

# Good Food Access Program Equipment and Physical Improvement Grant 2021 Request for Proposals

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.

# Table of Contents

Grant Summary .....	3
Application and Award Details .....	3
How to Submit Questions .....	3
Timeline and Deadlines for Grant Program .....	3
Application Guidelines .....	4
Grant Eligibility .....	5
Eligible Applicants .....	5
Eligible Areas .....	6
Eligible Projects and Expenses .....	6
Definitions .....	8
Application Review Policies .....	9
Conflicts of Interest .....	9
Privacy Notice and Data Classification .....	9
Requirements for Grant Recipients .....	11
Grant Award Agreement and Payments .....	11
Site Visits, Financial Reconciliations, and Evaluation .....	11
Bidding Requirements .....	12
Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy .....	12
Audits of Project .....	12
Voter Registration Requirement .....	12
GFAP Background and Program Goals .....	13
Project Evaluation Profile .....	14
Application Questions .....	15

# Grant Summary

---

## Application and Award Details

The Good Food Access Program (GFAP) Equipment and Physical Improvement Grant offers funding to grocery stores and small food retailers engaged in the sale of nutritious and culturally appropriate foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, in low-income and moderate-income areas. Grants help retailers make physical improvements and purchase equipment to stimulate sales of these foods.

The maximum request is \$50,000, and the minimum request is \$2,500. The MDA anticipates awarding approximately \$280,000 using a competitive review process. We expect that we will award approximately 8-15 grants, but the final number depends on the size of the awards. Preference will be given to retailers that were adversely impacted by COVID-19 and retailers that are serving areas impacted by civil unrest.

Your GFAP Equipment and Physical Improvement application must be received by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, November 19, 2020** in order to be considered for funding. We strongly encourage you to submit proposals through our [online application system](#). We will not consider late applications.

The MDA is not responsible for any technical or logistical problems resulting in the MDA not receiving the application on time. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that submission is received by the MDA before the deadline.

## How to Submit Questions

Direct questions about the grant program, completing the application, or additional accommodations to:

Ashley Bress or Emily Mehr  
[MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us](mailto:MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us)  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
625 Robert St N  
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538

All questions should be submitted through writing by mail or email by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on November 12, 2020**. MDA employees are not authorized to provide advice on any applications. Applicants who solicit or receive advice from unauthorized MDA employees may be disqualified from eligibility for a grant award.

## Timeline and Deadlines for Grant Program

A review committee, composed of MDA staff and external reviewers, evaluates all eligible applications based on the criteria in the Project Evaluation Profile. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The Commissioner of Agriculture reviews the committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. The review committee and Commissioner may use rural/urban and geographic diversity when making their decisions. The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

Questions due no later than 4:00 pm CST.....November 12, 2020  
Applications due no later than 4:00 pm CST.....November 19, 2020  
Committee recommendations submitted to Commissioner for review.....January 4, 2021  
Applicants notified of decisions; grant agreement negotiations begin.....January 7, 2021

## **Application Guidelines**

- Write for reviewers who are generally knowledgeable but may not have a thorough or deep understanding of your business. Use plain, easily understood language.
- Answer all questions completely within the character or page limits specified in the grant application. Use 12-point font and single spacing.
- The Project Evaluation Profile included in this document will be used to score and compare the grant applications.

# Grant Eligibility

---

## Eligible Applicants

- For profit and not for profit grocery stores and small food retailers engaged in the sale of nutritious and culturally appropriate foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, that are located in or serve a census tract designated as a Food Desert or who serve a substantial subpopulation, such as the elderly or disabled, in a low- or moderate-income census tract who have low super market access.
- Multi-site proposals are encouraged. It is not imperative that a final list of sites be predetermined; however, all sites receiving benefit under this program must meet all requirements and be pre-approved by the MDA.
- Organizations may apply on behalf of and act as fiscal agents for other eligible applicants.
- All applicants must be in good standing with the State of Minnesota (no back taxes owed, no defaults on Minnesota State-backed financing for the last 7 years, acceptable performance on past MDA grants, and in compliance with current State regulations), and must be authorized to conduct business in Minnesota.
- Eligible organizations serving sovereign nations are eligible and encouraged to apply.

