

Appendix C: Questions and Answers

Questions about this RFP may be submitted until January 10, 2025 to Aileen Randolph via email arandolph@nyfvi.org.

Questions and Answers correspond with RFP and Sections of the proposal. Answers will be posted within each category on weekly basis, please check back for updates.

A) Resources

A1) In addition to the upcoming webinars, I was wondering if there are resources available to help with the application process?

Several organizations are available to support applicants in developing their proposal. Please review the resources section on the program [webpage](#) for the list of possible options.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

B) Grant Awards and Sizes (updated 12/10/2024)

B9) What happens if my grant budget falls between the max for track 1 and the minimum for track 2?

Per the RFP, the grant award and match must be between \$5,250 - \$26,250. If an applicant has a project that they would like to submit that is larger than \$26,250 but smaller than \$52,500, they must be able to fund any costs over the maximum grant award for Track 1, which is \$25,000.

Question below answered on 11/20/2024

B8) Can you lease land, building, or storage?

Yes. This is an allowable use of funds. To be a competitive proposal, you will want to be able to demonstrate how the business will be able to support these costs as the grant concludes.

B7) When putting proposal together, if funding available at end of next year 2025, would we state what we will be doing in meantime with land, etc. to prepare for grant funding? Meaning purchasing some plants, preparing field, etc.

Anticipated project selection date is June 2025. All projects will be contracted no later than 4 months following selection. This grant is a reimbursement-based award. No costs will be reimbursed until a project has achieved key milestones or is successfully completed and all required documentation has been submitted. No costs that pre-date the execution date of the contract can be reimbursed. It is up to the applicant to determine if they want to include this type of information.

B6) The timeline of 18 or 24 months are the maximum time that could take execute the project, is there a minimum?

There is no minimum time to execute the project.

B5) Quick question, no matter the amount, the financial support (having the money for the grant) needs to be 100%, and a pre approval from a financing institution would be enough?

Only Track 2 projects, those over \$50,000 require proof of funds to implement the project prior to contract. All projects over \$50,000 must demonstrate their ability to self-finance or secure funding

to implement the project. Selected projects will have up to 120 days for this step to be achieved. Please see Contracting Requirements in the Technical Requirements for more information.

B4) Does owner sweat equity on business machinery count as 5% match?

If an applicant is documenting their time and collecting wages from the business, it may be used as a match, as long as all activity is directly related to achieving the purposes of the project.

Question below answered on 11/14/2024

B3) How many grants will be awarded?

The number of grants awarded will be determined by the size of the most competitive proposals in each track. The amount available for each track will not change, and a total of \$850,000 will be awarded.

B2) What are some examples of projects that have been funded in the past? If you do not have this information can you give examples of projects that you want to fund?

This is the first time NYFVI has issued an RFP for this program. Examples of potential projects are described in Section 4: Business Impact SMART Goals of the application.

B1) If a grant request is \$100,000, is the project only considered at the requested amount or can it potentially be partially funded by grant?

NYFVI does not anticipate proactively reducing project size, unless it is necessary to ensure the use of all funds in both tracks. Applicants are encouraged to review the Scoring Criteria of the program when determining the budget for their proposal. Applicants can use the grant funds to support a larger project. In the application, these projects are referred to as partially resourced, or multi-stage projects.

C) Number of Applications (updated 11/14/2024)

C2) I saw on the RFP addendum that someone can submit applications for more than one project (but can only be funded for one). Is that recommended?

Up to you! Applicants will need to determine if that is an option they want to pursue.

Questions below answered on 10/31/2024

C1) Can I submit more than one application?

Yes, applicants may submit more than one project for consideration, but they must submit separate applications. Only one project will be funded.

D) Use of Funds (updated 1/15/2025)

D24) We would use grant money to get the barn weatherized, do an architectural study and purchase equipment- I didn't see architectural study in the list of items but wonder if that is acceptable?

Can the grant be used for a whole multi-phase project or only for a single asset? The application seems to imply it can only be used for a single asset, but never explicitly spells it out. The examples, too, seem to refer to just one service or good. Ideally we'd like to apply for a grape planting project that would involve five major expenditures: drain tile installation, the grape vines themselves, planting of the grape vines, the trellis materials, and installation of the trellis. Each expenditure will happen at different times, but is more

than doable within the grant's time limits. Can the grant only be used for one stage of this project or can it apply to all five stages?

