

**State of Maine
Master Score Sheet**

| Bidder Name: | | Farm On Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'I Farm | Maine Grains, Inc | Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc. | Ocean Approved, Inc. | Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc |
|--|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$249,987.50 | \$246,219.20 | \$145,417.94 | \$250,000.00 | \$100,831.00 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | |
| 1. Eligible Entity | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2. Eligible Project Proposed | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3. Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 4. Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| 5. The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 6. Maine RFSI Priorities | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 5 |
| 7. USDA RFSI Priorities | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| 8. Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| 9. Expected Performance Measures | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 10. Stakeholder Support | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 11. Community Impact | 10 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |

| Bidder Name: | | Farm On Bremen Rd LLC dba Tops'l Farm | Maine Grains, Inc | Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc. | Ocean Approved, Inc. | Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc |
|---|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$249,987.50 | \$246,219.20 | \$145,417.94 | \$250,000.00 | \$100,831.00 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | |
| 12. Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| 13. Evidence of Critical Infrastructure | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 14. Budget Completeness | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| 15. Budget Narrative and Justification | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| 16. Matching Funds | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 17. Application Completeness | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 99 | 99 | 98 | 92 | 89 |

| Bidder Name: | | Circle B Farms, LLC | William H. Jordan Farm, LLC | Farming Fungi, LLC | Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm | Smith & Meyer Farm, LLC | Daniel J. Giguere | Fish Creek Oysters, LLC | Springtide Seaweed, LLC |
|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$248,397 | \$250,000 | \$210,114 | \$110,495 | \$280,000 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Eligible Entity | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2. Eligible Project Proposed | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3. Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 4. Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 7 |
| 5. The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 6. Maine RFSI Priorities | 10 | 9 | 7 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| 7. USDA RFSI Priorities | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| 8. Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| 9. Expected Performance Measures | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| 10. Stakeholder Support | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| 11. Community Impact | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 3 | 4 |

| Bidder Name: | | Circle B Farms, LLC | William H. Jordan Farm LLC | Farming Fungi LLC | Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm | Smith & Meyer Farm LLC | Daniel J. Giguere | Fish Creek Oysters LLC | Springtide Seaweed LLC |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$248,397.00 | \$250,000.00 | \$210,114.00 | \$110,495.00 | \$280,000.00 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness | 15 | 15 | 15 | 13 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 5 | 10 |
| 13. Evidence of Critical Infrastructure | 5 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Budget Completeness | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 7 |
| 15. Budget Narrative and Justification | 10 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 5 | 10 | 10 | 3 |
| 16. Matching Funds | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| 17. Application Completeness | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 87 | 87 | 82 | 77 | 75 | 68 | 66 | 66 |

| Bidder Name: | | Blackstone Dairy | Rosemont Market | Somali Bantu Community Association | Wescongus Wild Blueberry | Blackstone Point Oyster Company | Smithereen Farm |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$249,500 | \$248,318.86 | \$249,999 | \$105,880 | \$109,329 | \$250,000 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | |
| 1. Eligible Entity | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2. Eligible Project Proposed | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3. Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed | Pass/Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 4. Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity | 7 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Maine RFSI Priorities | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. USDA RFSI Priorities | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Expected Performance Measures | 5 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 10. Stakeholder Support | 5 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 11. Community Impact | 10 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 3 |

| Bidder Name: | | Blackstone Dairy | Rosemont Market | Somali Bantu Community Association | Wescongus Wild Blueberry | Blackstone Point Oyster Company | Smithereen Farm |
|---|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$249,500 | \$248,318.86 | \$249,999 | \$105,880 | \$109,329 | \$250,000 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | |
| 12. Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness | 15 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 3 |
| 13. Evidence of Critical Infrastructure | 5 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 5 |
| 14. Budget Completeness | 10 | 9 | 10 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| 15. Budget Narrative and Justification | 10 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| 16. Matching Funds | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 17. Application Completeness | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | <u>100</u> | <u>54</u> | <u>45</u> | <u>34</u> | <u>30</u> | <u>29</u> | <u>19</u> |

| Bidder Name: | | Ayotte Farms | Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture, Inc | Davis Farm | Dogpatch Farm, LLC | Fork Food Lab. | Fountain Farm, LLC | Lynch Hill Farms Inc | Maine Ocean Farms, LLC |
|--|------------------|---------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$250,000 | \$83,330 | Unspecified | Unspecified | \$250,000 | \$200,000 | \$100,000 | \$80,000 |
| Scoring Sections | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Eligible Entity | Pass/Fail | Pass | Fail | Fail | Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2. Eligible Project Proposed | Pass/Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail |
| 3. Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed | Pass/Fail | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 4. Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity | 7 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 5. The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. | 3 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 6. Maine RFSI Priorities | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 7. USDA RFSI Priorities | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 8. Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 9. Expected Performance Measures | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 10. Stakeholder Support | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 11. Community Impact | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |

| Bidder Name: | | Ayotte Farms | Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture, Inc | Davis Farm | Dogpatch Farm, LLC | Fork Food Lab. | Fountain Farm, LLC | Lynch Hill Farms Inc | Maine Ocean Farms, LLC |
|---|------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$250,000 | \$83,330 | Unspecified | Unspecified | \$250,000 | \$200,000 | \$100,000 | \$80,000 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness | 15 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 13. Evidence of Critical Infrastructure | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 14. Budget Completeness | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 15. Budget Narrative and Justification | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 16. Matching Funds | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 17. Application Completeness | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| TOTAL | 100 | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> | <u>n/a</u> |

| Bidder Name: | | Mook Sea Farm, Inc. | Newdawns Farms | Nick Planson, LLC | Oxford Hill Community Garden | Stewardship GEM, LLC | The Apple Farm | Yost Farm, LLC |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$89,395.81 | \$85,759 | \$214,557.51 | \$115,604 | \$250,000 | \$124,000 | \$19,955 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | | |
| 1. Eligible Entity | Pass/Fail | Pass | Fail | Fail | Fail | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2. Eligible Project Proposed | Pass/Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail | Fail |
| 3. Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed | Pass/Fail | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | Fail | n/a | n/a |
| 4. Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity | 7 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 5. The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. | 3 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 6. Maine RFSI Priorities | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 7. USDA RFSI Priorities | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 8. Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 9. Expected Performance Measures | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 10. Stakeholder Support | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 11. Community Impact | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |

| Bidder Name: | | Mook Sea Farm, Inc. | Newdawns Farms | Nick Planson, LLC | Oxford Hill Community Garden | Stewardship GEM LLC | The Apple Farm | Yost Farm, LLC |
|---|------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Proposed Cost: | | \$89,395.81 | \$85,759 | \$214,557.51 | \$115,604.00 | \$250,000.00 | \$124,000 | \$19,955 |
| Scoring Sections | Points Available | | | | | | | |
| 12. Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness | 15 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 13. Evidence of Critical Infrastructure | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 14. Budget Completeness | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 15. Budget Narrative and Justification | 10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 16. Matching Funds | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 17. Application Completeness | 5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| TOTAL | 100 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Farm on Bremen Rd LLC dba Tops'l Farm
Sarah Pike
20 John St
Camden ME 04843

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Sarah Pike:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
 - Tops'l Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farming Prosperity.
- Maine Grains, Inc.
 - Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment Expansion to make Nutritious Extruded Cereals and Snacks.
- Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.
 - Increasing Buckwheat Flour Processing and Packaging Capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.
- Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms
 - Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp
- Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.
 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

Upon approval of the Department Commissioner and the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff, the Department will contact the aforementioned applicants to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFA, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFA, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFA are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Maine Grains Inc
Amber Lambke
PO Box 2060
Skowhegan ME 04976

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Amber Lambke:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
 - Tops'l Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farming Prosperity.
- Maine Grains, Inc.
 - Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment Expansion to make Nutritious Extruded Cereals and Snacks.
- Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.
 - Increasing Buckwheat Flour Processing and Packaging Capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.
- Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms
 - Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp
- Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.
 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

Upon approval of the Department Commissioner and the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff, the Department will contact the aforementioned applicants to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFA, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFA, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFA are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Bouchard Family Farm Products
Joseph Bouchard
3 Strip Rd
Fort Kent ME 04743

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Joseph Bouchard:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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 - Tops'l Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farming Prosperity.
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 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

Upon approval of the Department Commissioner and the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff, the Department will contact the aforementioned applicants to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFA, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFA, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFA are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Ocean Approved Inc
Briana Warner
20 Pomerleau St
Biddeford ME 04005

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Briana Warner:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
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The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

Upon approval of the Department Commissioner and the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff, the Department will contact the aforementioned applicants to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFA, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Maine Coast Sea Vegetables Inc
Seraphina Erhard
430 Washington Jct Rd
Hancock ME 04640

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Seraphina Erhard:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
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- Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.
 - Increasing Buckwheat Flour Processing and Packaging Capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.
- Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms
 - Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp
- Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.
 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Circle B Farm
Gina Ayer
290 East Presque Isle Rd
Caribou ME 04736

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Gina Ayer:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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 - Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp
- Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.
 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

William H. Jordan Farm LLC
Penelope Jordan
21 Wells Rd
Cape Elizabeth ME 04107

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Penelope Jordan:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
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Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Farming Fungi LLC
Emily-Anne Sharoon Dickinson
21B Blanchard Rd
Springvale ME 04083

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Emily-Anne Sharoon Dickinson:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm
Megan O'Brien
34 Berry Rd
Thorndike ME 04986

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Megan O'Brien:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Smith & Meyer Farm LLC
Adam Meyer
1451 Cutler Rd
Cutler ME 04626

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Adam Meyer:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Daniel J. Giguere
352 Old Danville Rd
Auburn ME 04210

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Daniel Giguere:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Fish Creek Oysters LLC
Allison Melvin
PO Box 453
Stonington ME 04681

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Allison Melvin:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Upon approval of the Department Commissioner and the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff, the Department will contact the aforementioned applicants to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFA, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFA, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFA are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Springtide Seaweed LLC
Sarah Redmond
14 Factory Rd
Gouldsboro ME 04607

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Sarah Redmond:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
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 - Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp
- Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.
 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Blackstone Dairy
Herbert Klie
590 South Wade Rd
Wade ME 04786

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Herbert Klie:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Rosemont Market
Mark Law
832 Stevens Ave
Portland ME 04103

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Mark Law:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Somali Bantu Community Association
Lane Cannon Dracup
222 Pine Rd
Lewiston ME 04240

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Lane Cannon Dracup:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Wescogus Wild Blueberry
Dell Emerson
383 Indian Farm Rd
Addison ME 04606

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Dell Emerson:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Blackstone Point Oyster Company
Brendan Parsons
236 Bayview Rd
Nobleboro ME 04555

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Brendan Parsons:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Smithereen Farm
Severine vT Welcome
767 Leighton Point Rd
Pembroke ME 04666

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Severine vT Welcome:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Ayotte Farms
Scott Ayotte
999 Hamlin Rd
Hamlin ME 04785

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Scott Ayotte:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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As stated in the RFA, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFA are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture
Kyle Pepperman
PO Box 100
Beals ME 04611

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Kyle Pepperman:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
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- Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms
 - Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp
- Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.
 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Davis Farm
Kendal Davis
222 Meadow Ln
Etna ME 04434

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Kendal Davis:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Dogpatch Farm LLC
Sue Mamel
419 Old Country Rd
Washington ME 04574

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Sue Mamel:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Food Fork Lab
Bill Seretta
95 Darling Ave
South Portland ME 04106

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Bill Seretta:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Fountain Farm LLC
Clark Fountain
641 East Side Rd
Hancock ME 04640

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Clark Fountain:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Lynch Hill Farms Inc
Anne Emerson
1468 US Highway 1A
Harrington ME 04643

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Anne Emerson:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Maine Ocean Farms LLC
Willy Leathers
753 River Rd Unit 1
Brunswick ME 04011

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Willy Leathers:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Mook Sea Farms Inc
Steve Zimmerman
321 ME 129
Walpole ME 04573

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Steve Zimmerman:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Newdawns Farms
Lindsay Neville
112 Mcdonald Rd
Littleton ME 04730

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Lindsay Neville:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

- Farm on Bremen Rd, LLC DBA Tops'l Farm
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 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Nick Planson, LLD dba Shred Electric
Nick Planson
343 Penney Rd
New Gloucester ME 04260

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Nick Planson:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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 - Increasing the Resilience of Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

The applicants listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings.

The evaluation team recommended the applicants listed above for subrecipient award to the Department Commissioner for approval to be submitted to the USDA AMS RFSI Program staff. The Department Commissioner has authorized the submission of the above Projects as recommended for USDA RFSI approval. Recommended applicants will be required to complete Project plan and documentation edits that are necessary to ensure alignment and compliance with USDA terms and conditions, program-specific scope and requirements, and USDA regulations. The Department will complete the RFSI State Planning process with the USDA RFSI Program staff. The final contractual awards are contingent upon USDA's acceptance of the applicants' RFSI Project plan and documentation. The USDA reserves the right to reject any and all Applications or to make adjustments to awards.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden
Rocky Crockett
26 Whitman St
Norway ME 04268

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Rocky Crockett:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
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**AMANDA E. BEAL
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**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Stewardship GEM LLC
Alex de Koning
806 Bar Harbor Rd
Trenton ME 04605

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Alex de Koning:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

The Apple Farm
Marilyn Meyerhans
87 Back Rd
Fairfield ME 04937

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Marilyn Meyerhans:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY**

**AMANDA E. BEAL
Commissioner**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

CONDITIONAL AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

June 7, 2024

Yost Farms LLC
Tyler Yost
331 E Blaine Rd
Blaine ME 04734

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFA # 202403071,
2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI)

Dear Tyler Yost:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Applications (RFA), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the 2024 USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFA, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidders:

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Webb".

