

# **Good Food Access Program Equipment and Physical Improvement Grant Fiscal Year 2022 Request for Proposals**

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# Grant Summary

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## Overview

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.

## Funding availability

The maximum request is \$50,000, and the minimum request is \$2,500. The MDA anticipates awarding approximately \$320,750 using a competitive review process. We expect that we will award approximately 10-18 grants, but the final number depends on the size of the awards.

We must receive your GFAP grant application by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, March 17, 2022**, to be considered for funding. You must submit your application through our [online application system](#). We will not consider late applications.

## Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

[Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

This grant is limited to communities listed in the [Eligible areas](#) section. The grant will also prioritize projects that demonstrate 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 Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The MDA anticipates awarding at least 50% of the available funds to projects located in or serving BIPOC communities.

## How to submit questions

All questions should be submitted through writing by email ([MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us](mailto:MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us)) by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, March 10, 2022**. Responses to all questions regarding the application will be posted on the [Questions and Answers](#) section of the GFAP grant webpage.

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.

## How to apply

We must receive your GFAP Equipment and Physical Improvement grant application by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, March 17, 2022**, to be considered for funding. You must submit your application through our [online application system](#).

Technical assistance with the online application system can be provided until the submission deadline by calling 651-201-6500 or emailing [MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us](mailto:MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us) with “GFAP Equipment Grant” in the subject line. We encourage applicants to apply early so that there is ample time to receive technical assistance if needed.

**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.**

### Application guidelines

- Write for reviewers who are generally knowledgeable but may not have a thorough or deep understanding of your organization or project. Use plain, easily understood language.
- Answer all questions completely within the character limits specified in the grant application.
- The [Project Evaluation Profile](#) included in this document will be used to score and compare the grant applications.

## Timeline and deadlines for grant program

It is best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance to prevent unforeseen delays. Applications will not be accepted after the grant deadline under any circumstances.

Questions due no later than 4:00 pm Central Time ..... March 10, 2022  
Applications due no later than 4:00 pm Central Time ..... March 17, 2022  
Applicants notified of decisions; grant agreement negotiations begin ..... April 29, 2022 (estimated)

# Grant Eligibility

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## 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 U.S. 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 supermarket access.

Eligible organizations serving sovereign nations are eligible and encouraged to apply.

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

- Accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) 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 BIPOC communities; and
- Except for small food retailers, as defined, allocate at least 30% 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 Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) requirements with the appropriate implementing organization.

Applicants must be in good standing with the State of Minnesota:

- No back taxes owed.
- No defaults on state-backed financing for the last seven years.
- Acceptable performance on past MDA grants.
- Compliant with current state regulations.

MDA employees and their spouses are not eligible to receive grants from this program.

## Collaboration

Organizations may apply on behalf of and act as fiscal agents of other organizations that meet the eligible applicant criteria. 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. The letters should clearly describe the benefit of the grant project to their organization.
- Clearly identify these eligible entities and focus the application on their business.

## Eligible areas

Projects must be 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 the U.S. Census Bureau [TIGERweb viewer](https://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb) (tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb).
- Type in the address where the project will be occurring.
- On the upper left side of the screen, click the icon labeled “Layers” and select the box labeled “Census Tracts and Blocks.”
- On the map, locate the Census Tract (CT) and number for the project location.

Once you have the CT number, go to the [GFAP Eligible Areas](#) webpage. Go to your county, and then locate your CT number in the Census tract column. If your Census tract is included on this list, your location is eligible based on its designation as either a food desert or a low- or moderate-income area.

If your Census tract is not on the Eligible Areas list, check the [GFAP Ineligible Areas](#) webpage. If your location is on the Ineligible Areas list, we recommend checking surrounding Census tracts for eligibility.

**Projects may qualify if they can reasonably justify how they serve residents of eligible areas.**

Please contact us if you need help locating Census tracts.

## Eligible projects and expenses

GFAP grants help grocery stores and small food retailers make physical improvements and purchase equipment to stimulate sales of nutritious and culturally appropriate foods. Eligible projects include the purchase and installation of equipment and the costs incurred to make physical improvements.

Projects must:

- Increase the availability of and access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food (including produce) for underserved communities in low- and moderate-income areas.
- Not start until the grant contract is signed by all parties and has reached its start date.
- Be completed in three years or less. Contracts cannot be extended beyond three years.
- Be conducted in Minnesota.

## 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

Expenses may not be incurred until after a grant contract has been fully executed. Successful applicants should anticipate having contracts available to them around **May 2022**. Grant contract agreements will expire approximately three years after the start date of the contract. Expenses may only be incurred during the grant contract period.