Typically, if the Technical Requirements of an RFP does not include specific prohibitions or requirements, it is up to the applicant to determine how to interpret the direction. Overall, the applicant should keep in mind this language from the Overview Section of the RFP:

*It is anticipated that this program will receive a high number of applications from a wide range of beginning farmers. All applicants are encouraged to read this RFP closely to consider how best to use this opportunity to create a competitive proposal that will **advance** their plan to grow their business and become a financially sustainable, independent, agricultural enterprise.*

For specific use of funds questions, all applicants should review the Use of Funds section on page 4 of the technical requirements document. They should also closely review the scoring criteria on page 5 and then determine for themselves what they believe will be their most competitive proposal

If an applicant can provide a reasonable estimate of the operational outcomes and potential short-and long-term economic benefits that the use of the funds will create, then the project could fall under the Use of Funds category, “Other business needs as justified by the applicant’s proposal”

Questions below answered on 01/08/2025

D23) The following questions were from a single applicant:

- Are new plantings of a qualified product and the necessary equipment to successfully plant and care for said product eligible as a project focus?
- If so, can it be multiple products under one comprehensive growth plan? ie. wine grapes, lavender, cut flowers and christmas trees
- If so, since its advised that the application use a narrow project focus would the inclusion of new plantings AND equipment be appropriate to combine
- If considering new building construction are there limitations on the use of the building? For example must it solely be used for production or distribution of an eligible product or would a retail space selling an eligible product qualify?
- If considering new building construction are there limitations on what type of construction is eligible. For example installing a septic system and bathrooms to allow for the public to visit the business?

Overall, the applicant should keep in mind this language from the Overview Section of the RFP It is anticipated that this program will receive a high number of applications from a wide range of beginning farmers. All applicants are encouraged to read this RFP closely to consider how best to use this opportunity to create a competitive proposal that will advance their plan to grow their business and become a financially sustainable, independent, agricultural enterprise.

For specific use of funds questions, all applicants should review the Use of Funds section on page 4 of the technical requirements document. They should also closely review the scoring criteria on page 5 and then determine for themselves what they believe will be their most competitive proposal

If an applicant can provide a reasonable estimate of the operational outcomes and potential short-and long-term economic benefits that the use of the funds will create, then the project could fall under the Use of Funds category, “Other business needs as justified by the applicant’s proposal”

D22) My farm grows apples and makes hard cider. We are interested in hiring employees to work doing sales as part of a plan to expand distribution of their cider. Would the cost of employee wages be eligible for grant funding from the Beginning Farmer program?

Typically, sales-related costs would be considered a marketing activity, which is explicitly listed on page 4 of the technical requirements document as an eligible use of funds. All applicants must be able to provide a reasonable estimate of the operational outcomes that the project will create..

Questions below answered on 11/20/2024

D21) Can you purchase used equipment from a neighbor or does it need to be from a dealership?

Equipment may be purchased new or used, from a dealer or individual.

D20) Is there a list of vehicles or equipment that can be purchased?

There is no list. Applicants must justify any proposed cost in their application.

D19) Are pre-made sheds, including gravel, electric hookup, etc, eligible as infrastructure?

Yes. Please see Use of Funds on Page 4 of the Technical Requirements for more information.

D18) Is there an acreage minimum on small farm land leasing projects?

No. There is no acreage minimum on small farm land leasing projects. Please see the Projects on Leased Land section of Appendix A for more information.

D17) Our town requires fencing permit. If I need to have permit for application for grant, I know that permit expires within 1 year. It may already expire before grant is approved. How do we handle this?

If we are looking for a grant to erect a building. Do we need approval from our local town board for the erection of the building pre approval of the grant?

The permit is not required prior to grant application, but it will be discussed if the proposal moves to contract. If a project requires a permit to be implemented, obtaining the permit should be incorporated into the workplan and it will need to be clear that you can obtain the permit and complete the project in the timeframe. It would be prudent to learn from the town what their typical timeframe for obtaining a permit is. You will need to develop a workplan that demonstrates that the permit can be obtained and the project finished in the allocated timeframe.

D16) Will projects that are using land that is being leased from immediate family be considered?

Yes. Proposals may be submitted for infrastructure, building and renovation projects on leased land. All projects implemented on leased land must document the support of the landowner, prior to contract and have a lease that extends a minimum of five years beyond the contract termination date. Land transactions between immediate family members are prohibited, and land transactions including leasing, among extended family must be disclosed.

D15) Does the match have to be cash or can it be equity? If it can be equity, can that equity come from equipment that was purchased with a previous grant that is now closed and the applicant now owns.

The match cannot be equity from equipment. A match may be provided as a monetary or in-kind contribution to the project's cost. All matches must be documented. It is not permissible to use other NYS grants as a match. Please see page 3 of the Technical Requirements for more information.

D 14) Does the grant cover loan interest?

No, interest payments are not allowed. Please see Use of Fund Restrictions on Page 43 of the Application.

Questions below answered on 11/14/2024

D13) Can equipment be purchased used? If so, does it need to be purchased through a dealer or can it be purchased from an individual?

Equipment may be purchased new or used, from a dealer or individual. Any purchase is still subject to all program rules outlined in the project budget section of the Technical RFP and the applicant must be able to provide the information requested in the narrative budget description section for Machinery/Equipment of the Application.