Michelle Webb
Director of Agricultural Resource Development
Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
90 Blossom Lane 28 SHS
Augusta, ME 04333-0028

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**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'I Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'I Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. <i>Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. </p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'I Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and</p> | 10 | 9 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'I Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>workforce considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | 15 |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'l Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>99</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'l Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant proposed building a new facility and upgrading equipment for the middle of the supply chain activities.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's project involves ingredients that will be processed, packaged, and stored in a dedicated production facility.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'I Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant indicated that more than 67% of the project funded foods will be Maine-grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine's RFSI Priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified that the project will benefit socially disadvantaged producers per the RFA stated definitions.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - Great example of a detailed project plan and description of expected performance measures.
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and performance measures.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - Well articulated and documented how stakeholders that are not project partners support the Project.
- 11) **Community Impact (9 Points)**
 - Letter from the Town Manager articulates community impact and involvement.
 - Did not articulate specific farms, processors, or food businesses but did quantify the community impact across these groups
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The Applicant demonstrated sufficient planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
 - The Project describes activities, and the purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place
- 14) **Budget Completeness (10 Points)**
 - Full points, no errors or omissions found.
- 15) **Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farm on Breman Rd. LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

PROJECT NAME: Tops'I Farm: Nurturing Maine's Agricultural Resilience and Farmer Prosperity

DATE: May 6, 2024

16) Matching Funds (5 Points)

- The Applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet.
- The matching funds documentation demonstrates that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (5 Points)

- The application was complete and adhered to the format outlined.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | | |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | <p>10</p> | <p>10</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI | <p>15</p> | <p>15</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>funding has ended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities. | 10 | 10 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and | 10 | 10 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 4 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>99</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant describes a project to build a new building that will house new high-capacity extrusion equipment. The equipment will be used to make high-fiber, nutritious cereals and snacks from Maine-grown grains.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's project will expand middle-of-the-supply chain capacity and infrastructure by expanding processing capacity and value-added products.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant's project contains over 75% of Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine's RFSI Priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified that the project will benefit an LFPA producer.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes on the USDA template and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes and performance measures on the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified multiple stakeholders who support this project and submitted multiple letters of support. The Applicant also described how the need for this project will benefit all stakeholders involved.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The application illustrated a shovel-ready project that reviewers were able to understand.
 - The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
 - The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Grains Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Grains Cereal Extrusion Line Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks

DATE: May 7, 2024

achievable.

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)

- The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.

14) Budget Completeness (10 Points)

- No errors; thoroughly complete

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)

- The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.
- Justification statements are complete and detailed, provide a timeline of expenses

16) Matching Funds (5 Points)

- The Applicant provided matching funds 1:1
- All match funds are allowable
- Match budget documents and match verification letters align.
- The Applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that are complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation demonstrates that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (4 Points)

- The Applicant did not check the required box on the evidence of critical infrastructure letter.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to </p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | 15 |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | | |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>98</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant proposes a Project that will build buckwheat mill infrastructure.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's Project described an addition to its production and packaging space, allowing it to install a second mill, increase storage space for buckwheat byproduct, and increase storage space for packaged buckwheat flour.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant’s project contains 100% Maine-grown, harvested, or produced ingredients
- 6) Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine’s RFSI Priorities.
- 7) USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA’s RFSI Priorities.
- 8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified that the project will benefit 6 underserved or underrepresented farmers and ranchers as defined in the RFA.
 - The applicant identified veteran-owned farmers/producers that will benefit from this project.
- 9) Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes on the USDA template and articulated the Project’s purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes and performance measures on the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative.
- 10) Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. The applicant described the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Letters of support were submitted.
- 11) Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The Applicant already has the equipment; increased capacity and expanded potential.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: Increasing buckwheat flour processing and packaging capacity at Bouchard Family Farm.

DATE: May 3, 2024

- The application illustrated a shovel-ready project that reviewers were able to understand.
 - The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
 - The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable.
- 13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
- The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- 14) Budget Completeness (10 Points)**
- No errors; thoroughly complete
- 15) Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)**
- The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relate to the project.
 - Justification statements are complete and detailed, provide a timeline of expenses
- 16) Matching Funds (5 Points)**
- The Applicant provided matching funds 1:1 and included receipts to show equipment was secured.
 - All match funds are allowable
 - Match budget documents and match verification letters align.
 - The Applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that are complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation demonstrates that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.
- 17) Application Completeness (3 Points)**
- The Applicant did not select the box on the evidence of critical resources and infrastructure letter.
 - The applicant did not follow the instructions on the USDA template, which required N/A to be checked in the Expected Performance Measures section.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 7 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 4 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 15 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

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|---|------------------|-----------------|
| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>9</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>9</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>92</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's project consists of improving efficiency and food safety, expanding processing capabilities, reducing costs, and improving output at a processing facility

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicants Project will help improve the storage and distribution, processing, and packaging of value-added products and help to overcome middle-of-supply chain challenges in the kelp aquaculture industry.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant's project-produced items will contain over 95% of Maine-grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant did not respond to this section in the correct Project narrative section under heading 7 but did articulate in other areas.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (4 Points)**
 - The indicated Project will benefit beginning farmers.
 - Did not clearly articulate this scoring section in the correct project narrative heading section 8.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and performance measures.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified multiple stakeholders who support this project and submitted numerous letters of support. The Applicant also described how the need for this project will benefit all stakeholders involved.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The Applicant demonstrated sufficient planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
 - The Project describes activities, and the purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ocean Approved, Inc. (DBA Atlantic Sea Farms)

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Processing Capacity for Maine's Farmed Kelp

DATE: May 8, 2024

14) Budget Completeness (9 Points)

- The Applicant did not complete the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet Columns to show which Project year(s) expenses will occur.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (9 Points)

- Personnel justification is incomplete as it doesn't list when activities will occur.

16) Matching Funds (5 Points)

- The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.
- The Applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that are complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation demonstrates that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (3 Points)

- The Applicant's proposed Project start date is before the allowable Project performance period.
- The RFSI Budget Match Worksheet was incomplete (missing column).

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 5 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 2 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 4 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 15 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>9</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>10</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 4 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>89</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant described a project to purchase, install, and operate a seaweed powder mill for farmed seaweed. The mill will expand the processing capacity for Maine's seaweed aquaculture sector

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The proposed project activities will improve seaweed processing capacity and value by purchasing, installing, and operating a powder mill (processing infrastructure) to produce seaweed powder from farmed kelp on behalf of small growers and other processors. All activities are middle of the food supply chain.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant stated that 100% of the farmed seaweed will be of Maine origin.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified but did not clearly articulate in point 6 of the project narrative summary.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified but did not clearly articulate in point 7 of the project narrative summary.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (4 Points)**
 - The application identified more than one beginning farmer to benefit but did not demonstrate the involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes on the USDA template and articulated the Project’s purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes and performance measures on the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. The applicant described the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Letters of support were submitted.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The application illustrated a shovel-ready project that reviewers were able to understand.
 - The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Coast Sea Vegetable Inc

PROJECT NAME: Maine Sea Vegetable Aquaculture with Milling Capacity

DATE: May 6, 2024

- The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable.
- 13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
- The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- 14) Budget Completeness (9 Points)**
- The travel budget on the USDA template is not mathematically correct.
- 15) Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)**
- Full points, no errors or omissions found.
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.
 - Justification statements are complete and detailed, provide a timeline of expenses
- 16) Matching Funds (5 Points)**
- The Applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that are complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation demonstrates that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.
- 17) Application Completeness (4 Points)**
- The project start date is outside the period of performance stated in the RFA

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 9 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker- </p> | 5 | 4 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>owned enterprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 3 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project | 10 | 10 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>15</p> |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 9 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 2 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>87</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment.

The Applicant indicated that they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation are needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant proposed an eligible Project

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes a Project that would expand Maine agricultural producers' cold storage capacity for the aggregation and storage of fresh broccoli grown and harvested by the farm before shipment for further processing.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant's project contains 100% Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (9 Points)**
 - The applicant identified but did not articulate how the Project will address a Maine priority area in heading 6 of the project narrative summary; articulated in other areas of the application.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (4 Points)**
 - The applicant identified but did not articulate how the Project will address a USDA priority area in heading 7 of the project narrative summary; articulated in other areas of the application.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (3 Points)**
 - They indicated 6 farms that would benefit (underrepresented, beginning, socially disadvantaged) on the USDA template but did not clearly articulate how the Project will directly benefit underserved or underrepresented food producers or which specific producers, and did not demonstrate involvement of those beneficiaries in project or application development.
 - Additional information needed in project narrative summary heading 8.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes on the USDA template and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes and performance measures on the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. The applicant described the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Letters of support were submitted.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The Applicant demonstrated sufficient planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. The Project describes activities, and the purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date. Fully articulated data collection and reporting plan.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER: Circle B Farms, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expanding Circle B Farms' Cold Storage Capacity

DATE: May 3, 2024

- 13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
- The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place
- 14) Budget Completeness (10 Points)**
- Complete and mathematically accurate.
- 15) Budget Narrative and Justification (9 Points)**
- The budget is all placed into year one and no planned expenses are stated in years two or three, yet this is proposed as a nearly 3 year project. Additional budget narrative details are necessary for reviewers to fully understand.
- 16) Matching Funds (0 Points)**
- The Applicant's equipment match contributions are documented as quotes, not purchases.
 - There is no verification that the equipment listed as a matching contribution has already been purchased by the applicant and is in place for the Project.
 - Per USDA, if the equipment is purchased by the applicant prior to the applicant being recommended for an award and is special purpose that's critical for the success of for the project, they can use it as match.
 - The matching funds documentation does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.
- 17) Application Completeness (2 Points)**
- The Applicant's project start and end dates are both outside the period of performance stated in the RFA
 - The applicant did not follow the instructions on the USDA template, which required N/A to be checked in the Expected Performance Measures section.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan’s Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 2 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 7 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan’s Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 15 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>9</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>9</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

| | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>87</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

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| |
| <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant is a for-profit entity that meets the RFA stated SBA eligibility guidelines.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

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| |
| <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant proposes a project that will upgrade and expand their middle of the supply chain infrastructure wash/pack and storage capabilities.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

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|---|
| |
| <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant describes a Project that will expand processing capacity and introduce new value-added products.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (2 Points)**
 - It is unclear on the percentage of Maine grown, harvested, or produced in the dressings and jam; more detail is needed to understand that all foods produced with RFSI funded infrastructure meet the 51% or 67% criteria stated in the RFA.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (7 Points)**
 - The applicant begins to describe a broad alignment between their project and the Maine RFSI priorities. More details are needed to specifically identify which Maine priority and articulate clearly how the project will address one or more specific Maine RFSI priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (3 Points)**
 - The Application does not clearly articulate how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners that are not the Applicant or it's partners as defined in the RFA.
 - The Application does not demonstrate the involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and performance measures thoroughly.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified multiple stakeholders who support this project, and multiple submitted a letter of support. The Applicant also described how the need for this project will benefit all stakeholders involved.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: William H. Jordan Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Expansion of processing of mixed fruit and vegetables at Jordan's Farm

DATE: May 7, 2024

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)

- The Applicant demonstrated sufficient planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. The Project describes activities, and the purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date.
- Thorough documentation was provided to review this section.

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)

- The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place.

14) Budget Completeness (9 Points)

- The Applicant rounded amounts in the other budget section up and in the other budget sections justification leaving minor reconciliation variances.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (9 Points)

- The application includes produce which is an unallowable cost per the USDA General Terms and Conditions.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- Proposed matching contributions include business operating costs of produce (years 1 and 2).
- Proposed matching contributions include business operating expenses of and personnel in years 3 and 4 (beyond the Project activities for construction and equipment) that are not thoroughly justified as project-specific and necessary to complete the Project funded activities and expenditures.
- RFSI funds are for project expenses related to the building of infrastructure and not the purchasing of food products to be processed.
- It is unallowable for the project to purchase produce to be processed, and therefore produce would not be eligible to meet the match requirement.
- The USDA RFSI Program Scope and Requirements, Section 1.5.6, states that a project is a set of interrelated tasks with a defined goal, a definitive beginning and end, and are different from other ongoing operations in an organization. RFSI funds should not be used to cover daily operational business expenses nor the purchase of agricultural products for production. Applications should include only the costs necessary for the completion of the proposed project activities and not operational costs for the period of performance.

17) Application Completeness (5 Points)

- The application was complete and adhered to the format outlined in the RFA.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to </p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 2 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> | 10 | 10 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | 13 |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 2 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>82</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment

The Applicant indicated that they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The project will increase the processing capabilities of Maine grown food.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicants project will strengthen local and regional food systems by creating new revenue streams through increasing post-harvest processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant stated that 75% of the fresh mushrooms and 100% of the produce will be of Maine origin.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine's RFSI Priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (2 Points)**
 - Identified one Underserved / Underrepresented veteran producer who is a family member of the applicant.
 - Did not articulate how the Project would benefit underserved underrepresented producers or how they were involved in Project or application development
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and performance measures.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified multiple stakeholders who support this project, three of whom submitted a letter of support.
 - The Applicant also described how the need for this project will benefit broad stakeholders.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (13 Points)**
 - The Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter did not address project viability, feasibility, and readiness, and the Applicant did not complete heading 12 of the Project Narrative Summary. These additional details would have provided reviewers with full understanding.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (0 Points)**
 - Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter does not address any of the points in this scoring section as listed in the RFA.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

PROJECT NAME: Mousam Valley Mushrooms (MVM) Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Project 2024-2027

DATE: May 6, 2024

- 14) Budget Completeness (10 Points)**
 - Full points, no errors or omissions found.
- 15) Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.
- 16) Matching Funds (0 Points)**
 - Proposed matching contributions are Operational expenses in years 3 and 4 and are proposed to occur beyond the stated Project activities. The project activities are purchasing equipment and completing construction and are stated to be anticipated to end on 12/31/25 per the budget match worksheet.
 - Business operational costs outside of the Project are unallowable as matching contributions.
 - The matching funds documentation does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are allowable and are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award
- 17) Application Completeness (2 Points)**
 - Changed headings on Budget Match Worksheet
 - The project start date is outside the period of performance stated in the RFA
 - The Project narrative summary 4 pages longer than allowed per the RFA.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>0</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>3</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 15 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

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DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>6</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <p><u>TOTAL</u></p> | <u>100</u> | <u>77</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant describes an eligible Project that would increase storage by installing an insulated concrete pad to support a recently purchased cooler.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project based on allowable middle-of-the-supply chain activities, as described in Part 2, Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's Project would expand processing capacity by installing specialized equipment and increasing storage space.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

PROJECT NAME: Equipment expansion to make nutritious extruded cereals and snacks.