If submitting a proposal on behalf of one or more eligible organizations, the applicant must:

- Provide letters of support from the eligible entities that they represent that clearly describes the benefit of the grant project to their organization.
- Clearly identify these eligible entities and focus the application on their business.

Retailers receiving equipment or making physical improvements under this RFP must agree with the following conditions for a period of at least five years:

- Accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits;
- Apply to accept Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits, and if approved accept WIC benefits;
- Comply with all data collection and reporting requirements established by the Commissioner;
- Promote the hiring, training, and retention of local or regional residents from low-income and moderate-income areas that reflect area demographics, including communities of color; and
- Except for small food retailers, as defined, allocate at least 30 percent of retail food space for the sale of affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods, including fruits and vegetables, low-fat and nonfat dairy, fortified dairy substitute beverages such as soy-based or nut-based dairy substitute beverages, whole grain-rich staple foods, meats, poultry, fish, seafood, and other proteins, consistent with nutrition standards in national guidelines described in the current United States Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Organizations applying on behalf of eligible applicants, must receive written assurance from subawardees that they will comply with these stipulations prior to receiving equipment or physical improvements under this grant. These assurances must be sent to the MDA prior to site approval; the MDA will confirm SNAP and WIC requirements with the appropriate implementing organization.

For-profit businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, local government entities, and Native American tribal communities interested in equipment/physical improvements or dedicated staff/contractor time to stimulate urban youth agricultural education and/or urban agriculture community development are not eligible for such assistance under this grant program. Those projects are eligible under our [AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant](#). Please contact Emily Mehr at [Emily.Mehr@state.mn.us](mailto:Emily.Mehr@state.mn.us) for more information about our AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant.

Individuals, including farmers, businesses, agricultural cooperatives, local government entities that are significantly focused on the processing of Minnesota agricultural commodities are encouraged to apply to [AGRI Value-Added Grant Program](#). Please contact Jordyn Bucholtz at [Jordyn.Bucholtz@state.mn.us](mailto:Jordyn.Bucholtz@state.mn.us) for more information.

## Eligible Areas

Projects must be located in or serve a census tract designated as a Food Desert or must serve a substantial subpopulation, such as the elderly or disabled, in a low- or moderate-income census tract who have low supermarket access. Follow these steps to determine if your project is in an eligible area.

- Visit <https://geomap.ffiec.gov/FFIECGeocMap/GeocodeMap1.aspx>.
- Type in the address where the project will be occurring.
- On the left side of the screen, there is a box that notes the Census Tract.

Open the GFAP Eligible Areas page on the GFAP website at <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/grants/gfapequipmentgrant>. Locate the census tract number under the eligible county. If the census tract says eligible next to it, your location is based on its designated as a Food Desert or a Low- or Moderate-Income Area. If it says ineligible, we recommend you check surrounding census tracts for eligibility. Projects may be eligible even if they can reasonably justify how they serve residents of eligible areas.

Please contact the MDA if you need help locating census tracts.

## Eligible Projects and Expenses

Eligible grant projects are the purchase and installation of equipment and the costs incurred to make physical improvements. Up to 100% of the total project cost may be reimbursed with grant funds, with a maximum grant award of \$50,000 and a minimum grant award of \$2,500. There is no matching fund requirement. Applicants may request up to 50% of the award as an advance so long as they are already authorized to accept SNAP benefits and have applied to accept WIC benefits; all other amounts will be reimbursed after the project is completed to the State's satisfaction.

Expenses may not be incurred until a grant award agreement has been fully executed. Successful applicants should anticipate having grant award agreements available to them around January 18, 2021. All expenses must be incurred and paid for by April 30, 2022. Applicants may request an extension for up to three years from the start date of the grant award agreement for approval by the State.