D12) Does the building renovation include roof repair, and if it does would it count if you paid for someone to help you with this project?

Yes. The construction or improvement of physical structures, including semi-permanent structures is an eligible use of funds. Please see the "Use of Funds" section in the Technical Requirements sheet for more information.

D11) Would a well for irrigation qualify as a project to apply for?

Yes. Please see "Use of Funds" section in the Technical Requirements document for more information.

D10) If one element of the proposal doesn't qualify for the grant (i.e. legal services) would the whole grant be disqualified, or would you just remove those line items from the award?

The use of Legal services, if directly in support of the purpose of the project would be an eligible use of funds.

D9) When you say the purchase of agricultural land, can this help with the downpayment?

Yes, if all requirements are met. Please see Appendix B for information on purchasing land.

D8) Can livestock and machinery be purchased from immediate family?

Yes, only land transactions between immediate family members are prohibited.

D7) If you are just purchasing land, wouldn't it all be on one line?

Yes, it could be, but there may be additional transactional costs that the applicant would like to include.

D6) When it comes to something like building additions- are we allowed to contract with Amish builders? We have many in our area that have done wonderful work.

All contractors must have appropriate licenses. Please see Appendix A for more information.

D5) Can livestock and machinery be purchased from immediate family?

Yes, only land transactions between immediate family members are prohibited.

D4) If you are just purchasing land, wouldn't it all be on one line?

Yes, it could be, but there may be additional transactional costs that the applicant would like to include.

Questions below answered on 10/31/2024

D3) Is deer fencing an eligible cost?

Applicants who aren't sure if their project is eligible should first review the Purpose of Grants section of the Technical Requirements document. If an applicant can provide a reasonable estimate of the operational outcomes and potential short-and long-term economic benefits that the use of the funds will create, then the project could fall under the Use of Funds category, "Other business needs as justified by the applicant's proposal"

D2) I'm just starting to look for land, how much should I budget?

Land is an eligible use of funds, but applicants must have a parcel identified prior to submitting an application. Please refer to [Appendix B: Guidelines for Land Purchases](#) for more information. If help is needed to find land, the resources at [Farms for A New Generation](#) may be useful.

D1) Can my greenhouse renovation project be based on leased land?

Yes. Please review the Projects on Leased Land section found in Appendix A to understand the conditions that the project must be able to meet.

E) Eligibility (updated 01/15/2025)

E26) We have farm land but have not yet begun farming. We have the concept of what we want to plant, but are still deciding on who will be our lead farmer. If the land owner applies yet does not have farm experience, is that permissible?

It is permissible. The applicant will need to determine if their past experience and transferrable skills are sufficient to create a competitive proposal. The scoring criteria can be found on page 5 of the Technical Requirements.

E25) Is hydroponic farming allowed under this grant?

Yes. If the goal is to create a commercial enterprise, hydroponic farming is an agricultural business..

E24) I'm a hay farmer that does custom work and planting. I would like to apply for a grant to build out my commercial mechanic shop. Is this eligible?

No. The focus of the project must be to build or grow a commercial agricultural business.

Questions below answered on 12/23/2024

E23) I understand that I will apply as an individual but I think I can tell a stronger story by applying with a partnership I am involved in. Is there an amount of ownership interest that makes it clear that I am eligible and independent?

There are opportunities throughout the application to incorporate information about the current business.

Business information provided in the application should reflect the proposed or current business structure. The phrase “financially sustainable, independent, commercial ag enterprise” can be interpreted to mean that it is anticipated that applicants will have a significant ownership interest in any business that the grant funds will benefit. **The Eligibility section of the Technical Requirements document outlines the conditions that an applicant must meet. Final determination of eligibility will be made during the review process.**

Questions below answered on 12/03/2024

E22) I operate an apiary with 60 hives and would like to expand. Is that considered a farm?

Yes, an apiary is considered an agricultural product. Please see page 3 of the Eligibility section of the Technical Requirements document for more information.

E21) Our farm services our restaurant and other food operations at a hotel. We would like to expand our marketing operations to begin selling to the public and our visitors. We raise vegetables, eggs, pork, lamb, and flowers. We've experimented with some pickled products, etc. and would like to sell these value added goods as well. We're considering applying for merchandising and processing equipment to improve marketing of farm products. As a farm under the same LLC as a hotel, do we still qualify for this grant program? Is our competitiveness impacted in anyway?

*The **Individual** is applying. Applicants who are eligible for this grant are Individuals with experience, knowledge or skills relating to, or transferrable to, the production of horticultural or agricultural crops or livestock, Individuals who currently or will materially or substantially participate in operating a farm, including urban farms, in New York State, and Individuals who have NOT operated a farm for more than 10 years. There is no minimum required years of farming to apply for this grant. Please see the "Who is the applicant?" on page 4 of the Eligibility section of the technical Requirements for more information.*

Questions below answered on 12/02/2024

E20) I currently live out of state but would really like to move to NY and have access to farmland through my family. Do I have to be a current NYS resident to apply?