DATE: May 8, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant's project contains 100% Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine's RFSI Priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - The Applicant does not clearly articulate how the Project will benefit underserved or underrepresented food producers as defined in the RFA.
 - The Applicant has not demonstrated the involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant did identify but only partially described expected performance measures. The Applicant did include unallowable activities in the narrative of this section
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - Well articulated and documented how stakeholders who are not project partners support the project.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The Applicant demonstrated sufficient planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
 - The Project describes activities, and the purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure

STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES

RFA #: 202403071

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necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place.

14) Budget Completeness (5 Points)

- Within the Travel section, mileage was not mathematically correct.
- Within the Other section, it is not mathematically correct (\$40 off)
- The applicant submitted an incomplete RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. The applicant did not complete any columns indicating which year the expenses would occur.
- Missing multiple years of budget documentation/timeline

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (6 Points)

- The Applicant does not state when the delivery driver will work (no timeline in personnel justification).
- Equipment and Construction acquisition dates begin before the allowable project performance period of 9/1/24-5/24/27
- Travel justification begins before the allowable project performance period. It is unclear when each trip will occur.
- The travel budget's contribution to achieving the project's objectives and outcomes, as described in the travel justification section, is unclear.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- The applicant checked the box indicating certification for a 25% match. However, they provided a budget for a 50% match rather than 25%.
- When unallowable matching contributions are removed (carrots), the applicant has not demonstrated a 50% or 25% match that is committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for award.
- Produce is a business operating expense and is not allowable in an RFSI budget for requested funds or matching contributions.
- RFSI funds must not be used to cover daily operational business expenses or purchase agricultural products for production.
- RFSI funds are for project expenses related to the building of infrastructure and not the purchasing of food products to be processed.
- It is unallowable for the project to purchase produce to be processed and therefore produce would not be eligible to meet the match requirement.
- The USDA RFSI Program Scope and Requirements, Section 1.5.6 states that a project is a set of interrelated tasks with a defined goal, a definitive beginning and end and are different from other ongoing operations in an organization. RFSI funds should not be used to cover daily operational business expenses nor the purchase of agricultural products for production. Applications should include only the costs necessary for the completion of the proposed project activities and not operational costs for the period of performance.

17) Application Completeness (3 Points)

- Budget Match Worksheet is incomplete.
- The Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section does not follow the format outlined in the RFA and is challenging to review and score.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved,</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| sales channels for the Applicant. | | |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 8 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. | 5 | 3 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the | 5 | 4 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
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| <p>supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | | |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI</p> | 15 | 15 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <p>funding has ended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities. | 10 | 8 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and | 10 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <p>articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 2 |
| <p><u>TOTAL</u></p> | <u>100</u> | <u>75</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes an eligible Project to build collaborative cold storage infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple and sap Producers

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes a Project based on allowable middle-of-the-supply chain activities, such as value-added processing, packaging, freezer/cold storage, and refrigerated wholesale distribution to our in-state wholesale markets.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant's project contains 100% Maine-grown, harvested, or produced ingredients
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (8 Points)**
 - Applicant begins to describe a broad alignment between their project and the Maine RFSI priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant did not clearly articulate or identify in this project narrative section #7. Began to describe in other sections.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - Not identified according to the definition in the RFA
 - The Applicant did not articulate how the Project will directly benefit underserved or underrepresented food producers or their involvement
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (4 Points)**
 - Partially articulated the expected performance measures and description of general tasks.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. The applicant described the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Letters of support were submitted.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The application illustrated a shovel-ready project that reviewers were able to understand.
 - The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability,

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Collaborative Cold Storage Infrastructure for Washington County's Resilient Heritage Apple & Sap Producers

DATE: May 8, 2024

technical feasibility, and readiness.

- The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable.

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)

- The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.

14) Budget Completeness (8 Points)

- The equipment section of the Budget Match Worksheet does not reconcile with the USDA template equipment budget table.
- The supplies section of the USDA template is not mathematically correct (totes)

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (5 Points)

- Acquisition dates outside of the performance period
- Did not indicate the timeline for personnel.
- The delivery truck, as justified, is an unallowable expense.
- The delivery truck is described as being able to convert into a flatbed transport so that the applicant can conduct pre-harvest soil amendment activities, such as applying compost/pomace to the orchards, at the beginning of the supply chain. This is an allowable use of RFSI funded (or matching) equipment.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- The application does not demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured when the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (2 Points)

- Project start date is before the RFA performance period
- Did not check n/a in expected performance measures in the USDA template
- Multiple Spelling errors throughout
- On the Maine RFSI Application, missing project narrative sections, didn't follow recommended heading guidelines

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 3 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 2 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. </p> | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 2 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. | 10 | 10 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | 15 |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 9 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 2 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>68</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant described a Project that would expand processing capacities, including adding product types, increasing production volumes, and supporting new wholesale/retail product lines

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's Project involves creating a new facility for processing, preparing, and packaging specific eligible agricultural products.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant begins to articulate the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges and adds or improves sales channels but doesn't fully explain.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant indicates that 6 of 8 products contain 100% Maine Maple.
 - It is unclear if the dairy and coated nut products meet the 51% or 67% requirement at stated in the RFA.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant indicates that one beginning producer will benefit but does not clearly articulate how the Project will benefit the producer and does not demonstrate the beneficiary's involvement in developing the Project or application.
 - Further details should have been provided on the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and performance measures.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified multiple stakeholders who support this project, one of whom was the City Deputy Director of Planning, Permitting, and Code.
 - The Applicant also described how the need for this project will benefit all stakeholders involved.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (15 Points)**
 - The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
 - The city engineer has reviewed the Project, and the building permit has been received.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place.
- 14) **Budget Completeness (9 Points)**
 - A math error was found on the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Daniel J. Giguere

PROJECT NAME: New building middle food chain operation specialized equipment upgrades process 100% Maine maple delivery markets

DATE: May 8, 2024

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)

- The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- The Applicant included business operating expenses in the match.
- The applicant did not prorate the delivery truck to only include the percentage of the delivery truck's time/tasks that were specifically dedicated to the Project.
- The matching funds' documentation does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are allowable and are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (2 Points)

- The status of submitted documentation makes it difficult to fully evaluate the Project.
- The applicant did not follow the RFA requirement that "all forms must be submitted as a single, typed, separate PDF file."
- One copy of the Budget match worksheet is handwritten and difficult to review.
- Submitted a blank Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.
- Formatting and file naming issues make the application package difficult to review.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker- </p> | 5 | 5 |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

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|---|-----------|----------|
| <p>owned enterprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | 2 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | 2 |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project | 10 | 3 |

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BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>4</p> |

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RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 8 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 2 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>66</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application outlines a project for constructing a facility and the purchase of specific equipment to bolster the middle-of-the-food-supply chain, specifically in regard to processing, storing, and transporting shellfish

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes a project to construct a new facility. This will increase cold storage, ensure have ice on hand for safe transportation, and expand packing/processing for distribution, making oyster handling more food-safe.

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RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER: Fish Creek Oysters LLC

PROJECT NAME: Fish Creek Oysters Infrastructure Project

DATE: May 6, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant stated that 100% of the oysters will be of Maine origin.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine's RFSI Priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - The Applicant did not address how the Project will directly benefit any underserved or underrepresented food producers as defined in the RFA.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (2 Points)**
 - Did not complete heading section 9 of Project Narrative summary.
 - The Applicant selected outcomes on the USDA Proposal Template but did not thoroughly articulate the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (2 Points)**
 - Described external support in USDA Proposal Template but did not provide heading section 10 of the project narrative summary or LOS to provide additional documentation or understanding
- 11) **Community Impact (3 Points)**
 - More detail is needed to better understand the community impact.
 - If the project is successful, it may benefit other aquaculture producers.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (5 Points)**
 - The application lacks sufficient detail to score this section fully.
 - The Application does not provide sufficient information for reviewers to understand the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
 - The Project description of activities and purpose is unclear.
 - The Applicant has not thoroughly demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (4 Points)**
 - More details would have helped the reviewers understand more clearly.
- 14) **Budget Completeness (8 Points)**
 - The total budget costs column equals federal funds requested, not total project costs (inclusive of match).
 - Did not select the 25% budget match on the RFSI Budget Match worksheet, which resulted in a budget error.

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15) Budget Narrative and Justification (10 Points)

- Full points, no errors or omissions found.

16) Matching Funds (5 Points)

- The Applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that are complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation demonstrates that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (2 Points)

- The Applicant submitted an incomplete project narrative summary (missing #9).
- The project start date is outside the period of performance stated in the RFA.
- The applicant did not follow instructions on the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

DATE: May 9, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

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TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 4 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 5 |

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BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 : | 4 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 10 |

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BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>7</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>3</p> |

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RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

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|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>66</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

DATE: May 9, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes an eligible Project to expand existing processing services and add a new wet milling machine that will create a new high-value product.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes a Project that would update and modernize a shoreside building for washing, prepping, holding, and transporting food products.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

DATE: May 9, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant's project contains 100% Maine-grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine's RFSI Priorities.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA's RFSI Priorities.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (4 Points)**
 - Identifies beneficiaries per RFA definitions.
 - Does not demonstrate the involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed project and application.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected expected outcomes on the USDA template and articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes and performance measures on the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (0 Points)**
 - The applicant does not clearly demonstrate stakeholder support.
- 11) **Community Impact (4 Points)**
 - The Applicant does not articulate the specific farms, processors, and community stakeholders but begins to demonstrate community impact.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (10 Points)**
 - The application lacks sufficient information to completely understand the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness
 - The applicant did not describe reporting outcomes and indicators.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
 - The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- 14) **Budget Completeness (7 Points)**
 - Direct costs on the RFSI Budget match worksheet are not mathematically

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Infrastructure Investments for Maine Farmed Seaweed Processing

DATE: May 9, 2024

correct.

- Indirect costs are described as both a match and a funds requested. Indirect is unclear.
- Errors in match rate on RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (3 Points)

- Insufficient information for reviewers to determine how costs were determined.
- No personnel timeline or justification for equipment item 5
- No match type indicated in construction or equipment.
- Missing portion of supplies table in USDA template budget
- Supplies are business operating expenses and are not allowable.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- The Applicant has not submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet
- The limited matching funds documentation does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are allowable and are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (3 Points)

- Unallowable project start date per RFA performance period.
- Didn't follow the RFA format for the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative Section

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 2 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 3 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

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|--|----------|----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 3 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 : | 6 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 5 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

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|---|------------------|-----------------|
| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>9</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>2</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

| | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 1 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>54</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment.

The Applicant indicated they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or a nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes an eligible Project that expands the creamery operation.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes a Project with activities involving the production of value-added organic dairy products from raw organic milk.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (2 Points)**
 - The Executive summary provided in the USDA template does not address the scope of the Project or describe any middle-of-the-supply chain activities. It describes the applicant’s business operations and does not provide a Project summary, Project deliverables, expected outcomes, or a description of the general tasks and activities to be completed during the project per the template instructions.
 - The USDA template’s “Provide the specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address” does not describe challenges, barriers, or needs in the middle of the supply chain.
 - The USDA template objectives include unallowable activities that are not middle-of-the supply chain.
 - The application does not provide sufficient information for reviewers to thoroughly assess the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing or improving middle-of-the-supply chain capacity and resiliency.
- 5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant’s project contains 100% Maine-grown, harvested, or produced ingredients
- 6) Maine RFSI Priorities (10 Points)**
 - Very well done
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of Maine’s RFSI Priorities.
- 7) USDA RFSI Priorities (5 Points)**
 - Very well done
 - The Applicant identified and articulated how the project will address one or more of the USDA’s RFSI Priorities.
- 8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - The Maine RFSI application form project narrative does not clearly articulate how the Project will directly benefit underserved or underrepresented food producers as defined in the RFA.
 - The Maine RFSI application form project narrative does not demonstrate the involvement of these beneficiaries when developing the Project or application.
- 9) Expected Performance Measures (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant does not thoroughly articulate the Project's purpose,

STATE OF MAINE TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures or provide a detailed description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures in the related application sections.

- The Applicant selected outcomes on the USDA Proposal Template but did not thoroughly articulate the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.

10) Stakeholder Support (3 Points)

- The applicant provided letters of support
- In the USDA template, the applicant was asked to describe the stakeholders who support the need for this project and why.
- The applicant did not clearly articulate stakeholder support, per the RFA and instructions provided, on the USDA template and did not address this at all in the project narrative summary. Additional information needed to complete reviewer understanding.

11) Community Impact (6 Points)

- The application identifies some community impact but does not clearly articulate or describe the degree to which the Project directly impacts the community. More narrative detail is needed to provide reviewers with a complete understanding.
- The application does not articulate the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (5 Points)

- Lacking details to determine project timeline and readiness.
- More details are needed to understand project readiness and viability
- The applicant does not indicate that they will submit the required USDA reports.
- Provides little detail with regard to reporting outcomes and indicators.

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)

- The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.

14) Budget Completeness (9 Points)

- The USDA template budget summary incorrectly categorizes construction and other costs. Later, they are categorized as personnel.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (2 Points)

- The reviewers cannot determine if the Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs. The applicant indicated that this specific project has been submitted for funding to a federal or state grant program and is listed as a partner on a federal grant. Reference to the federal grant is in other sections of the application.
- Reviews are unable to determine if the Project will have distinct and measurable outcomes, activities, and expenditures that will not be funded through other state or federal funds.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Dairy

PROJECT NAME: Expansion and Modernization of Creamery Operation

DATE: May 9, 2024

- No titles or timelines are provided in the personnel budget section.
- No acquisition dates in equipment or construction budget sections
- Justification sections need more description of need and project alignment in every budget section.
- Personnel in years 2 and 3 are business operation expenses and are not specific to the project.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- A portion of their matching contributions are business operating expenses and are not specific to the Project.
- Unable to determine if matching funds are related to a different federal grant award.
- Per the RFA:
 - Matching contributions cannot satisfy a cost-sharing or matching requirement for the RFSI grant program if they are used toward satisfying a match requirement under any other Federal grant agreement to which the applicant is a party.
- Cost sharing or matching is the portion of project costs not paid by State or Federal funds, which could be cash and/or in-kind contributions. Cash can be a financial outlay, or cash donations from non-Federal third parties. Other State and Federal funds cannot be used as a match.
- The matching funds documentation does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are allowable and are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award

17) Application Completeness (1 Point)

- Signatures are missing on two pages of the Maine RFSI application form, the evidence of critical infrastructure letter, and the match verification letter.
- Unallowable project start date (requested 7/1/2014) which is ten years and two months ahead of the allowable performance period start date of 9/1/2024 as listed in the RFA.
- Applicant did not check the n/a boxes in the expected outcomes section as instructed on the USDA template.
- Spelling issues throughout.
- 4 files submitted in Word format (All forms must be submitted as a single, typed, separate PDF file).

