned to the Responder.
3. This RFI is being issued to obtain information only and is not intended to result in contracts with any Responder. This RFI, and responses to it, does not in any way obligate the MDA to issue an RFA, award a contract or complete any project, including this one. The MDA reserves the right to cancel this RFI if it is considered to be in its best interest.
4. Responders are solely responsible for all costs and expenses associated with the preparation and submission of a response to this RFI.
5. Responding to this RFI is completely voluntary. Responders will not be excluded from eligibility to participate in any potential future related requests for applications (RFAs) based on a Responder's decision to respond to this RFI or the content of its response(s) to this RFI. Additionally, responses to this RFI will not provide any advantage to any Responder in any potential future requests for applications, if any occur.
6. All responses to this RFI are public, according to MINN. STAT. 13.03, subd. 1, unless otherwise defined by MINN STAT. 13.37 as "Trade Secrets." Responses should not contain any information that is trade secret or proprietary in nature.

But if a Responder submits information that it believes to be trade secret/confidential materials, at the time the response is submitted the Responder must clearly mark every page of trade secret materials in its response with the words "Trade Secret" or "Confidential," and must justify the trade secret designation for each item in its Response (*be specific, do not make general statements of confidentiality. Include reference to specific facts, licenses, trademarks, etc., and any relevant statutes or other law, such as how the data meets the requirements of MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1(b)*). Any decision by the State to disclose information designated by the Responder as trade secret/confidential will be made consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Ch. 13, and other relevant laws and regulations.

7. As applied by the MDA to this RFI, a statement by a responder that submitted data is copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the data contained in the response.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.