No, if the applicant meets all eligibility criteria, and the project is based in NYS, the current place of residence is irrelevant. Please see page 40 of the application for more information about the eligibility criteria.

E19) We are New York natives, who currently live in Maine but would really like to move back home. Home being Wyoming county. Brad grew up on a large dairy farm that has since gone out of business and much of the land is being rented to a larger farm. We have a passion for regenerative farming! So, with that being said I am wondering if there are still funds available for this grant for 2025 and do we have to be current NY residents in order to even apply ? The land is already available, we would be restoring Brad's great grandfather's original farm consisting of 50 acres.

Applications close Friday, January 24, 2025. Yes, you can apply because eligible farmers are individuals who currently or will materially or substantially participate in operating a farm, including urban farms, in New York State. All projects must be based completely in New York State. Grantees are responsible for complying with all local, state and federal laws applicable to work performed under this RFP/Agreement. Please see page 40 of the application for more information.

Questions below answered on 11/20/2024

E18) Can you further define "operated" in I have operated a farm for less than 10 years?

A farm operator is a person who runs the farm, making day-to-day management decisions. An operator could be an owner, hired manager, cash tenant, share tenant, and/or a partner. Please see page 4 of the Technical Requirements in the section Who Is The Applicant for more information.

E17) Operating farm for less than 10 years in NYS eligibility: If planting the land for last few years, but not named business, should we register business name before making application?

Start ups are eligible. When you register the business name is up to you.

E16) You mentioned the application is for a single applicant, so does that literally mean one person? How are married couples operating together treated?

If a LLC is applying, is it the LLC or the individual partner applying? Or neither?

If the farm has 2 co-owners, is it correct that this should only focus on the education and credentials of one of these owners?

The applicant is an individual, not a business. All biographical details must reflect one individual. Additional information about the ownership structure of the business, and why that is an asset can be include in the Business Profile question in Section 3, as well as the Project Team.

E15) Are nonprofit farms (or say, the hired manager of one) going to effectively be an eligible entity?

Nonprofit farms are not eligible. The applicant must be an individual, and their goal must be to build a commercial ag business.

E14) Does experience from another country be factored?

The application collects chronological information about an individual's experience. It is not limited to their experience in NY agriculture.

E13) Does it need to be a farm operation? Can it be consulting to the Ag industry?

No, a consulting firm to the Ag industry is not an eligible application. he application must be in a commercial farm operation and in direct support of creating an agricultural product.

E12) In your opinion, could a young person (high school) meet your experience requirements? Are under age 18 eligible?

No, an applicant must be 18 years old to enter into a grant contract.

E11) Is track 2 available for those who never applied before or only track 1?

Both Tracks are available to individuals who meet all eligibility requirements.

E10) Restricted into NY territory only?

Yes. All projects must be based in New York State.

E9) Can the creation/distribution of an agricultural products such as a pesticide or fertilizer in tandem with a farm be supported?

Although the purchase of goods or services that support value-added production is an eligible use of grant funds, the applicant's business must also be producing the key ingredients for the product.

E8) For the question regarding examples, I meant that if you could speak about few examples of candidates that would be eligible. So if you have worked with a farm, but you're not a listed manager is that ok? What would a "manager" be defined as?

Applicants who are eligible for this grant are Individuals with experience, knowledge or skills relating to, or transferrable to, the production of horticultural or agricultural crops or livestock, Individuals who currently or will materially or substantially participate in operating a farm, including urban farms, in New York State, and Individuals who have NOT operated a farm for more than 10 years. A farm operator is a person who runs the farm, making day-to-day management decisions. An operator could be an owner, hired manager, cash tenant, share tenant, and/or a partner. Please see page 4 of the Technical Requirements in the section Who Is The Applicant for more information.

Questions below answered on 11/14/2024

E7) Does the beginning farmer competitive grant include homesteads?

No. Applicants must be seeking to build a commercial agricultural business.

E6) Is a flower farm eligible?

Can you do this grant if you're a second generation farmer? I have only been farming for 2 years, but my father is my mentor

I have/live on a farm, but have not operated a commercial farm. Am I eligible?

The answer to all three questions above is the same. Yes, if all eligibility criteria are met.

E5) If the business is co-owned, do we need to list both sets of details?

If the farm business is owned/operated 50/50 by a married pair, do we include readiness history for both of us?

Would a cooperative farm qualify for these grants? Could the board fill out all this bio? Or would it be for one representative only?

Is the applicant an individual or a business? If an individual is required to apply and both owners are beginning farmers, then how do we determine which one applies?