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 0 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | 2 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 10 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 8 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>0</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>10</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>3</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p><u>TOTAL</u></p> | <u>100</u> | <u>45</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant is a for-profit entity that meets the RFA stated SBA eligibility guidelines.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant wants to expand the production of Maine grains by proposing a project to replace imported flour in their bakery production with 100% Maine grains. This would be done by expanding processing capacity and modernizing equipment.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's Project would be processing Maine flour into value-added products sold in a bakery.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified expected performance measures on the USDA template but did not articulate them in the Maine RFSI Project Narrative, which was not submitted.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (5 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. The applicant described the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Letters of support were submitted.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (8 Points)**
 - Applicant provided some detail, but it was insufficient for reviewers to award total points in this category.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the evidence of critical infrastructure letter.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Rosemont Market Inc

PROJECT NAME: Rosemont Market Transitions to 100% Maine Grains

DATE: May 7, 2024

14) Budget Completeness (10 Points)

- The Applicant clearly demonstrated and described allowable costs and provided justification for how the cost relates to the project.
- Justification statements are complete and detailed, provide a timeline of expenses

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (3 Points)

- The Applicant was missing justification and dates/timeline for personnel in the justification.
- There also was not enough information to determine how the total cost for the Project was determined.
- The applicant did not fully articulate how category costs are derived from the budget.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- A portion of their match is unallowable because it is described as business operation expenses rather than exclusive to Project expenses.
- The matching funds documentation does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are allowable and are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award

17) Application Completeness (0 Points)

- The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components:
 - Application Cover Page
 - Debarment, Performance and Non-collusion Certification
 - Litigation form
 - Maine RFSI Project Narrative
 - Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.
- The Applicant changed the headings on the Budget Match Worksheet.
- The applicant proposed, on the USDA Template, to start their project on 5/1/2024, which is outside of the RFA stated project performance period.
- The application did not submit an Evidence of Critical Infrastructure and Resources Letter.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 0 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected | 5 | 2 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
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| <p>numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | | |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support. a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>2</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support. a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>10</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application. a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>7</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>funding has ended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 2 |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities. | 10 | 4 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and | 10 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

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PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| <p>articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>34</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant is an eligible entity described as a nonprofit organization.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant's Project would construct critical cold storage, wash/pack, and solar collection infrastructure to increase access to shared food processing facilities.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant described a Project that would enhance farmers' ability to provide institutions with culturally relevant produce, increase processing capacity, ensure food safety, aggregate produce to meet growing demand and offer opportunities for climate-smart adaptations.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or the Project Narrative section.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or the Project Narrative section.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or the Project Narrative section.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or the Project Narrative section.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant indicated Expected Performance Measures on the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.
 - The Applicant did not thoroughly articulate details related to this scoring section because they did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or the Project Narrative section.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (2 Points)**
 - Described external support in the USDA Proposal Template but did not provide a project narrative summary or LOS to provide additional documentation to inform the reviewers.
- 11) **Community Impact (10 Points)**
 - The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
 - The Application demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant states they will build, purchase, or construct. However, no quotes, permits, construction plans, or indicators were submitted to demonstrate the

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Somali Bantu Community Association

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Key Infrastructure Access for Immigrant Farmers to Supply Institutions with Culturally Relevant Produce

DATE: May 8, 2024

Project is shovel-ready. See USDA Project Profile Template Construction Justification section instructions.

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (2 Points)

- The Applicant did not submit an error-free, complete Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- The Applicant also did not certify that landowner resources and infrastructure are in place and committed.

14) Budget Completeness (4 Points)

- The missing RFSI Budget Match Worksheet prevented evaluators from reviewing this category thoroughly.
- Supplies are not mathematically correct on the USDA template.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (0 Points)

- The Applicant did not submit an RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.
- What was submitted had multiple errors and formatting challenges.
- The justification sections and the budget tables do not reconcile (e.g., equipment).
- Heat pumps, utilities, and solar panels are business operation expenses, not Project expenses.
- Several budget sections include expenses not related to the section listed in the USDA template.
- The budget does not clearly demonstrate the total cost of the Project or articulate how the category costs listed in the budget are derived.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- The Applicant did not submit an RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.
- The limited matching funds documentation provided does not demonstrate that all matching contributions are allowable and are committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.

17) Application Completeness (0 Points)

- Project start date outside stated RFA performance period
- Edited EoCI template, does not adhere to RFA template
- The Applicant removed the certification check box and required language from the Evidence of Critical Infrastructure letter.
- Did not submit the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.
- Applicant requested to purchase equipment on the last day of the RFSI project performance period (5/24/27) without justification.
- Extensive formatting issues in the USDA template.
- Budget justifications appear in incorrect boxes.
- Budget funding amounts appear incorrectly on the USDA template

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine’s Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine's Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 0 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine’s Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>0</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>2</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine’s Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 3 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 5 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | 7 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine's Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>0</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>3</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine’s Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>30</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine's Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment.

The Applicant is an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether for-profit or non-profit. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant proposes a project where a modernized processing line would be installed to boost post-harvest yield.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine's Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

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| <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant proposes a project that will enhance their supply chain resilience (as will other small farms' who purchase from them) through equipment upgrades to extend processing capacity and increase the post-harvest yield of their blueberry crops.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine's Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant clearly demonstrated a market impact and articulated how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase the middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency of Maine-produced agricultural food.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or Project Narrative.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or Project Narrative.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or Project Narrative.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score. The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form or Project Narrative.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant identified expected performance measures on the USDA template but did not articulate them in the Maine RFSI Project Narrative (not submitted).
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (3 Points)**
 - The Applicant submitted two letters of support and a brief response in the external support section of the USDA template.
 - Did not provide stakeholder support information on the Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative (not submitted).
- 11) **Community Impact (5 Points)**
 - Begins to partially describe community impact.
 - The Application does not clearly demonstrate community impact, including labor and workforce considerations.
 - The Application does not thoroughly articulate the specific farms, processors, food businesses, and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (7 Points)**
 - The Applicant demonstrated insufficient details for the reviewers to fully understand the Project's Financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

PROJECT NAME: Transforming Maine's Wild Blueberry Industry with AI and Automation

DATE: May 7, 2024

- More information was needed to assess the Applicant's capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.
- 13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (0 Points)**
- The Applicant submitted a partially completed Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter. It does not indicate that the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project are in place and does not certify that they committed prior to the project's start date.
 - The Applicant did not submit an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form.
- 14) Budget Completeness (3 Points)**
- The budget match worksheet is challenging to read and not correctly formatted. The total Project Costs are not calculated properly, and the indirect costs are not properly aligned with the overall project budget.
- 15) Budget Narrative and Justification (3 Points)**
- The application does not demonstrate complete compliance with allowable costs described in Part 2 Section D of the RFA and the USDA terms and conditions.
 - Blueberries are an operational cost and are unallowable in a project budget.
 - The role of the sales consultant listed in other budget sections is unclear, and they did not provide a timeline for personnel.
 - A large portion of the budget includes educational videos and training for other producers, which is an operating/education/promotion expense and not a direct middle-of-the-supply chain activity and is unallowable.
- 16) Matching Funds (0 Points)**
- Insufficient matching contributions proposed and unallowable expenses are included in the match budget.
 - Reviewers were unable to determine that allowable matching contributions would be committed or secured at the time the Applicant was recommended for an award.
- 17) Application Completeness (0 Points)**
- The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components: Application Cover Page, Debarment, Performance, and Non-collusion Certification, Litigation form, Maine RFSI Project Narrative, and Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 3 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 0 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | 2 |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | 3 |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and | 10 | 6 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

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| <p>workforce considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | 7 |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | 3 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

| | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 3 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | 2 |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>29</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant describes an eligible project for renovations suitable for the processing and distribution of oysters

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

This project will address the need for a land-based infrastructure that is suitable for processing and storage of products and accessible for distributor & wholesaler vehicles.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (3 Points)**
 - The applicant partially described a Project designed to solve challenges and increase middle-of-the-supply chain capacity and resiliency in Maine’s food system.
 - The applicant does begin to describe the degree to which the Project adds additional or improved sales channels for the Applicant.
 - Positive: Indicated that the project will result in year-round sales.
- 5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 6) Maine RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 7) USDA RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 9) Expected Performance Measures (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant selected outcomes on the USDA Proposal Template but did not thoroughly articulate the Project’s purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.
- 10) Stakeholder Support (3 Points)**
 - Described external support in USDA Proposal Template but did not provide project narrative summary or LOS to provide additional documentation.
- 11) Community Impact (6 Points)**
 - Listed specific farms, processors, and food businesses and partially described community impact in addressing a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local food supply chain.
- 12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (7 Points)**
 - Efforts to describe the project’s viability are minimal, and details are missing.
 - No year two expenses are proposed.
 - The EoCRI letter has minimal information describing the applicant’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

PROJECT NAME: Primary Infrastructure renovation to develop year-round oyster processing, distribution and wholesale for Blackstone Point Oyster Co.

DATE: May 6, 2024

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (3 Points)

- Did not provide documentation on the ownership arrangements for the new building.
- More information is needed for reviewers to understand the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project are in place and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

14) Budget Completeness (3 Points)

- Multiple budget errors exist.
- Budget worksheet equipment math is incorrect.
- RFSI Budget Match Worksheet is vastly different from the USDA Proposal Template budget sections.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (2 Points)

- The budget documentation does not provide enough detail.
- Multiple errors prevent the reviewers from easily understanding how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project objectives and expected outcomes.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- The RFSI Budget Match Worksheet does not reconcile with the stated matching contributions on the USDA Project Proposal Template
- Budget errors do not allow reviewers to understand the proposed matching contributions.
- There are no bank statements or supporting documents to verify that all matching contributions will be committed or secured when the Applicant is recommended for an award.
- The match verification letter lists less than 25% of total Project costs for the match.

17) Application Completeness (0 Points)

- Did not sign the application cover page.
- Did not provide a Maine RFSI Application Project Narrative Summary
- Did not complete section A General Information on the Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet
- Did not propose an eligible Project Start Date
- Indicated that their matching contribution equipment will be acquired on 9/1/24 or 11/1/24 per their USDA Project Template which does not meet the requirements for matching contributions to be secured at the time the applicant is recommended for an award.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p>i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p>ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | 4 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | 0 |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); | 5 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected | 5 | 2 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | | |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | 2 |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | 3 |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability,</p> | 15 | 3 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| <p>workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | 5 | 5 |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | 0 |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> | 10 | 0 |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | 0 |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | 0 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>19</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes an eligible Project to build a walk-in freezer for fresh-packed berries and other vegetables and fruit.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Application describes a Project based on allowable middle-of-the-supply chain activities: expanding capacity and improving the infrastructure for wild blueberry processing and expanding capacity for other crops.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweed, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 4) **Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). (4 Points)**
 - Applicant begins to describe the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing or improving middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. Additional information needed for reviewers to award full points.
- 5) **The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 6) **Maine RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 7) **USDA RFSI Priorities (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 8) **Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. (0 Points)**
 - Unable to score, the applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.
- 9) **Expected Performance Measures (2 Points)**
 - Applicant identifies but does not articulate.
 - Applicant did not submit a Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative to thoroughly help reviewers understand expected performance measures.
- 10) **Stakeholder Support (2 Points)**
 - The Applicant does not thoroughly describe the stakeholders who support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project).
- 11) **Community Impact (3 Points)**
 - The applicant does not clearly demonstrate community impact including labor and workforce considerations
- 12) **Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness (3 Points)**
 - Some evidence of project planning was submitted, but it was insufficient to fully demonstrate the applicant and project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- 13) **Evidence of Critical Infrastructure (5 Points)**
 - The Applicant submitted evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Smithereen Farm

PROJECT NAME: Improving Value Added Processing for Diverse Crops (blueberries, seaweek, herbs, and other rare fruit) in Rural Washington County at Smithereen Farm

DATE: May 8, 2024

14) Budget Completeness (0 Points)

- The application budget sections are not thoroughly complete and mathematically correct.
- Their USDA template budget does not reconcile with the Budget Match Worksheet.
- Math error on RFSI Budget Match Worksheet Funds requested and total project cost do not reconcile.
- Did not submit any matching funds columns on the RFSI budget match worksheet.
- Unable to thoroughly review the RFSI budget match worksheet for correctness because it is incomplete.
- Indirect costs listed in the USDA template do not reconcile.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification (0 Points)

- The Personnel section is business operating expenses, not project expenses.
- No timeline was provided for personal or contractual budget sections.
- Contractual expenses are in the budget summary table but not the contractual table, and the contractual justification is incomplete.
- Cranes are listed as 2, and the cost per unit is \$5K, but the budget table doesn't reconcile.
- No acquisition dates provided for the following budget categories other, equipment and construction
- Match type not indicated for construction
- Indirect costs more than 10% of funds requested.

16) Matching Funds (0 Points)

- Incomplete RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.
- Incomplete Budget Match Verification Letters
- Unallowable costs listed in matching contributions
- The applicant did not submit an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA

17) Application Completeness (0 Points)

- The Applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components:
 - Application Cover Page
 - Debarment, Performance and Non-collusion Certification
 - Litigation form
 - Maine RFSI Project Narrative
 - Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.
- Multiple formatting issues and missing information were noted throughout the application material.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p style="text-align: center;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | | |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add </p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);</p> <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | | |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities. | 10 | N/A |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, | 10 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>the budget sections reconcile.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment

The Applicant indicated that they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not identify a proposal that meets the RFA definition of a project.