## Ineligible projects and expenses

*Food shelves and other organizations that are not selling food are ineligible to receive grant funds unless there is a retail operation as a part of their programming. The GFAP program supports small food retailers and grocery stores.*

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Operating costs
- Expenditures incurred prior to contract execution
- Advertising, public relations, entertainment, and amusement 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 an eligible cost.
- Donations and in-kind contributions, including property and services, made by the applicant (regardless of the recipient)
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to comply with federal, state, local, or Native American tribal laws and regulations
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)
- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists and political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, legal costs, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Land rental and purchases
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.

## Matching funds

Applicants are not required to provide matching funds to the grant award. Up to 100% of the total project cost may be covered by the grant, with a minimum grant award of \$2,500 and a maximum grant award of \$50,000.

## Definitions

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**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

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## Review process

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, geographic distribution, services to special populations, applicant's history as a state grantee, and capacity to perform the work when making their decisions. The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

## Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers ([MINN. STAT.16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making, 2022 \(Word\)](#)).

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 Good Food Access Program. 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 to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited 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 Minnesota's statute on grants ([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 for data classified as Department of Agriculture data ([MINN. STAT 13.643, subd. 1](#)) and 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 ([MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1\(b\)](#)) 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

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## Pre-award financial review

All nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial review prior to a grant award made of \$25,000 and higher. All for-profit organizations (including individuals and farms) and the University of Minnesota are excluded from this requirement.

To comply with [Policy 08-06: Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations \(PDF\)](#), you may be asked to submit one of the following documents:

- Grant applicants with annual income of under \$50,000, or who have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or audit, should submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of \$50,000 or more and less than \$750,000 should submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit.

## Accountability and reporting

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 SNAP and WIC, retail square footage, sales of fresh fruits and vegetables, and job creation. Dollar amounts of sales via the SNAP WIC may be requested directly from implementing agencies.

## Grant award agreement and payments

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs](#) website.

Upon approval of an application and prior to beginning work on the 2022 GFAP grant project 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
- Complete and submit a [Grant Affidavit for Individuals \(Word\)](#) if receiving a grant as an individual/sole proprietor (i.e. tie grant to your social security number) within 30 days of receipt of the award; and
- Sign a grant contract 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 in May 2025. Grant contracts may not extend beyond three years from the effective date of the contract.

Grantees can request up to 50% of their award funds up-front. **You must indicate in the Budget section of the application if you are requesting advance funds.** Advance funds must be reconciled within one year of the start of the grant contract. Additional payments will not be made until advanced payments have been accounted for. The MDA reserves the right to not honor requests for initial advanced payments, including if an organization has an existing open grant with the MDA. Note that any cash advance that violates the terms of the grant agreement or does not adequately support the approved project will need to be repaid.

All other 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.

## Site visits and financial reconciliations

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.

## 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**

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 ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 8](#)). 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 provide voter registration services for its employees ([MINN. STAT. 201.162](#)).

## **GFAP Background and Program Goals**

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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 May 2025.</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.	10
Demonstrates commitment to participate in state and local initiatives to educate consumers on nutrition and promote healthy eating and healthy weight.	10
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 BIPOC communities.	10
Demonstrates that the project requires an investment of public support to move forward, build capacity, create community impact, or be competitive.	15
Budget and Investments <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 investments, monetary and non-monetary.</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
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

# Application Questions

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## 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 state backed financing for the past seven years, in compliance with current state regulations, and acceptable performance on past MDA grants.) (Yes/No)
- The organization is in Minnesota or authorized to conduct business in Minnesota. (Yes/No)

Has work started on your proposed project or will work start before the grant contract agreement is signed by all parties? The MDA is unable to reimburse for any work that is performed prior to the start date of the contract. (Yes/No)

Is anyone involved who will receive grant funds an MDA employee or spouse of an MDA employee? (Yes/No)

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 or more eligible applicants. (Yes/No)

I have the authority to apply for this grant based on my relationship with the Applicant Organization. (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. (Yes/No)

- Accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) 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 BIPOC communities. (Yes/No)
- Except for small food retailers, as defined, allocate at least 30% 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 the [Definitions](#) page of the RFP 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 the [Eligible areas](#) 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

## Project 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)*

## 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: June 2022</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
<i>Example: Walk-in cooler</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>	<i>Restaurants.com</i>

### 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 would like to receive up to 50% 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 is 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...	2020	2022 (Expected)	2023 (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.

Applications submitted on behalf of one or more other organizations must include letters from intended subawardee(s).

Other supporters could include:

- 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