The answer to all four questions above is the same. **The applicant is an individual, not a business.** All biographical details must reflect one individual. Additional information about the ownership structure of the business, and why that is an asset can be include in the Business Profile question in Section 3, as well as the Project Team.

E4) What defines "Independent" does a LLC qualify where you are one of the owners or does it need to be a Sole Proprietor?

Business information provided in the application should reflect the proposed or current business structure. The phrase "financially sustainable, independent, commercial ag enterprise" can be interpreted to mean that it is anticipated that applicants will have a significant ownership interest in any business that the grant funds will benefit.

The Eligibility section of the Technical Requirements document outlines the conditions that an applicant must meet. Final determination of eligibility will be made during the review process.

Questions below answered on 10/31/2024

E3) Is a 501c3 nonprofit organization eligible?

Please review the eligibility section in the Technical Requirements document.

*It is expected that all applicants will own or have a serious interest in building an independent commercial enterprise that will generate revenue and compensate workers in accordance with NYS labor regulations. The applicant's goal for the enterprise must be to become a financially sustainable agricultural business. **Non-profit organizations are not eligible.***

E2) I'm a next generation farmer and want to use this grant to buy animals to expand my family's business. Am I eligible?

Applicants must be seeking to build or grow an independent commercial enterprise. If the applicant will own the animals and run it as an independent enterprise, they would qualify.

E1) Would a new ag enterprise such as opening branded beef/butcher shop qualify?

No. Retail facilities are not included as part of this program. New York State has another program that might meet your needs. More information is available at [RFP 0332 - Food Access Expansion Grant Program | Agriculture and Markets](#).

F) Scoring Criteria and Competitiveness (Updated 12/13/2024)

F2) Say I were to create an application and ask for \$100,000. It would be \$40,000 just to rescue the barn from eventually being unusable, basically just shore up the foundation and integral beams that are collapsing over time. Then the rest of the money I would ask for would be to finish it and update other important things like electricity. Could there be a way where I get approved for the \$40,000 or whatever smaller amount and then just not approved for the rest of the project?

I don't want to ask for too much money and then not get the grant. Basically, does it hurt my chances by asking for too much or is there a scenario where they decide just not to fund my whole project? Basically, what I'm asking is are my chances better by asking for less grant money?

Applicants will need to make this decision for themselves. If you review the Scoring Criteria on Pages 5-6 of the technical document, you will see that part of the project's evaluation includes Business Impact. The project budget is considered when making that assessment. It is not anticipated that the program will proactively fund only parts of any proposal.

Questions below answered on 11/20/2024

F1) I listened to the earlier webinar and am back for more. I have a question about project selection. Am I more likely to be successful with this grant if I submit a proposal for my farm's biggest economic bottle neck but also the highest dollar project? Or submitting a proposal to fix a smaller bottle neck that will have an impact economically but leaves the biggest bottle neck still out there?

Example: Does a 20k project require a better profit percentage than a project receiving 8k do be considered "efficient business"?

Will preference be given to expanding into new markets or growing current market?

Will education or outreach components be considered or helpful? Such as a demo of a piece of purchased equipment for area farmers?

Please see page 44 of the application to see the Review Process and Scoring Criteria. Successful proposals will be based on the scoring criteria. It is up to the applicant to decide which project they feel best aligns with the scoring criteria and program goals.

G) What to Know Before Applying (updated 12/02/2024)

G6) Can you apply to both the NYS Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program and the NYS Grown & Certified ITRD Grant Program?

If you and/or your business meet the eligibility criteria for both grants, you can apply to both grants. However, the same project cannot be funded by both grants. Projects need to be unique to each grant.

Questions below answered on 11/20/2024

G5) If purchasing new equipment or constructing a building, it is possible costs may change between application submission and the time of purchase or hiring a contractor. Is there any way to account for that?

Applicants will need to determine how they want to plan for price increases. Options include planning for increases in the proposal budget, or planning to have contingency funds available so that the project may be completed.

G4) If we choose a track, are we locked into that track? i.e. Could we apply for a track 2 grant, but only get approved for a track 1 grant?

NYFVI does not anticipate proactively reducing project size unless it is necessary to ensure the use of all funds in both tracks. Applicants are encouraged to review the Scoring Criteria of the program when determining the budget for their proposal. Applicants can use the grant funds to support a larger project. In the application, these projects are referred to as partially resourced, or multi-stage projects.

Questions below answered on 11/14/2024

G3) Reimbursement - means to get money AFTER the project finished ? Let me understand it clearly.

Yes. A reimbursement grant pays you back (reimburses you) after the project is complete and all reporting and reimbursement requirements are met.

G2) Can items that you have already purchased for the farm be included in the grant proposal for full or partial reimbursement?