The applicant did not propose a definitive beginning and end on their application materials. The application listed July 1, 2024 as both the start date and the end date. This is not a Project and falls outside of the RFA stated grant performance period of September 1, 2024- May 24, 2027.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

*Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a limited duration with a **definitive beginning and end**. A Project will also have an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.*

The applicant requested funding for equipment only and did not request funds for any Project related expenditures. They are encouraged to apply to the Maine RFSI Equipment-only RFA anticipated to open in October 2024.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

A Project is defined as a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Ayotte Farms

PROJECT NAME: Purchase of innovative potato wash line equipment for the purpose of enhancing potato processing efficiency

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>N/A</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant's eligibility cannot be determined through the submitted documents.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant did not identify a proposal for a RFSI Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Beals Island Shellfish Mariculture Inc DBA Great Wass Shellfish Company

PROJECT NAME: Enhancing the distribution of locally farmed shellfish in Eastern Maine

DATE: May 1, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: N/A not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Davis Farms
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb
Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Davis Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Davis Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Davis Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Davis Farms
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Davis Farms
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Davis Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant's eligibility cannot be determined through the submitted documents.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application which included the Project Narrative Summary. The reviewers would have to make assumptions to determine if the proposal complies with the USDA RFSI program scope, terms and conditions, and requirements for an RFSI-eligible project.

The applicant did not identify the proposal as a Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Davis Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

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| |
| <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb
Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm LLC
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant's eligibility cannot be determined through the submitted documents.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant did not identify a proposal for a RFSI Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Not Reviewed | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. </p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> | 10 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | N/A |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>Fail</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The Applicant is a nonprofit organization that operates middle-of-the-supply-chain activities.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant describes business operations and partnerships but does not describe an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of the RFA.

The applicant did not identify the proposal as a Project that meets the definition of a project.

Reviewer assumptions were required if this were to be determined to be a Project.

The USDA Template Executive Summary describes the entity's business operations but does not provide a project summary. The RFSI project purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes are not described. The applicant did not follow instructions to include a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period in the Executive Summary.

The applicant describes business operations in the USDA template section regarding the specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address but does not provide any information related to an RFSI project proposal in this section.

It is unclear if the objectives stated in the USDA template are allowable per the RFA stated requirements and the USDA RFSI program scope, requirements, and terms and conditions.

The narrative provided in the external project support section of the USDA template relates to support of the applicant's business operations but does not describe the stakeholders who support the specific RFSI project.

The applicant does not indicate if the application meets the RFA requirement that 51% of project-related ingredients will be grown, harvested, and produced in Maine.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

The applicant did not follow the formatting outline for the project narrative summary and the applicant does not clearly describe a project that responds to Maine or USDA RFSI priorities.

The applicant did not thoroughly describe the proposal's expected outcomes and performance measures and did not provide a narrative description of project tasks and activities.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

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| <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Not reviewed, previous fail.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fork Food Lab

PROJECT NAME: Palletized Frozen Storage for Fork Food Lab Businesses, Partners & Area Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to </p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

| | | |
|---|-----------|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> | 10 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | N/A |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, and the reviewers would have to make assumptions to determine if the proposal complies with the USDA RFSI program scope, terms and conditions, and requirements for an RFSI-eligible project.

The applicant did not identify the proposal as a Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

The applicant did not propose a definitive beginning and end on their application materials. They indicated that their work would start "ASAP" and end in "fall 2026."

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

*Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a limited duration with a **definitive beginning and end**. A Project will also have an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.*

The applicant did not follow the formatting outline for the project narrative summary, and the reviewers were unable to determine that this application satisfies the RFA requirements for an eligible Project.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Fountain Farm, LLC

PROJECT NAME: Apple & Bean Facility: Enhancing Yield, Storage Capacity, Quality, and Community with Sustainable Processing of Maine Grown Products

DATE: May 7, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | | N/A |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p><u>TOTAL</u></p> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

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| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

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| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant did not identify a proposal for an RFSI Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

The applicant submitted a USDA RFSI Equipment-Only Template that was not provided, required, or referenced in the RFA.

The applicant did not propose a definitive beginning and end on their application materials because they did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

*Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a limited duration with a **definitive beginning and end**. A Project will also have an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.*

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Lynch Hill Farms Inc

PROJECT NAME: Increasing Efficiency and Capacity with Advanced Optical Berry Sorter

DATE: May 1, 2024

The applicant requested funding for equipment only and did not request funds for any Project related expenditures. They are encouraged to apply to the Maine RFSI Equipment-only RFA anticipated to open in October 2024.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

A Project is defined as a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: N/A

The application does not describe an eligible middle of the supply chain Project

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p><u>TOTAL</u></p> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Maine Ocean Farms LLC

PROJECT NAME: Establish Shellfish Cold Storage, Packaging and Distribution Capacity

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment

The Applicant indicated that they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or a nonprofit organization.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant requested a Project amount under the minimum RFSI Infrastructure Project Grant subaward threshold of \$100,000 stated in the Maine RFA and the USDA AMS RFSI Program Scope and Requirements, so it cannot be considered an eligible Project application.

The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components: Application Cover Page, Debarment, Performance, and Non-collusion Certification, Litigation form, Maine RFSI Project Narrative, and Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Mook Sea Farm Inc

PROJECT NAME: Repair and improvement of Land Based Oyster Processing and Storage Facility

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment

The Applicant indicated they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or a nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The Applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Narrative Summary. Therefore, reviewers are unable to determine whether the proposal is an allowable project per the definitions provided in the RFA.

The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components: Application Cover Page, Debarment, Performance, and Non-collusion Certification, Litigation form, Maine RFSI Project Narrative, and Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Newdawns Farms
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb
Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Newdawns Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Newdawns Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Newdawns Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Newdawns Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071
RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program
BIDDER: Newdawns Farms
PROJECT NAME: Not provided
DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Newdawns Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant's eligibility cannot be determined through the submitted documents.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The Applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Narrative Summary. Reviewers are unable to determine if the proposal is an allowable project per the definitions provided in the RFA.

The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components: Application Cover Page, Debarment, Performance, and Non-collusion Certification, Litigation form, Maine RFSI Project Narrative, and Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Newdawns Farms

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 1, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas. i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting). iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section. a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to </p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> | 10 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain. ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit. | | |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | 15 | N/A |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>16) Matching Funds * Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet. a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness * Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted. 18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>N/A</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

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| |
| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The Applicant is a for-profit entity.

The applicant is not an agricultural producer or processor.

The applicant does not meet the USDA criteria for Entities eligible for RFSI Infrastructure Project Grants.

The applicant entity's overall business activities are not primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers.

The applicant's entity's overall business activities are not currently and primarily focused on operating middle of the supply chain activities.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

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| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</p> <p>The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not identify a proposal that meets the RFA definition of a project.

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

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| |
| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</p> <p>The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> |

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Nick Planson LLC DBA Shred Electric LLC

PROJECT NAME: Demonstrating cost-effective electric commercial vehicle transportation with battery-powered refrigeration for small-scale agriculture and aquaculture

DATE: May 7, 2024

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

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|---|-----------|------------|
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | 10 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

- a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or a signed Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant's eligibility cannot be determined through the submitted documents.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or a signed Maine RFSI Application Form. Therefore, the applicant did not identify a proposal for an RFSI Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

The applicant did not propose a definitive beginning and end on their application materials.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

*Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a limited duration with a **definitive beginning and end**. A Project will also have an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.*

Subsequently, the reviewers cannot determine if the application meets USDA requirements according to the stated RFSI Program Scope and Requirements and USDA Terms and Conditions because the applicant did not submit the required USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Oxford Hills Community Gardens DBA Alan Day Community Garden

PROJECT NAME: Not provided

DATE: May 8, 2024

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA. | Pass | |
| 2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA. | | Fail |
| 3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA. | | Fail |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| 4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

| | | |
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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

| | | |
|--|----------|-----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | | |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>funding has ended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure <i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities. | 10 | N/A |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification <i>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and | 10 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

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| <p>articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>N/A</u> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass

The applicant is a for-profit agricultural producer/processor operating middle-of-the-supply chain activities such as processing, aggregation, or distribution of targeted agricultural products. The applicant's business activities are primarily focused on benefiting local and regional producers. The applicant indicates that they meet the eligibility requirements of the SBA small business size standards.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The Application describes a Project that is not completely dedicated to the allowable middle-of-the-supply chain activities defined in the RFA and the USDA RFSI Program Scope, Terms and Conditions, and regulations.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Stewardship GEM LLC

PROJECT NAME: Constructing a Chilled Recirculating Wet Storage Addition for Bivalve Shellfish

DATE: May 9, 2024

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The application documents and letters of support indicate that this project will conduct beginning of the supply chain harvest activities.

The application states the purpose and objectives of this Project are beginning of the supply chain harvest activities in multiple sections of the application materials.

Examples include:

- This project will enable scheduling of harvest days around the weather, instead of scheduling harvest days around the processing and distribution schedule.
- This project improves our farm's resiliency by removing harvest interruptions that cost both us and our customers money.
- Additionally, this project would allow for harvest from the farm during bacterial closures that come with significant expense and testing requirements.
- Purpose: this project aims to even out production interruptions due to water quality or mechanical breakdowns on the harvest vessel
- Specifically, this project addresses the challenges associated with the time temperature control for vibrio, and harvest interruptions for closures.
- This infrastructure will remove harvest interruptions
- This allows us to schedule harvest around the weather
- The specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address: Missed harvest days
- Objective: Reduce the number of missed harvest days

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Pass | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i> a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i> a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically: i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment

The Applicant indicated that they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the Maine RFSI Application form, which included the following required application components: Application Cover Page, Debarment, Performance, and Non-collusion Certification, Litigation form, Maine RFSI Project Narrative, and Maine RFSI Environmental Prescreening Worksheet.

The applicant did not adhere to requirements to submit application materials in .pdf format, making evaluation difficult for reviewers to thoroughly assess.

The applicant did not submit the required Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Letter, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, or the Matching Funds Verification Letters. Therefore there is not enough information submitted for reviewers to understand if this proposal describes an eligible project per the definitions and requirements listed in the RFA.

The provided budget sections do not reconcile, making it difficult to assess if this is a Project that meets the RFA requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: The Apple Farm

PROJECT NAME: Washing and grading machine to facilitate processing of farm products

DATE: May 1, 2024

The budget summary is 99% equipment only and 1% unallowable business operating expenses (business supplies). This is an equipment-only request and does not meet the definition of a Project per the RFA.

The applicant requested funding for equipment only and did not request funds for any Project related expenditures. They are encouraged to apply to the Maine RFSI Equipment-only RFA anticipated to open in October 2024.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

A Project is defined as a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFA Coordinator: Michelle Webb

Names of Evaluators: Gus Nelson, Jane Kirsling, Joy Bonenfant, Andrew Kendall, Ellen Mailing

| <u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u> | <u>Pass</u> | <u>Fail</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | | Pass |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | | Fail |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N/A not scored | |
| <u>Scoring Sections</u> | <u>Points Available</u> | <u>Points Awarded</u> |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address). <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | 7 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | 3 | N/A |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p>i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p>ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p>iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); <p>ii. Workforce/economic impact</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

| | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; <p>iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers. * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | 5 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <p>11) Community Impact * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | 10 | N/A |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness * Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project’s financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <p>b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).</p> <p>c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.</p> <p>d. The Project will improve the Applicant’s business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.</p> <p>e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity’s infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.</p> | 15 | N/A |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <p>f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.</p> | | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure * Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.</p> <p>b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification * Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> | <p>10</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

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RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds <i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | 5 | N/A |
| <p>17) Application Completeness <i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>18) The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | 5 | N/A |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>N/A</u> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER: Yost Farm LLC

PROJECT NAME: To upgrade existing food grade sunflower oil processing equipment

DATE: May 1, 2024

Preliminary Information (Eligible Entity)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Pass with comment

The Applicant indicated that they are an agricultural producer or processor but did not select whether the entity is a for-profit meeting SBA guidelines or nonprofit organization. If awarded, further clarification and documentation is needed.

Preliminary Information (Eligible Project Proposed)

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.***

The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: Fail

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Narrative Summary. The applicant did not identify any proposal for a Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

The applicant did not adhere to RFA formatting requirements to submit application materials in .pdf format, making it difficult for reviewers to assess the materials submitted.

The application submitted a USDA equipment-only template, which was not requested, provided or referenced in this Project RFA.

The applicant requested an amount under the minimum RFA threshold for a Project and therefore the request is ineligible to be determined to be an eligible RFSI Project per the RFA.

The applicant did not submit the required USDA RFSI Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template or the Maine RFSI Application Form. Due to this, the applicant did not identify a proposal for a RFSI Project that meets the RFA definition of a project.

The applicant did not propose a definitive beginning and end on their application materials.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

*Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a limited duration with a **definitive beginning and end.** A*

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Project will also have an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.

The applicant requested funding for equipment only and did not request funds for any Project related expenditures. They are encouraged to apply to the Maine RFSI Equipment-only RFA anticipated to open in October 2024.

From RFA Part 2 Section A:

A Project is defined as a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people

Preliminary Information (Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed)

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.**

The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.

Evaluation Team Comments: not reviewed, did not meet prior pass/fail criteria

**EVALUATION SECTION
Evaluation of Scoring Sections**

Evaluation Team Comments: n/a not scored.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

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BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
 - i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q. Current activities seem to be focused on events, not processing. Project would appear to be a new venture / startup. Don't see experience. No specificity about products.

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RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd., LLC DBA Tops'I Farm

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>18)</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- detailed narrative in RFSI application form</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- covered in RFSI Maine application form p.6</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- covered in RFSI Maine application form p.6

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- covered in RFSI Maine application form p.7

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q- do women count as under served populations</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- clearly described on p. 7 of Maine RSFI and on USDA form p 6 +7</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- clearly articulated with letters of support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- clearly stated in Maine RFSI p.8 and USDA p. 5</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- clear, viable and feasible project. Capable visionary team.
Q- no mention of specific product lines simply shelf stable

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letter included and well documented

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- completed. Details appreciated. appears accurate.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- detailed and complete.</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>P- attached and complete</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>P- complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Positive.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Positive.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>12 female-led farms but gender not included in group via RFA. Committed to prioritizing female and BIPOC-owned operations.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Positive.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Positive. LOS from Clara Coleman, Waldoboro town manager, fellow farmer Razorville Ridge Farm</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive. Looking to go from 22 to over 50 farms.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Timeline is well-researched and ambitious. Well planned. They seem shovel-ready.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

The letter includes town permits access to lines for electricity and water, supplying additional labor, a shared kitchen, and an extra building lease if needed at zero dollars.