## Project Examples

- Retail display coolers and freezers
- Storage coolers and freezers
- Shelving
- Mobile food trucks
- Permanent infrastructure at farmers' markets
- Architectural work
- Costs associated with the installation of equipment

## Ineligible Expenses

- Operating costs
- Expenditures incurred prior to contract execution
- Costs incurred prior to execution of the grant award agreement
- Training and workshop fees
- Advertising and public relations
- Bad debts – Including uncollectible accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs
- Donated or volunteer (in-kind) services. While these may be furnished to an applicant by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor, the value of these services is not reimbursable either as a direct or indirect cost
- Donations, in kind contributions, including property, and services, made by the applicant, regardless of the recipient
- Entertainment, amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, alcohol and gratuities)
- Fines, penalties and other settlement expense resulting from violations (or alleged violations) of, or failure of the applicant to comply with, Federal, State, local, or Indian tribal laws and regulations
- 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
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified within the project, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the implementation of proposal related activities)
- Investment management costs, including costs of investment counsel and staff, and similar expenses incurred to enhance income from investments
- Land and building purchases
- Lobbying – including costs of membership in organizations substantially engaged in lobbying
- Political activities

## Definitions

---

**Farmers' Market:** an association of three or more persons who assemble at a defined location that is open to the public for the purpose of selling directly to the consumer the products of a farm or garden occupied and cultivated by the person selling the product.

**Food Hub:** a centrally located facility with a business management structure that facilitates the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, marketing, and sale of locally or regionally produced food products, and which may include a small-scale retail grocery operation.

**Grocery Store:** a for-profit, not-for-profit, or cooperative self-service retail establishment that sells primarily meat, fish, seafood, fruits, vegetables, dry groceries, and dairy products and may also sell household products, sundries, and other products. It includes a supermarket or large-, mid-, or small-scale retail grocery establishment and may include a mobile food market or a delivery service operation.

**Mobile Food Market:** a self-contained for-profit, not-for-profit, or cooperative retail grocery operation located in a movable new or renovated truck, bus, or other vehicle that is used to store, prepare, display, and sell primarily meat, fish, seafood, fruits, vegetables, dry groceries, and dairy products and may also be used to sell a nominal supply of cooking utensils and equipment and other household products and sundries.

**Small Food Retailer:** a small-scale retail food outlet, other than grocery store, as defined. It includes, but is not limited to, a corner store, convenience store, farmers' market, mobile food market, and a retail food outlet operated by an emergency food program or food hub.



# Application Review Policies

---

## Conflicts of Interest

The State will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers, per [Minn. Stat.16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making \(PDF\)](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

## Privacy Notice and Data Classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under the AGRI Program and GFAP. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence. However, only completed applications will be considered for a grant; incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the Minnesota Data Practices Act as private or nonpublic, although some or all of the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited by law to MDA staff and contractors with a valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per [Minn. Stat. 13.599](#):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in application responses (except trade secret information, see below) becomes public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed.

- **Procedure for Claiming Protection of Trade Secrets:**
  - Trade secret information (as defined in [Minn. Stat. § 13.37](#)) is classified as not public data. In order for an applicant to protect data submitted as part of this application as trade secret information, the applicant must clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that the applicant believes to be a valid trade secret (as defined by Minnesota law), and provide an explanation of the economic value of keeping the data from being generally known to other persons. Determining what constitutes trade secret information is ultimately the responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data marked by an applicant as trade secret information, or otherwise marked “confidential,” will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data do not meet the definition of trade secret information, that data will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

# Requirements for Grant Recipients

---

## Grant Award Agreement and Payments

Upon approval of an application and prior to beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant is required to do the following:

- Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the State's accounting system, and submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification; and
- Sign a Grant Award Agreement indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks. The agreement also authorizes the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The grant award document must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties. Applicants should anticipate that grant contracts will have an end date of April 30, 2022. At the discretion of the MDA, grant contracts may be extended up to three years from the effective date of the contract.

Grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. To receive grant payments, grantees must provide proof that grant project work has been done by submitting details of each purchase on receipts or invoices, and proof that the vendors have been paid. Annual progress reports are required to be submitted during the duration of the project. Upon completion of the grant project, a final progress report is required to receive the last 10% of the award.