G1) Can a project be started after the application is accepted but before reward is determined? (thinking seasonal target date to finish for a project that is going forward regardless of award)

The answer to both questions above is No. Applicants are encouraged to closely read the What to Know Before Applying section of the Technical Requirements document. Any cost that predates the projects contract execution date is ineligible for reimbursement.

H) Contracting Requirements (updated 01/15/2025)

H9) Would an auto loan be a reimbursable source of implementation funds?

Yes, if the purchase of the vehicle is for the commercial business and part of the project, An auto loan, to allow the applicant to secure the vehicle would be reimbursable, as long as the loan and purchase do not predate the execution date of the grantee contract.

H8) We are applying for the Beginning Farmer Grant and are applying for funds for a tractor (over \$50,000). Can you clarify this statement: "If an applicant anticipates spending \$50,000 or more with a single business, formal cost proposals from three businesses will be required for applications selected for funding." Does this mean that if we are awarded we need to get three quotes, or for the application we need to get three quotes?

Formal cost proposals will be required during the contracting process.

H7) It looks like land transactions are the only prohibited transaction between family members. There are no other issues for this? i.e. paying a family member to do decal work on a market vehicle?

As long as the relationship is disclosed in the application, and the bid is competitive, transactions among family members and extended family are permitted.

H6) For the purpose of this grant, are owner's draws/distributions considered salaries/wages paid to the applicant?

No. Owners draws and distributions are not typically structured to reflect specific activity. Only activity that is directly related to the purpose of the project is permissible for reimbursement.

Questions below answered on 01/08/2025

H5) If my father in law was able to loan me the \$26,000 needed for my project, would that qualify for him to be reimbursed from the grant or does the funding need to come from a bank?

Unless a grantee requests an assignment of payment to a third party during the contracting process, the project reimbursement will be made to the grantee after all reporting and reimbursement requirements are met. During the contracting process, projects over \$50,000 must demonstrate they have access to funds to implement the project. Projects requesting \$25,000 or less must be able to self-finance or secure financing prior to reimbursement, but documentation is not required. Access to funds is likely to be provided as documentation of a line of credit, project specific funds, or other accessible financial resources.

Please review pages 6-7 What to Know Before Applying and Contracting Requirements of the Technical Requirements document for further information. Review of the Reimbursement Requirements on page 8 may also be helpful

Questions below answered on 12/23/2024

H4) I would like to purchase land from a Trust that is owned by family members. Is that permissible with this program?

No. Please see Appendix B.

Land transactions between immediate family members are prohibited, and land transactions among extended family must be disclosed. Immediate family members include any member of the household, as well as the applicant's parents, step parents, siblings and any business in which they have an ownership interest. Extended family includes in-laws, aunts, uncles, cousins and any business in which they have an ownership interest.

Questions below answered on 12/13/2024

H3) In reference to the requirement of proof of funds prior to contracting a \$50,000 project is there a specific form that it must take? For example, If there is a line or credit, credit card, with a mix of cash on hand is that okay or does it need to be a single loan?

Proof of funds may come from multiple sources as long as adequate documentation is provided.

H2) Can you clarify what adequate insurance coverage is in reference to this statement? " All projects over \$50,000 must demonstrate appropriate insurance coverage."

If selected for funding, at contract, applicants must have insurance coverage for any asset that they will be purchasing with the funds. Coverage should allow them to repair or replace the asset if it were damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen.

Questions below answered on 10/31/2024

H1) Are there any specific limitations on infrastructure projects that are on leased land?

Please see page 9 of the Technical Requirements sheet under the section "Projects on Leased Land."

I) Reporting and Reimbursement Requirements (updated 12/10/2024)

I6) The RFP states that "No expenses that pre-date the execution date of the contract can be reimbursed". Is this execution date estimated to be June 2025?

Project selection is anticipated to occur in June 2025. Track 1 projects will contract no later than 90 days after selection. Track 2 projects will contract no later than 160 days following selection. Please see Page 2 of the Technical Assistance Sheet in the Key Dates section for more information.

I5) The RFP states that "No expenses that pre-date the execution date of the contract can be reimbursed". Is this execution date estimated to be June 2025?

Project selection is anticipated to occur in June 2025. Track 1 projects will contract no later than 90 days after selection. Track 2 projects will contract no later than 160 days following selection. Please see Page 2 of the Technical Assistance Sheet in the Key Dates section for more information.

Questions below answered on 11/20/2024

I4) How would land transactions work then in the case of delayed reimbursement? Is this more so for loan repayment in that case?

All transactions are treated the same. Unless agreed to at contracting, no costs will be reimbursed prior to the project's conclusion and all required documentation has been submitted. *Any project that will seek financing to implement their project may request to assign their grant payment to a third party.*

I3) How many draws are accepted on the grant? (One at the end, or others for each completed step?)