Includes lease info and diagram.

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Positive. Error free.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. Demonstrated and justified.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Road

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Positive. Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The UEI is in process as stated on the application.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The project will allow 40 products in 10 categories of Maine based value added products. Need to double check that this will not be direct to consumer.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>Although the applicant says product formulations account for more than 67%, they state they are a flexible brand. Need more information.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The applicant states that their project aligns with the multi-purpose storage/processing facility to support processing and packing improvements, value added processing, storage, and distribution. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The application aligns with “Projects that expand value added capacity and increase diversity in processing options. The project also aligns with “benefits underserved or underrepresented food producers” although more information is needed on how this would be achieved.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application meets the requirements. b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application is lacking details on the metrics that will be used to measure the progress of the progress. b. The application meets the requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>a. The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the requirements.
- b. The application meets the requirements.
- c. The application meets the requirement.
- d. The application partially meets the requirement, it was not clear how the business would be sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements.c. Need to double check this for cash donation.d. The application partially meets the requirements. Although there is support for the town permits they are not in place. |
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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>a. The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>D .The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Bremen Rd LLC DBA Tops'l Farm

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>A. The application verifies that there will be a cash match split over the duration of the project. The match budget meets the requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>For the USDA outcomes the N/A boxes are unchecked.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P 3 Letters of Support</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Farm on Breeman

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P-100%</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q. Unsure if building which will house extruder will be ready. It's completely appears to be contingent on raising funds.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q. Unsure if building which will house extruder will be ready. It's completely appears to be contingent on raising funds.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Grains**

DATE: **5/06/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- very detailed</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- meets standard</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- clearly articulated

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- clearly articulated

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P- mentioned in proposal</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Q- did not specifically outline deliverables, outcomes and performance measures</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Grains**

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- demonstrated Q letter from sales manager may be self-serving</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- documented</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P-

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- form is detailed
Q- if certification box is checked

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- form appears correct and complete Q- see comment on match.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- budget complete and well justified</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Q- reduced match percentage, not sure if business qualifies</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>P- forms and supporting documents</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Grains, Inc**

DATE: **5/6/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Good case for not being alone in having food-grade byproducts that warrant their value to build a more resilient food system. Blueberry pomace, seaweed steam okara from tofu.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Over 75% Maine grown.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>MG is woman-owned. MG buys from Liberation Farms. MG is an LFPA partner and meets the socially disadvantaged processor definition.</p> <p>Checked every box under Project Beneficiaries Veteran Producers but no follow-up. 400 Beneficiaries.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>Positive. Recipes tested on the Cornell machine in NY.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive.</p> <p>3 LOS: Diggables, Crooked Face, and extruder maker company.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Skowhegan was identified as low income as defined by census tracts. MG employs 20 people and expects to hire 15 more. Purchases from over 40 small farms and 200 plus Somali Bantu farmers in Maine.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Positive.
MG is well-connected and has received many grants to support its efforts.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Positive. No errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>No errors. All of their match is in year two. Positive.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Positive. Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Positive. Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements. ,</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application describes how middling grains are wasted due to not having the equipment to turn them into a value-added product. This project will solve this challenge and add improved/additional sales channels.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application states that ingredients in the project are 75% grown, harvested and produced.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.

i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.

- The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.

ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).

iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

a. The project describes the expanded capacity for aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of Maine-produced food products. Dairy is mentioned in here, that is an unallowable cost.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

A. The project expands processing capacities, adds product lines, increases production volumes, and supports new wholesale and retail markets.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The business is woman-owned and is an LFPA producer partner. The business also supports Liberation Farms. b. The application demonstrates support from a woman-owned business and the manufacturer of the equipment to be bought. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application meets the stated requirements. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements and has 3 project stakeholders' support letters. The need for the project is described.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>a. The application clearly states the community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will be viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application start and end dates are reasonable.
- c. The application meets the stated requirements.
- d. The application meets the stated requirement. It is not clearly stated that the entity will be viable, but given the data in other categories, there is evidence that it will be.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements.
- f. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the stated requirements.b. The application meets the stated requirements.c. The application meets the stated requirements.d. The application meets the stated requirements. |
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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains, Inc.

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. A woman-owned business does not qualify for the match reduction.b. The match must be greater than stated. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Grains**

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Joy Bonenfant**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P <u>3 letters of support</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

**Box not check on Evidence of
Critical Resource letter**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Grains

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p><u>P</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|-----------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andy Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Q</p> |
| <p>18)</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>PASS Q- did not check second box as a for profit entity.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- applicant’s project meets market demand challenges</p> <p>Q- project requires additional expert staffing to be retained which could be challenging in the location.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>Fulfills requirement</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- Project clearly articulates on farm facility infrastructure improvements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Project clearly articulates multiple USDA RFSI priorities

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>P- Project has direct benefit to Aroostook County. N- Project does not identify as a historically underserved entity.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>P- Applicant thoroughly articulated Project and activities. Applicant identified multiple indicators under Outcome 2. Q -applicant may have underestimated the number of local agricultural producers who could benefit from storage and distribution capacity.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- Applicant demonstrates support from a variety of stakeholders.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- Applicant demonstrates support to address a growing market demand in Maine with specific growers and buyers.</p> <p>N- applicant does not identify workforce considerations for community impact</p> |

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DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- Proposal meets criteria

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- applicant provides evidence
Q- applicant did not check box
on the form

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- Project total matches on both forms</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- budget is detailed and comprehensive</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept of Economic and Community Development

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|--|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>P- applicant submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification letter and budget match worksheet.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>N- Budget was not submitted as a pdf</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Pass</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>Pass</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>Pass</p> |

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DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Positive. 20 x 56-foot addition for production and packaging, a second mill. Increase storage from 4 to 12 pallets of buckwheat. Increase milling from 500 to 1000 pounds per hour. Less frequent removal of byproduct.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Positive: 100% Maine-grown Buckwheat so over 67%.</p> |

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DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive. Aligned well.
New building 20 x 56
New configuration
Triple amount of storage of pallets.

Processing and hiring.

Storage, distribution improvement of processing.

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DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive.

I: expand capacity and resiliency, small business, gluten free
II: will pay fair wages of 16 and 19 per hour for part time
III: rural Northern Maine
Roy's is veteran owned

Buckwheat is a 2024 Food Trend

**STATE OF MAINE
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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive.</p> <p>Will benefit six underserved farmers.</p> <p>The area is at risk according to the Distressed Communities Index</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P.</p> <p>See section XIV: Planned Data Collection Analysis and Reporting which is part of the Narrative.</p> <p>Multiple measures checked.</p> <p>Pounds milled per hour goes up Pallet storage goes up Byproduct relocation less frequent</p> |

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DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive.</p> <p>Bouchards is the primary source of buckwheat for Better with Buckwheat</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3 LOS: Better with Buckwheat, Diggables, Roy Farms in Fort Kent. Well integrated in the community and the state.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive.</p> <p>Currently, Bouchards can not keep pace with demand for buckwheat. With expansion, other Fort Kent farmers and farmland can be converted to buckwheat production.</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will be viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Positive.
Can begin securing specialized equipment. Already begun with 2nd mill for 35K.

The project will right-size reasonably.

"Increased capacity will fuel demand."
Expand to other farms in the area.

"Will expand market potential."

"Ensure economic sustainability post-award."

Shovel ready has been shown.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive. Building to be constructed on the existing parking lot, same electrical power hookup, no upgrade needed. Budget has demolition which may be for the parking lot area, not the demolition of a building, more of a configuration.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|----------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Positive. No errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. Looks good.</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Positive. Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included. Invoices included. OK to use a Canadian equipment company.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Negative includes not selecting NA or critical infrastructure box.</p> <p>Positive includes Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page all included.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application partially meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The project is to construct an addition to the processing manufacturing floor to double production capacity. It meets eligibility requirements. The project is to construct an addition to the processing manufacturing floor to double production capacity. It meets eligibility requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The project of adding production, packaging space, and increasing storage space will double the farm's capacity to process buckwheat flour from 500 lbs an hour to 1000 lbs an hour, increase storage capacity of packaged flour from 4 to 12 pallets.</p> <p>There is growing demand from wholesale customers projected and this project will enable Bouchard to meet the demands. Additional employees will be hired due to this project.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The project will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements, support processing and storage improvements. The application meets the stated requirements.

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm Products, Inc.

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The project expands value added product capacity, adds jobs, diversifies processing infrastructure because of its location in northern rural Maine, and increases production of buckwheat flour.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Bouchard Family Farm does not identify as a historically underserved entity as defined by the USDA.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>The application meets all of the requirements. There are 3 outcomes explained. There are indicators selected under both outcomes 2 and 3.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>There are 3 letters of support. The application meets the requirements in both the project narrative section and the USDA external support section.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Gluten-free buckwheat flour is popular and rising in demand according to several sources in the application. The use of a neighboring farm will increase the farmer's soil health.</p> |

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12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the requirements. The budget is well thought out.
- b. The end date is ambitious, but it fits within the acceptable project performance dates.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application does not talk about sustainability after the funding is completed but does address the projected need for the project's proposed activities and services.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the requirements. I think it is wise that they are hiring an accountant to help out with the costs of the project.
- b. There is a letter included that outlines the business plan and the existing infrastructure that will support the plan.
- c. The box is not checked at the bottom.
- d. The applicant included a letter about owning the processing facility outright. The box is not checked at the bottom.

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DATE: 5/02/2024

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The budget meets requirements in both the USDA template and the RFSI budget match worksheet.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the requirements, the budget lists all building costs and budgets for the duration of the project.</p> <p>c. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the requirements. The building costs are extremely reasonable.</p> |

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DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. In kind donations are in place. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>There were boxes unchecked in two forms.</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Bouchard Family Farm

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
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| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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DATE: 5/02/2024

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P – 3 Letters of Support provided.</p> |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P – No other funding received P – Budget adds up, all costs are allowable. P - In Kind is > 50% of total ask.</p> |

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>P- matching > than required 50%</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>N –box on Evidence of Critical Resource & Infrastructure not checked. And N/A boxes not checked on Expectations.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved, Inc. DBA Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Q, budget not itemized by year</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Q</p> |

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DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved DBA Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved DBA Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- well documented</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- addressed in proposal</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- clearly articulated

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DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P= clearly articulated

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved DBA Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">P- documented N- lacking mention of demonstrated involvement</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P- thoroughly articulated</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- clearly demonstrated</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- clearly demonstrated</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- well documented

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- provided

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- very detailed</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- very detailed and complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Ocean Approved DBA Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>P- well documented</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>P- complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>All Project activities are middle of supply chain activities; All of activities covered by this grant are to support improvements in middle-of-supply-chain work including freezing, packaging, frozen storage, processing, and food safety.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>More than 95% of all of their farmed kelp is farmed in Maine by partner farmers.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Applicant used USDA priorities instead of Maine priorities. More business operations focused.

- 1) It expands value-added product capacity and resilience
- 2) meets the workforce/economic impact priority
- 3) only scaled processor of farmed kelp - middle-of-the-supply chain processing infrastructure which turns kelp into popular value-added products.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Develops improved and accessible value-added, nutrient-dense, and traceable kelp products to US consumers.

It also helps to diversify coastal incomes by increasing fishermen's access to kelp farming in the face of rapid climate change and an increasingly volatile lobster monoculture.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Says partners are new or beginning. Weak section.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Positive.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>30,000 lbs in 2018 and our partner farmers alone are now growing more than 1,000,000 lbs this year.</p> <p>Diversify the fishing community. Governor’s Heritage Award as well as many industry awards focused on climate leadership.</p> <p>Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center, U of ME Coop Extension, Maine Aquaculture Association.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive. They have at least 20 new potential farmers reaching out each month – most of whom are fishermen – looking to diversify into kelp.</p> |

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DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

VP of Operations used to lead \$200M+ manufacturing business. They have trialed all of the equipment, clear plan on implementation that the entire production team contributed to. Are ready to implement this project immediately.

We have grown the kelp farmer network from 3 farmers in 2018 to 40 today.

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BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive. Letter included and the box has been checked.

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BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farms

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Positive. Did not do the budget timeline with expenses in each year.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. Personnel justification does not list dates.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Positive. Match Verification Letter is included and details broken down.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Positive. Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page are all included, except budget timeline.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|-----------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p><u>P-100%</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">P – new/beginning farmers</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <p>4 Letters of Support (one not signed)</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>I-Budget adds up, years grant match will happen not provided. Match is \$1.50 more than necessary.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Personnel justification does not list when activities will occur.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Sea Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mathematically correct but match period not defined.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q. Identifies but doesn't explain more. No how.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q. Identifies but doesn't explain how.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q. Involvement</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q. Not sure about match calculation</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: **5/05/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | PASS |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | PASS |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | PASS |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> | <p>P-very detailed explanation of market impact and solving challenges, increasing capacity and resiliency</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: **5/05/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---------------------------|
| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- meets criteria</p> |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> | <p>P- strong evidence</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> | <p>P- clearly articulates. Benefit to worker owned enterprise</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project | <p>Q- uncertain if narrative includes these designated groups</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>P- clearly articulated</p> |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder</p> | <p>P- well documented</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- critical infrastructure need for growing industry</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and</p> | <p>P- well documented</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for | <p style="text-align: center;">P- complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget complete and accurate</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> | <p>P- budget justification complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditionsb. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed | <p>P- match letter complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>P- application complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Maine Coast Sea Vegetables**

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Positive.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>100% farmed seaweed of 100% Maine origin.</p> |

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Maine alignment supports processing and packaging eg milling, of and improving the middle of the supply chain – aquaculture. Could have used more articulation.

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Expand value-added product capacity and resilience, diversity of processing infrastructure, Projects that offer more and better opportunities. Need more articulation.

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RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Beginner farmer? Identified multiple. This was the only category.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Positive. I like the inclusion of the bar chart on page 7 with tasks and dates.</p> |

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>LOSs included. Could add more demonstration of support.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive.</p> <p>Page 8- burst bubble with oversupply of raw material and undersupply of value-added processing capacity. Based on 50 years of experience in the seaweed industry we believe in milling capacity for high-value powders.</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Positive.
MCSV owns all prerequisite equipment and has the space. Quotations are in hand (page 8) powdered kelp has high value

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BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive. Specifies details.