## Site Visits, Financial Reconciliations, and Evaluation

The grant agreement allows the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The MDA will perform a monitoring visit for all grantees with awards of \$25,000 or more before a final payment is approved. Other grantees may receive monitoring visits at the discretion of the MDA.

The MDA will perform a financial reconciliation of at least one invoice on grants greater than or equal to \$50,000; financial reconciliation may be performed on additional payment requests at the discretion of the MDA. For this purpose, the grantee must provide expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents requested by the state.

Follow-up surveys are needed to help us determine the long-term impacts of the grant program and to comply with statutory requirements. Grantees are required to complete periodic follow-up surveys for up to five years after they have received their award.

At minimum, surveys will include questions about leveraged funding, amounts of sales via the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), retail square footage, sales of fresh fruits and vegetables, and job creation. Dollar amounts of sales via the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) may be requested directly from implementing agencies.

## Bidding Requirements

All funded applicants will be required to abide by the state's bidding requirements for larger purchases. See a detailed list of the state's [bidding requirements](#) for details.

## Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified ([Minn. Stat. 363A.02](#)). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship ([Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500](#)).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the [Minnesota Human Rights Act](#).

## Audits of Project

Per [Minn. Stat. 16B.98, subdivision 8](#), the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

## Voter Registration Requirement

The grantee will comply with [Minn. Stat. 201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees.

## GFAP Background and Program Goals

---

The Good Food Access Program (GFAP) was established to increase the availability of and access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, including fresh fruits and vegetables, for underserved communities in low-income and moderate-income areas. These goals will be accomplished by providing financial and technical support and supporting sustainable public-private projects to open, renovate, or expand the operations of grocery stores and small food retailers; expanding access to credit and reducing barriers to investment in underserved communities in low- and moderate-income areas; and to provide technical assistance, primarily for small food retailers with demonstrated need.

The GFAP Advisory Committee advises the Commissioner of Agriculture on managing the program, establishing program criteria, establishing project eligibility guidelines, establishing application processes and additional selection criteria, establishing annual monitoring and accountability mechanisms, facilitating leverage of additional public and private investments, and promoting the program statewide. The MDA drafted this RFP in cooperation with the GFAP Advisory Committee.

## Project Evaluation Profile

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
Demonstrates a viable plan for long-term sustainability, including the ability to increase the availability of and access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, including fresh fruits and vegetables, for undeserved communities in low-income and moderate-income areas.	20
Demonstrates the capacity to successfully implement the project and that they have thoroughly considered the steps necessary to complete the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work plan is thorough and realistic</li> <li>• All required deliverables will be completed by April 30, 2022</li> <li>• A detailed description of each step of the grant project including estimated dates is provided</li> <li>• Applicant has experience implementing a project of comparable scale, or has sufficient partners committed to assisting the project</li> </ul>	20
Demonstrates community engagement in and support for the project.	5
Demonstrates commitment to participate in state and local initiatives to educate consumers on nutrition and promote healthy eating and healthy weight.	5
Demonstrates that the project will have positive economic and health impacts on underserved communities, including creation and retention of jobs for local or regional residents from low-income and moderate-income areas that reflect the area demographics, including communities of color.	10
Demonstrates that the project requires an investment of public support to move forward, build capacity, create community impact, or be competitive.	10
<b>Budget and Cash Match</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget table and narrative are consistent</li> <li>• Budget narrative clearly details all project costs</li> <li>• Budget narrative clearly explains source and amount of applicant's funds (cash match)</li> <li>• Budget is cost effective and appropriate amounts are backed by quotes or other sources</li> </ul>	10
Demonstrates commitment to increasing sales from Minnesota agricultural producers.	5
Demonstrates that the service area or organization experienced significant impact from COVID-19 or social unrest and includes a meaningful response to assist in overcoming the impacts.	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

# Application Questions

---

## Contact Information

### Applicant Information

- Applicant Name
- Organization Name
- Organization Mailing Address
- Organization Telephone
- Organization Email

### Authorized Representative

If awarded a grant, the person that will sign the grant contract agreement for this organization.