During the contracting process, *any complex project that will require 24 months to complete may request to include one intermediate payment for costs incurred after tangible milestones, identified in the workplan, have been met.*

Questions below answered on 11/14/2024

I2) What does the post-project audit process look like?

Please see the "Reporting and Reimbursement Requirements" section of the Technical Requirements document.

Questions below answered on 10/31/2024

I1) The RFP says "See Potential Grant Recapture Scenarios below" but I can't find the copy.

This copy was unintentionally omitted in the Technical Requirements of the RFP. It has been added to the [RFP addendum](#).

J) Other (updated 12/10/2024)

J7) I am wondering if there are still funds available for this grant for 2025?

Applications for this funding cycle close Friday, January 24, 2025. NYS has committed to future years of funding for a Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program as well.

J6) I am eligible for both the Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant Program and the NYS Grown & Certified Infrastructure and Technology Grant Program. Can I submit the same project in both programs?

Yes, as long as the project meets all criteria for both programs it may be submitted in both programs. The same project will not be funded in more than one program.

Questions below answered on 11/20/2024

J5) I have a project that requires two identical infrastructure components. If I were to build just one component it could be a Track 1 project. Can I apply for half the project in Track 1 and the full project (both components) in Track 2?

Applicants will need to make their own decisions on what they think the best course of action would be. Duplicative projects would not be funded.

J4) Given that the grant should continue in the future, will farmers who receive this grant this year be eligible for the grant in future years as well?

Can beginning farmers be recipients more than one time? For example, if I was awarded a Track 1 grant this cycle, would I be eligible to apply for a Track 2 grant in the next cycle?

For the Beginning Farmer Competitive Grant does receiving a grant one year effect one's eligibility if there is a new RFP the following year? In other words, will proposal reviewers consider past awards?

Although funding for the Beginning Farmers Competitive Grant program has been committed, the RFP for future grant cycles has not been developed and criteria related to eligibility and subsequent grant funding has not been determined.

J3) Where can I find the link to the first webinar?

Links to the webinars are on this page <https://nyfvi.org/bfcg-program/> in the Webinar section.

Questions below answered on 11/14/2024

J2) Are there any conflicts of interests being considered for eligibility or priority?

No. There was not any conflict of interest guidance included in the RFP.

J1) Do you know if FSA would be an option for initial funding if we already have loans through them?

Please direct your question to your FSA office.

K) APPLICATION (updated 11/20/2024)

K7) Who reviews the applications?

NYFVI staff will conduct a technical review of all applications to ensure that all requirements are met. An application review committee will be comprised of individuals from across the State who are part of the ag ecosystem that supports farmers. Their expertise will include business management and agriculture. Reviewers will independently read and evaluate the proposals. If a proposal requires specific expertise that is not available among the reviewers, that expertise will be sought. Please see page 5 of the Technical Requirements, section Review Process and Scoring Criteria for more information

K6) Is prior grant funding in regard to the farm system or individual

Prior grant funding should be any grant that the individual has helped to develop or implement.

K5) Does the NYS Vendor ID need to be completed before the application is submitted?

No, the NYS Vendor ID will be required for projects over \$100k at contract.

Questions below answered on 11/14/2024

K4) Projected Income: What is a minimum amount of projected income to be eligible?

There is no minimum amount of projected income to be eligible for the grant, however applicants must be seeking to build a commercial ag enterprise. Applicants are encouraged to review the Scoring Criteria in the Technical Requirements document and determine if their project will deliver a strong business impact relative to the size of the award.

K3) I saw the guidance in the RFP that a proposal should be narrowly focused. Should I still mention other things that are connected but are not being funded by the grant?

Applicants will need to determine if that information is helpful for the reviewers to understand or if it distracts from the proposal.

K2) Agricultural Products: What category would we enter honey bees?

Honey is a food and beverage ingredients or products.

Questions below answered on 10/31/2024

K1) Agricultural Products. I don't understand what you mean by some of the choices. Can you provide more guidance?

Yes, NYFVI sees where that may be confusing.

Food and beverage ingredients or products. Select this choice if you are growing any type of crop or raising animals for human consumption. This would include all produce, meats, and field crops used as ingredients in human food or beverages.

Crops to support the food system including animal feed and other inputs. Select this choice if producing a crop that is used for animal feed, bedding or in other ways supports the full cycle of creating food or beverages for humans.

Livestock for production systems. Select this choice if the farm's primary business is to raise animals for sale to other farm businesses.

Fiber both animal and plant. Select this choice if you are growing crops or raising animals specifically for fiber creation.

Nursery plants, ornamentals and Christmas Trees. Select this choice if the business sells nursery plants, including fruit and vegetable plants, ornamental plants, living trees and Christmas trees

Wood products, both biomass and timber, Select this choice if the business is growing any type of crop or trees for harvest as biomass, or timber.