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Negative. Travel budget is not accurate. But overall accurate.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. Uses the term “project manager” and is dedicated to the project.</p> |

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Positive. Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included. Good details. Labor and finance staff are included.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page included. Ineligible start date.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application lacked details in the designated location but later explained in detail. Projects that support processing, packaging improvements, and demonstrate stakeholder support, and improve middle of the supply chain challenges are listed.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The application meets the stated requirements. Value added product capacity and resiliency, diversity in processing options, and including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing are mentioned.

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DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>There is a question of whether farming a new product would designate a farmer as a beginner.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the requirements.
- b. The application meets the requirements.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application meets the requirements.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- A. The application meets the requirements.
- b. There is a letter but no evidence.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application mentions land but does not provide further evidence.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Inc.

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The equipment is missing from the list. Fair value market pricing is also missing.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

14) Budget Completeness

*** Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.**

- a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.

| | | | | |
|-------|---------|---|--------|------------|
| N | | | | |
| 1,200 | \$2.58 | 1 | \$0.00 | \$3,094.00 |
| 3 | \$36.00 | 1 | \$0.00 | \$360.00 |

Travel Budget is not mathematically correct on the Grant template.

15) Budget Narrative and Justification

*** Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.**

- a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the [USDA General Terms and Conditions](#)
- b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.
- c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.
- d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.
- e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.
- f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.

| | | | | |
|-------|---------|---|--------|------------|
| N | | | | |
| 1,200 | \$2.58 | 1 | \$0.00 | \$3,094.00 |
| 3 | \$36.00 | 1 | \$0.00 | \$360.00 |

Travel Budget is not mathematically correct on the Grant template.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: ME Coast Sea

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N-Match letter is not mathematically correct</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|-----------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | IQ |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | IQ |
| | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS Q- applicant did not select for profit entity box</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- proposal represents strong opportunity to facilitate middle of the supply chain resiliency. N- lacks specific details on increased sales channel or product loss values</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Meets eligibility</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- project addresses priorities

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N-application does not articulate rationale for alignment with priorities.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P- woman owned business N- does not explain rationale for benefit underserved farmers</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- section is complete and identifies pretermind indicators</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Q- application mentions that the business leases land for production but there are no letters of support from potential farmer partners</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- application highlights opportunity for multiple crops N- does not address labor and workforce considerations</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N- unclear how business will provide the match funds for equipment purchases
Q- a relatively new business

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q- applicant lacking documentation of previous experience managing proposed work and the relationship

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget appears to be aligned</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N- contractor budget lacks detail between work plan and costs incurred</p> <p>Q- contractor budget is exactly for the upper limit of available funds for project</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Q- matching funds verification letter lacks documentation of source of funding</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p><u>P- complete</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Pass</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>Pass</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>Pass</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>7x larger cold storage capacity. “This will help us reach operational scale.” “We lost 35% of product last year due to lack of capacity.”</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>100% broccolli</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

All three – expansion to infrastructure, support processing, support storage (4 to 12 pallets).

**STATE OF MAINE
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DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive.
b. i. 1 and 2 support the development of value-added products. Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers.

Does the application clearly address how? Yes, but covered in other areas.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>Owned by underserved food producers mainly Filipino women. Creates revenue for other farms. Applicant did not name the six farms or farmers.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>Positive.</p> <p>Will double shipment per day. Waste will be reduced from 35% to 0%. Storage will increase 7 fold. Storage time will increase from 4 days to 2.5 weeks. Expand capacity, increase pounds, extend length of time of storage.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive. Show strong external support. 3 LOS: Hannaford, Allens Blueberries and Harvesting Good.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive. Part of the agriculture food hub at the old Loring Air Force Base. Rollins Trucking is local transport. Native Maine, Boston Public Schools, Sysco and other groups receive the broccoli.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Harvesting Good has a proven record with 1 million pounds of broccoli processed last year. Relationships have been proven.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Letter from G4M. Part of the ag hub. The structure used to be a bowling alley. Circle B is a fairly new farm, established in 2021.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Positive, no errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Good complete description for the most part, match budget is all in year one.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Positive. Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included. Committed?</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements of an Agricultural Producer.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The project start date is earlier than allowable.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The project would convert a former bowling alley into a cold storage facility for broccoli processing. It would also include the renovation of a leased building. A cold room will also be constructed near Circle B's broccoli fields. Both proposed deliverables meet criteria.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>A slight typo was found in paragraph iv. The need is clearly stated. Broccoli has a limited storage period, and this project will extend that time. There has been a loss of crops due to this issue. The project will extend storage time from 4 days to 2.5 weeks. This will prevent the loss of crops and allow them to sell to more producers in Maine and beyond. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>This is a 100% Maine grown specialty crop.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

There are three priorities listed:

- Storage and Distribution improvements
- Demonstrate Stakeholders Support
- Improved MOSC Challenge

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

One priority is listed: Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>The application states that the business is owned by majority Filipino woman and creates revenue streams for other farms from renting land.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application thoroughly meets the requirements.b. The application lists indicators under both outcomes 2 and 3. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>There is a multitude of benefits to stakeholders and Maine communities. 3 letters of support from stakeholders are included.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The project addresses a gap in broccoli processing. The building that will be renovated is in Caribou. Also, nearby farmers benefit as Circle B Farms rents land from farmers to grow the broccoli.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will be viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the requirements.
- b. The beginning date is earlier than allowable. The end date is within the allowable timeline.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The project will help alleviate the 35% crop loss due to a lack of cold storage. The stakeholders in the project state that there is a need for an increased supply of broccoli.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements. Food waste will decrease.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the requirements. The letters of support clearly define the working relationships and how the project will be supported.
- b. The application meets the requirement with the lease from Green 4 Maine.
- c. The application is missing the exact template for this as outlined and included in the RFA.
- d. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The USDA template budget meets the requirements. The RFSI budget doesn't split the line items up for the cost of the new building.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>D. Maine RFSI budget was not detailed by line item.</p> <p>e. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B Farms, LLC

DATE: 5/2/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>The RFSI Maine template was not submitted as a single file.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P- 100% broccoli</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">N – not clearly defined.</p> <p>7. Increased cooling capacity extends market reach, increases revenue, which can be invested back into Circle B; expands partnerships</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P – 3 Letters of support plus support expressed in the lessor Critical Infrastructure letter Green 4ME</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P – In kind contributions are allowable and add up correctly.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P – 100% Match P – Free of math errors</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Circle B

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P- 100% Match provided in equipment – not purchased in time to match though.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q. Not specific enough

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q. Charitable food ineligible.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q. Not sure proposed match is eligible.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Q</p> |
| <p>18)</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine's middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine's food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- well documented approach</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- meets standard</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- meets requirements

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- well documented

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">P- well documented</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P- Extremely well documented on the Maine RSFI application form</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|----------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- letters included</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- addresses specific gap</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- well documented

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letter included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- complete and appears to be correct</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- justification is detailed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan's Farms

DATE: 5/052024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q- produce included as a match cost</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>P- documents submitted</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Reno and expansion of barn.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>100% Maine grown except dressings and jams. The applicant should have been more specific and guaranteed the % for all foods.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Multiple priorities are listed but not articulated.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Many listed but not fully articulated in this section. Use value-added language. Grow and processing season will harvest longer.

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Liberation Farms a Somali Bantu operation and Cultivating Community. Mentions Mainers Feeding Mainers.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive. Thorough.</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the crand any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Positive. LOS from Liberation Farms, Six River Farm, Crown of Maine.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Brief. Purchasing more, selling more volume, new and diff value added commodities, increasing the seasonality of work, more local food available, feeding throughout the year.</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of I Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | <p>Brief. Seems shovel-ready. No utility upgrades are necessary.</p> |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Letter from builders stating they are ready when Jordan Farms is ready.

14) Budget Completeness

*** Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Positive. The narrative is good. No errors. Staffing.</p> |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> | <p>Negative. Produce was included as match. A Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H. Jordan Farms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Positive. Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: William H Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>a. The application meets the stated requirements. A new wash/pack facility and storage will increase the middle of supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>Question: Will the salad dressing and jams be excluded from the project?</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

- a. The application meets the requirements. The project includes on-farm facility improvements, supports value-added processing, and increases storage capacity, including cold storage and aggregation.

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

A. The application meets the requirements. The project supports expanded value-added product capacity. The project will also offer better safety for workers.

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BIDDER NAME: William H Jordan Farm, LLC

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the stated requirements.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>a. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application meets the stated requirements.
- c. The application meets the stated requirements.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements.
- f. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application meets the stated requirements.
- c. The application meets the stated requirements.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.

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RFA #: 202403071

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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>a. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>A. Produce is an unallowable matching cost.</p> <p>b. Produce is an unallowable cost, which wouldn't make the match 50% in this application.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan Farm

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Jordan Farm

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p><u>I – 100% other than dressings and jams is what % in total?</u> <u>Not clearly stated</u></p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Identified but not clear specifics of how.

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DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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DATE: 5/06/2024

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P <u>3 letters of support</u></p> |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>I-Rounded up Other justification</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p><u>produce not allowed (\$118k) – without that they do not meet match</u></p> |

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DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N –. And personnel is matched in yrs 3 & 4.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q. No commitment by applicant

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q. A major part of the match is the lease payments on two trucks over the project period. Is that allowable? Project seems to be complete after the second year but lease and personnel expenses continue for two more years.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Q.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA: Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirement.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA: Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application has limited detail. The problem is defined, but the solution is broad; more specific details are needed. More details are noted under Maine RFSI priorities.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>The 25% of products grown on other facilities may need further verification on whether or not they meet the standard.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application proposes infrastructure, processing, packaging, and storage and distribution improvements. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Value-added product capacity, increasing community workforce, and market opportunities and revenue streams are listed. The application meets the stated requirements.

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BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA: Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application lists the deliverables and purpose but lacks detail on performance measures and expected outcomes. Data collection is further explained under planned data collection.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA: Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the requirements.
- b. The beginning date on the application is earlier than allowable.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application meets the requirements.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

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DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets three requirements.c. The application meets the requirements.d. The application meets the requirements via the match verification letter. |
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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA: Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Question on the breakdown of funds throughout the years. Besides that the application meets stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi LLC/ DBA: Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | PASS |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | PASS |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | PASS |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> | P- well documented |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---------------------------|
| <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- meets criteria</p> |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> | <p>P- well documented</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P- well documented</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers. • Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added); ii. Workforce/economic impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities. • Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers; iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities. • Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises • Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project | <p>Q- uncertain if RPCV is considered veteran, and if women-owned businesses are considered socially disadvantaged</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi DBA Mousam Valley Mushrooms

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>P—met requirement</p> |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder</p> | <p>P- well documented</p> |

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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- well documented</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and</p> | <p>P- well articulated</p> |

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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for | <p>Q- applicant did not provide letter citing dedication of space for project</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>the proposed Project to be successful are in place.</p> <p>c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> <p>d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.</p> | |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget section appears mathematically correct and complete.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> | <p>P- extensive narrative provided</p> |

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DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditionsb. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed | <p style="text-align: center;">P- complete</p> |

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| <p>verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Q- project narrative is 9 pages</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>As described in Part 2 Section D of the RFA.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>Applicant lists 75%</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Gender is not a specified class. Spiller Farm is a veteran. Not clearly articulated.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Positive. Very detailed. Checked more than one performance measure.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Also included support in the narrative. LOS from Tootie's tempeh, Native Maine, Maine Venture Fund, Maine Center for Entrepreneurs</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive. Good specifics.</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Positive in other parts but not noted in the correct section. The project seems shovel-ready when reading other parts including budget.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Negative.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Positive. No errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. Complete and clear. The applicant changed the budget template.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farming Fungi

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included. Issues with labor and truck leasing matching continuing past the project completion date.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page. Issues with some checkboxes.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P – veteran – Spiller Farm (women owned doesn't qualify nor does AmeriCorps).</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P 3 Letters of support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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Page – page 9 of .pdf

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P
3 letters of support and demonstrated support in narrative

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Farm Fungi

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u> <u>9 pages of narrative not the max 5 required</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Q |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | P |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O'Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">N, Food used as match</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P-documented</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>P- addressed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q- Maine RDFI application includes information but appears to have repurposed other USDA application language

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q- Maine RDFI application includes information but appears to have repurposed other USDA application language

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q- information provided but not clearly articulated with details of demonstrated involvement</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- addressed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- addresses and letter of support provided</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- submitted</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- provided

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>N- claimed .25 match but did not use formula on spreadsheet</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N- carrots included as match, but may not be needed with the .25 claimed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O Brien

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>N- not error free due to carrots</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>P- application appears complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>More and better processing options for farm and farm partners by expanding capacity and ability to aggregate, package, store and deliver more Maine produce.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>All handled products are 100% Maine-grown.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive. On-farm improvement, support processing and packaging improvement, storage and distribution improvements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive. Expand value-added capacity and diversity in processing.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Women are not defined as underserved or underrepresented in this category. Sells to 13 women-owned businesses and purchases from 2 women-owned farms.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Negative and positive. Purchase 20% more produce, sell 17% more produce. But sales is not middle of the supply chain.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Positive. Crystal Spring Farm, GSFB, Nature's Circle Farm are all listed and letters of support are included.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive. Applicant states increased employment and ability to offer year-round jobs with benefits. Purchase of more than 50K in local farm supplies. Increase the sustainability of local farms that can rely on the steady growth of sales.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Positive. The largest problem is meeting the demand for their products. Projected sales growth is high, almost doubling in a few years. Quote from Georgia for van. Other quotes "in hand" but not supplied. The timeline is confusing and the budget match worksheet.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive. Letter is included and box is checked.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Budget timeline not included. Incomplete budget match worksheet.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Equipment. Delivery driver for the project or operating expenses. 188,000 dollars worth of carrots as an in-kind donation.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farms

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Match Verification Letter centers on delivery drive time for year one at 37k.is included. Lots of carrots – 188K worth which are unallowable as match. The budget is included. Checked 25% box for match.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Positive. Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page. Incomplete budget match worksheet.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Projects that support storage and distribution improvements are stated and clearly articulated.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