- Name
- Telephone
- Email

## Eligibility

Confirm that the following statements apply to your organization.

- The organization is in good standing with the State of Minnesota. (No back taxes owed, no defaults on Minnesota State backed financing for the past 7 seven years, in compliance with current state regulations, and acceptable performance on past MDA grants.)
- Your organization is in Minnesota or authorized to conduct business in Minnesota.
- No one involved in the project or the application for the grant is an employee or spouse of an employee of the MDA.

Please answer each of the following questions. You must respond “Yes” to at least one of the first two questions to be eligible to apply for this grant.

- Applicant is a Minnesota grocery store or small food retailer engaged in the sale of nutritious and culturally appropriate foods. Yes/No
- Applicant is applying on behalf of one more eligible applicant. Yes/No
- I have the authority to apply for this grant based on my relationship with the Applicant Organization. Yes/No
- I agree that work has not started on the proposed project and will not start until the grant contract agreement is fully executed. Yes/No

Do you agree to comply with the following conditions for a period of at least five years? If applying on behalf of eligible applicants, you must agree to make these requirements of each eligible applicant before a subaward is made.

Accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Yes/No

- Apply to accept Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits, and if approved accept WIC benefits. Yes/No
- Comply with all data collection and reporting requirements established by the Commissioner. Yes/No
- Promote the hiring, training, and retention of local or regional residents from low-income and moderate-income areas that reflect area demographics, including communities of color. Yes/No
- Except for small food retailers, as defined, allocate at least 30 percent of retail food space for the sale of affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods, including fruits and vegetables, low-fat and nonfat dairy, fortified dairy substitute beverages such as soy-based or nut-based dairy substitute beverages, whole grain-rich staple foods, meats, poultry, fish, seafood, and other proteins, consistent with nutrition standards in national guidelines described in the current United States Dietary Guidelines for Americans Yes/No/Not Applicable

How did you hear about the Good Food Access Program? Please check all that apply:

- MDA website
- Word of mouth
- Notification from another organization (Please list organization name)
- Tradeshow (Please list which tradeshow)
- I have previously applied
- Press release
- Email notification
- Other

May the MDA share your contact information and a summary of your proposal with program partners and technical assistance providers if your proposal is not funded? Funded proposals are automatically considered public information. If there are any parts of your proposal that you would not like shared, you must indicate the specific content that is a trade secret. Yes/No

## Previous Grants

Have you received a previous GFAP grant? Yes/No

If yes, briefly describe your previous grant project(s), including date(s) and amount(s) awarded. (1,000 characters, including spaces)



## Applicant Overview

(If applying on behalf of one business, complete the questions below; if applying on behalf of multiple businesses or locations, complete the table.)

- Business Name
- Address

Most recently completed fiscal year's gross revenue was:

- The retailer was not in business
- <\$50,000
- \$50,000 – \$750,000
- >\$750,000

Current Square Footage of Food Retail Space

Estimated Square Footage of Food Retail Space after Project Completion

### Type of Entity

Select the option that best describes your business. See [Definitions \(page 4\)](#) for more information.

- Grocery Store
- Corner store
- Convenience Store
- Farmers' Market
- Mobile Food Market
- Retail Food Outlet operated by an Emergency Food Program or Food Hub
- Other "small food retailer" (please specify):

### Eligibility Option

Each location where equipment is installed or physical improvements are made must be in a food desert or in a low- or moderate-income area with a substantial subpopulation that has low supermarket access. (Refer to "Eligible Locations" section for details on determining if the project is located in a Food Desert or serves residents of a low-income or moderate-income area.)

Is the retailer located in a food desert? Yes/No

If no, explain how the retailer serves a low- or moderate-income census tract that includes a substantial population of residents with low supermarket access and explain how the project will target residents with limited access. (1,200 characters, including spaces)

What census tracts are impacted by this project? Include the name of the county where the census tract is located.

If applying on behalf of multiple store/market locations, there is a table you can download, complete, and re-upload that includes the following pieces of information for each business impact.