Non-food crops for humans. Select this choice if the business is growing crops to incorporate, or have others incorporate into other non food products. Examples include lavender and goat milk soaps

L) Budget (Updated 01/08/2025)

L7) I am unable to enter data without “unprotecting” the cells, and this requires a password. Can you please provide assistance?

The cells that are protected in the document should not be edited. They are either standard labels, or formulas. Please review the instructions in the first tab of the sheet.

Note: if you are having problems entering any data in the spreadsheet, please doublecheck that you have fully downloaded the file.

Questions below answered on 12/23/2024

L6) Given the timeline from designing the project budget for the application to grant contracting (9-12 months), it's very likely that the costs estimated in our project budget will change. How is this handled by the grant when my estimates are more than what I originally submitted or was quoted?

The applicant will be responsible for any costs overruns associated with the project. Applicants can choose to factor for inflation as they develop their budgets. For more information, please see What to Know Before Applying in the Technical Requirements document on page 6.

L5) Is there a way to insert additional lines to the budget spreadsheet for machinery/equipment? The table includes 15 lines and i can't seem to insert additional spaces. Is it possible the intention is for applicants to group cost estimates by category? if so the 15 lines may be adequate.

There is no way to add additional lines. Please use your best judgement on how best to categorize machinery and equipment in the space provided.

L4) I am putting together a budget for a new farmer grant and wanted to make sure it was proper to include vine and trellis as "equipment". It is not how we usually think of the expense but it looks like for purposes of this budget, it is the best fit?

Applicants will need to use their best judgement on how to make the spreadsheet for their proposal. If something doesn't seem to easily fit with the spreadsheet, you may want to use the “other” category. It is important to ensure that all costs in your project budget are clearly aligned with the project's purpose.

Questions below answered on 12/13/2024

L3) We would like to use our 2024 financial numbers instead of the our 2023 numbers the grant

application. Is this acceptable?

Yes, as long as consistent dates are used in all answers.

L2) I am applying from the vantage point of a new farmer who owns the land but will be starting the farm in the next 12-16 months. Because of that, I do not have a balance sheet or income

statement yet that I can use to fill in this section. Do you want me to put projected income and balances in?

Good question. Yes, please use projected numbers, with the target date in the future.

Questions below answered on 12/11/2024

L1) Is a licensed contractor required for the erection of a structure like a high tunnel since it is not conventional construction?

Any structure that requires a certificate of occupancy must be built by a licensed contractor. A high tunnel, since it is considered to be temporary, is usually classified as equipment in NYS. It is important to note that it may still be subject to local zoning laws.

M) Project Purpose (Added 12/13/2024)

M1) I had a question regarding how to answer the **Section 4 Project Purpose** question. My request will be for the purchase of a large (420+/- sf) pre-built drying shed on skids. Technically it is a building; however, it is pre-made and delivered by drop off (no additional construction needed), and is on skids, so it can be moved. It is not a permanently affixed structure.

I wanted to know if this shed would be considered more as "Equipment" or would it fall under "Construction or improvement of physical structures, including semi-permanent structures" as a semi-permanent structure?

Good question! In this case, Equipment is the best answer since you will not be constructing or improving the semi-permanent structure.

N) Business Profile (Added 01/08/2025)

N1) When asking if I have a farm business plan are you asking if I have a clear idea for what I am doing and how I will achieve it, or something more official such as Form CCC-902, Farm Operating Plan for an individual or legal entity.

The type of business plan that an agricultural business will need may vary based on the stage of the business. The intent with the question was to determine if applicants had developed a document that outlined their goals for the enterprise. By checking yes, an applicant is confirming that the document exists and could provide it in the future if requested.

O) SMART Goal (Added 01/08/2025)

O1) Are we able to attach additional supporting documentation such as that form or letters of recommendation from technical advisors supporting the impact of the project.

No, the application form does not allow for additional letters to be submitted. However, Section 4. Business Impact: SMART Goal does ask applicants to describe how the numbers provided in the SMART Goal were developed.

P) Education and Experience (Added 01/15/2025)

P2) The employment table asks for past jobs to be described, but can I also list non-paying farm internships there, as they had a direct influence on my current farming skills? Also, I was self-employed for a number of years - is it ok to list that work there, too?

All forms of employment should be included.

P1) Can the character reference who submits a letter be one of the 3 references listed in the References List, or can they be an additional 4th person?

The applicant should make that decision for themselves.

Q) SWOT Analysis (Added 01/15/2025)

Q1) I have a question about the application software where the SWOT analysis is entered. For the Strengths, Opportunities and Threats (Not the Weaknesses), the application says "Identify three to five Strengths/Weaknesses/threats and provide a one-sentence description of each."

The application only allows 250 characters, which is not enough space to list the 3-5 attributes along with a full sentence for each.

Please use your best judgement. A single sentence for each should fit within the space allotted. There is more space provided in subsequent questions for additional detail.