- Business Name
- Address
- Census Tract
- Type of Upgrade
- Type of Eligible Area
- Current Square Footage of Food Retail Space
- Estimated Square Footage of Food Retail Space After Project Completion
- Most Recently Completed Fiscal Year's Gross Revenue
- Explanation of the how the project will impact people with low access, if not located in a food desert

## Proposal Summary

Include a description of the project and goals to be accomplished. The summary of this proposed project must be suitable for dissemination to the public. *(1,200 characters, including spaces)*

- Total Project Costs
- Grant Amount Requested
- Estimated Start Date (project cannot start until a grant contract agreement is fully executed)
- Estimated Completion Date

## Business/Organization Overview

Describe the business(es)/organization(s) capacity to implement the project. Include information such as years of experience in retail, years at the location(s), other experience in the food business, community support, organizational strengths, and any other information to demonstrate your organization's ability to execute your project. *(1,000 characters, including spaces)*

Describe the business(es)/organization(s) current capabilities to provide nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate foods to consumers. *(1,000 characters, including spaces)*

## Priority Projects

The following two prompts are optional, but you will not receive points in the evaluation criteria if you do not respond to them.

1. Describe how your business was adversely impacted by COVID-19 and/or how your business responded to the impact in the community. You are encouraged to include information about the impact on the community, such as numbers of confirmed COVID cases in the community/county, unemployment rates, business closures, etc. (500 characters, including spaces)
2. Describe how your business was adversely impacted by the civil unrest, how your business is responding to new community needs, and how this project will enable you to improve your services. (500 characters, including spaces)

## Investments

Describe your organization’s investments (monetary or non-monetary) into the project. If working with partners on the project, you may also include information about their investments (monetary or non-monetary). If contributing a cash match to the project, indicate the source of the funding. (2,400 characters, including spaces)

## Work Plan

Complete the following table. You should include the steps that you will take to successfully complete your project. For example, you might include target dates for requesting quotes, installing and testing equipment, and full launch of the equipment. Not all areas will apply to all projects. You may add additional lines or pages as necessary. The online application will have a table for you to download and re-attach to your application.

Timeframe	Description of Task/Action Item	Person Responsible
<i>Example: February 2021</i>	<i>Order Cooler</i>	<i>Store owner</i>

## Budget

### Budget Table

Complete the following table. You may add additional lines or pages as necessary. The online application will have a table for you to download and re-attach to your application.

Item	Quantity	Cost Per Unit	Total Amount	Source of Estimate
blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell
blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell
blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell
blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell
blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell
blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell	blank cell

## Budget Narrative

Respond to the following prompts. (3,000 characters, including spaces)

- Detail how the funds will be used and justify each expense listed in the Budget Table.
- Explain how the expenses outlined in the Budget Table will enable you to offer and sell more nutritious, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods.
- Explain sources of funds for any ongoing maintenance of equipment.
- Describe the necessity for grant funding to complete this project.
- The MDA normally does not provide cash advances for grant projects. However, if retailers who are already authorized to accept SNAP and have applied to accept WIC benefits would like to receive up to 50 percent of the total award as an advance, please justify the need for upfront funding. Note that any cash advance that violates the terms of the grant contract agreement or not adequately used to support the approved project, will need to be repaid.

## Expected Outcomes

Complete the following table. We recommend that you review sales records. If the retailer(s) was not in business prior to the grant project, you may enter zeros in the first column.

Sales of...	2019	2021 (Expected)	2022 (Expected)
<i>Fresh Fruits and Vegetables</i>			
<i>Canned/Frozen Fruits and Vegetables</i>			
<i>Minnesota Grown Fruits and Vegetables</i>			

How will the proposed project lead to continued or increased sales of Minnesota grown and raised foods? (2,400 characters, including spaces)

## Letters of Support

Letters of support are not required for most applications but are strongly recommended. The letters will help you demonstrate support for your project and may boost your application's evaluation score.

- Community-based organizations or units of local government engaged in healthy eating activities
- Local producers and/or distributors of foods sold
- Financial institution or other organization that will be used for the balance of the funding
- Applications submitted on behalf of one or more other organizations must include at least one letter from an intended subawardee.