A. Projects that expand value-added capacity and increase diversity in processing options are stated and clearly articulated.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Woman-owned isn't underserved, according to the USDA. Mainer's Feeding Mainer's is mentioned as well as the Good Shepard Food Bank. b. The application meets the stated requirement. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application meets the stated requirements. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine's local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The project start date is earlier than what is allowable. There are details in the narrative, but the budget does not show how the money will be parsed out.
- c. The application meets the stated requirements.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the stated requirements.b. The application meets the stated requirements.c. The application meets the stated requirements.d. The application meets the stated requirements. |
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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The budget is not entirely filled out to show how the funds will be used throughout the duration of the project.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Megan O' Brien DBA Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| outcomes and objectives. | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | Produce is an unallowable match. Without this part of the match, the threshold is not met. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P-100%</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">N- Women owned is not underserved/underrepresented</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P – some items not allowable</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <p>3 letters of support – 1 not signed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>N- match period(s) not defined 2 mathematical errors</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Personnel Just – when activities will occur is missing.</p> <p>Milage rate is not mathematically correct ($41,040 * 0.67 = 27,496.80$ not $27,497.47$).</p> <p>Other section not mathematically correct ($\\$2 * 94,224 = 188,448$ not $188,488$).</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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BIDDER NAME: Hall Brook Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>3 match letters provided, although it shows on the letters year 1 is when match will be provided it does not show that on the budget. Letter 3 of 3 only shows ½ of the in-kind match in carrot (produce not allowable) – don't meet match without produce.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N- Budget match is not defined</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Q. Proposed use of truck unallowable.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>18)</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- demonstrated</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- meets critiera</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- clearly articulates

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

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EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- clearly articulates

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>Q- not specifically mentioned</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>Q- lacks detail</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|--------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- clearly demonstrated</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- clearly demonstrated</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q- more details needed

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- provided

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget appears complete and accurate</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Q- could have provided quote details in USDA narrative form Q- question on \$30K from Bold Coast Ecopark</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Smith and Meyer Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Q- minor error on match letter</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>P- appears complete</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>They believe to have an eligible proposed project that specifically solves middle of the supply chain challenges - related to value-added processing, packaging, freezer/cold storage, and refrigerated wholesale distribution to in-state wholesale markets</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>100%</u></p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive. All are stated. Processing packaging improvements. Had to infer.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive. Increasing specialty crop values by incorporating underutilized crops into new products and ingredients with the implementation of the most efficient equipment available.

Investing in co-use cold storage and distribution assets will extend shelf life and increase product value, which in turn creates more employment opportunities, resulting in more money staying local to the underserved Washington County producers and workers.

Having cold storage equipment, refrigerated transport and liquid storage containers allows for diversity in crop usage and will allow for new streams of revenue for Smith & Meyer Farm and our collaborating partner

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Underserved and underrepresented, labeled as stakeholders. No details or names were included.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Positive. Could have provided more detail, and more articulation.</p> |

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Positive. 3 LOS: pub and brewery, Greater East Grand Economic Council, Patty Sansing.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive. Distressed rate in Maine at 80.8, Preserving this Maine heritage industry and heirloom cultivars will have a profound impact on our Washington County community and economy. Bridges that gap with financial gains worthy of preserving the once-vibrant industry.</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Positive. They are ready to make this project happen now, ready to fast track this project and complete by Fall 2024.

Committed to funding and executing the entire project.

This bridge needs to have all its components.

The current Washington County model has been in place for eons, equaling fallow lands, unproductive trees, depressed people, and migrating youth.

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Letter and check mark.

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Some errors in math in the supplies section, equipment section of budget match is not math correct.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive with som issues - Allowable costs issue – truck no direct to consumer functions or using to spread soil amendments such as pomace, dates outside performance period. No timeline for personelle.</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>The truck can not be used for anything else. Positive with some issues - Allowable costs issue – truck no direct to consumer functions or using to spread soil amendments such as pomace Matching funds don't line up.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Negative. Missing project narrative sections, hard to follow, did not check n/a in boxes, environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application is missing details on the degree to which it will add additional channels.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain <i>67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The priorities are not clearly articulated. Modifying existing processing building for production.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Increasing product value of a specialty crop. New product development. New streams of revenue. The application is not clearly articulated.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is mention of serving residents of Washington County, an underserved population. b. There is support from a resident of Washington County. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The proposed project period is not feasible with the timeline of the grant. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application mentions Washington County as a whole.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application partially meets the requirements. More details are needed.b. The proposed timeline would have to be adjusted. This may affect project outcomes due to the seasonality of what is trying to be accomplished.c. The application needs more detail.d. The application needs more detail.e. The application meets the requirements.f. The application meets the requirements. |
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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application meets the stated requirements.
- c. The application meets the stated requirements.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>The application meets all the stated requirements, although the project timeline is not as feasible as requested.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer Farm LLC

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Needs to discuss the level of commitment to the equipment proposed.b. The application meets the requirements of the above equipment is committed. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

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RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P on RFSI App</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <p>😊 Hope for the community.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P – letter provided & box checked

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N-mathematical errors</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N – Mathematical errors:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Supplies Section $\\$645 * 25 = \\$16,125$ they have a different amount</p> <p>Equipment Budget match is short by 2,878.77 on RFSI Budget-Match document</p> <p>Personnel time worked on project omitted</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smith & Meyer

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Verification of Match letter has a mathematical error (\$645 * 25 units = \$16,125). Quote has shipping, budget does not.</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Truck not allowable.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel J. Giguere

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Pass</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Pass</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Pass</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- discusses in RFSI application form</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Q- specific products are not estimated by percentage of Maine products</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- meets priority areas

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- meets priority areas

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>P- owner is new farmer N- does not clearly articulate</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>P- addressed N- lacks details on tasks completed Q Uncertain how vehicle is relates to project</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P-diverse stakeholder buy in</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Q- not sure project clearly demonstrates</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q- status of submitted project documentation makes it difficult to fully evaluate the project.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q- Letter is in multiple locations making this criteria difficult to evaluate

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Q- format of budget submitted is challenging to review. Match rate not included on form</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- lots of detail on the line items</p> |

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel. Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|--|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>P- match appears to be correct. Q- amount and source of match is challenging to interpret from submitted materials.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Q- formatting of proposal is challenging to review</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P “Improved sales markets and opportunities, increasing both consumer choices and profitability. And expanding new markets. |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P Applicant now provides to 7 farms and 13 grocery stores and retail markets. |
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or</p> | |

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BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>need that the project will address).</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency. ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>This project benefits a new producer which is the applicant. Needs more on expanding to more and better markets for Maine syrup products.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle-of-the-supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>6 out of 8 products are 100%. Nuts are not.</p> |
| <p>6) Maine RFSI Priorities</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form</p> | |

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| <p><i>Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">• The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).</p> | <p>Says there are six priorities. But not listed or articulated.</p> |
| <p>7) USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> | <p>Negative. Applicant says there are six plus priorities but only three in the application.</p> |

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| <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.• Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);ii. Workforce/economic impact<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.• Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.• Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises• Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers. | |
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form</p> | |

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| <p><i>Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>“The project benefits a new producer.” Quote from Maine template. Identified but not articulated.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Measure building, constructing, paperwork, and hire 2 more staff. Customer base from 20 to 100.</p> |
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure</p> | |

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| <p>Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Local retailer and City of Auburn letters of support.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>A long list of stakeholders. City of Auburn is key. Bring in folks from all over.</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification</p> | |

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| <p>Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | <p>The building permit is in hand from the city of Auburn.</p> <p>Demonstrated shovel-ready? Included lots of documentation. Researched well.</p> |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <p style="text-align: center;">Letter included and check box is checked.</p> |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets | <p style="text-align: center;">Changed the settings in template.</p> |

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| <p>align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | <p>Positive with issues. Difficult to read and figure out. Not easy to determine and fully evaluate the project. They were instructed to separate.</p> |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the | <p>Positive with issues. Did not prorate delivery truck to only project. 67K of 70K. Match Verification Letter is included. The budget is included. Have not demonstrated match.</p> |

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| <p>format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>All pieces are there but not formatted correctly. Missing env. Prescreening.</p> |

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| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
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| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application is difficult to read. It indicates market impact.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application does not indicate this.</p> |

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6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application states that it meets the priorities but does not list which ones.

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7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The application says it aligns with 6 of the USDA priorities but does not list which ones.

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application states the primary owner of the business is a beginning farmer, and this will benefit him.b. The application is missing details. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application is difficult to understand, the project is adding a new building and van.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Three letters of support are included. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>a. The application is missing details on how this directly addresses a specific gap and listing specific farms, processors and food businesses that will benefit.</p> |

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12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application is missing details. The supporting documents do provide proof of readiness.b. The project dates are allowable.c. More details are needed.d. More clear details are needed.e. This project will achieve operational efficiency.f. The application meets the stated requirements. |
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13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application partially meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application partially meets the requirements.
- c. The application had a form but it was not error free.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The RFSI budget is difficult to read and handwritten.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>b. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> <p>c. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> <p>d. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> <p>e. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The form has errors. Is credit an allowable match?b. The application meets the stated requirements if credit is allowable. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The RFSI match budget was handwritten.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P – 75%</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N –stated 6 but no listed and no description, only 3 available and not even 6

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N –stated 6 but no listed and no description.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>N – he is new but this section is about serving others</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P 2 Letters of support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- will bring in people from all over the state to the community</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

**P- permit in hand, support
from City of Auburn**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letter with box checked

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>I- seems to, hand written copy is difficult to read. Printed copy is on multiple pages, also difficult to read</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N -personnel section on handwritten document (Building permit & ARD listed there in this section) is not mathematically correct.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Daniel Giguere

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N-truck is nearly all of the match</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N – Maine RFSI application is incomplete, no litigation or N/A noted. Project narrative incomplete, Environmental prescreening incomplete. Formatting makes it difficult to review.</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q. It seems that the applicant only describes themselves as underrepresented/underserved. Not sure that is sufficient.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Q. Section seems incomplete.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Q. Really stakeholders question</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q. The applicant requested a 25% Match as a Beginning Farmer. However, in the budget, a 50% match is used. The proposed match is more than the 25% but less than 50%.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- eligible project Q- narrative does not specify potential for market impact</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- meets criteria</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- meets criteria

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q- alignment with a.i. and a iii are unclear

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q- not addressed in narrative</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Q- not addressed in narrative</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Q- not seeing details on this section</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Q- vague evidence of community impact</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N- the project narrative is lacking in detail about financial viability and technical feasibility

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q-previous experience with proposed work is unclear.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Q- required match rate is incorrect</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- form is complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Q-unclear why personnel costs are not listed as an inkind match instead of cash for equipment</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>P- forms and documents generally in order, with incorrect match rate noted.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Positive.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>100% Maine grown, harvested and produced.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Multiple priority alignment. On farm improvement, equipment to help with processing, will increase the value of the product, improve cold storage, packaging, and labeling and distribution efforts. All will make food safe.

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Will facilitate future growth into value-added products. The tumbler, and grader washer will increase economic impact. Will hire one season employee to join the team. Adding fair-wage job opportunities is a responsibility.

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Negative. Not described. Distress index of 57.4 which is moderate.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Need to look at other sections. Interesting: "We report our annual landings every month as required by the Dept of Marine Resources.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Overall, LOS include Greenhead Lobster in Stonington, Oyster shipper in Stonington. Letters not very detailed.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Working waterfront. The lobster industry transitioning, reasonable to believe catch volume will decrease as the water warms. Diversify fisheries.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Negative. Only a few sentences in the narrative. Would love to have more information esp on industry numbers on Deer Island.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Applicant owns land?

Waiting on approval on a larger lease site from the Department of Marine Resources.
The letter included and refers to the budget template.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Budget error with required match rate.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. Stays within the timeline.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Positive but not picked the correct drop down. Match Verification Letter is included. Budget is included. Allowable and will provide the cash. This is a smaller project of 110K.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Environmental prescreen, narrative, litigation, debarment, cover page. Had a few missing items.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>a. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application meets the requirements at 100%.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Infrastructure improvements and the improvement of cold storage. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Increase workforce, economic impact and new streams of revenue are listed, the application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">The application is missing the required details.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Details are missing in the Maine RFSI narrative.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application has two letters of support. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. Question on what the plan will be if there are struggles with contractors and how much longer it will take them to clear the wood on their property for the project.
- b. The proposed start date is not allowable. Further detail is needed on the feasibility of the project within the dates proposed.
- c. The application lacks detail.
- d. The application lacks detail.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the requirements.
- b. The application meets the requirements.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>a. The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>d. Not every item had detail behind the use of it, but the items were detailed thoroughly.</p> <p>e. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oysters, LLC

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>N – I didn't see this in the narrative</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3 Letters of Support and description of support in application</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Total Budget costs column = Requested and not requested + Match</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Total Budget costs column = Requested and not requested + Match</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Fish Creek Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Section 9 on Narr Summary not completed.</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Q, not clearly demonstrated</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Q, not clearly demonstrated</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q, not clearly demonstrated.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Q, some math errors</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed, LLC

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- articulates project</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>N-assumed but not specifically called out in section within project narrative</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- clearly articulates

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- clearly articulates

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>N- mentions but does not clearly articulate</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Q- generally addressed but did not follow format to allow full understanding</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>N- no section in Maine RFSI proposal narrative. no specific mention of customers included in USDA application no letters of support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>N- not mentioned in narratives in either application</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N- project start date incorrect. Other planning information (quotes etc) not included.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letter included. Diagrams included were helpful

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budgets appear complete and correct</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N- no quotes provided</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>P- match letter included</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>P- application appears complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | P Expanding, modernizing, enhancing, developing |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Explained LPA licenses: Limited purpose aquaculture. 500% increase in ten years.</p> <p>Whole Leaf has a limited market. Milled can produce flakes and powders.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>100% Maine-farmed seaweeds at this facility.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive.
All the Maine priorities. Identified.
Support processing and packaging improvement including wet and dry milling, invest in distribution.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities

i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency

- Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
- Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);

ii. Workforce/economic impact

- Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
- Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;

iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure

- Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
- Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
- Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Positive.
All three are listed.
Expand value-added product capacity jobs, diversity in processing infrastructure and more and better market opportunities.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Washington and Hancock 57 and 93 Distress Scores.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Positive. Outcomes 2 and 3: Listed in the USDA application, N/A boxes are checked as appropriate. Activities and Outcomes in Maine section has good language.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>In organizational mission and background: wide range of services, providing milling service to other farmers and seaweed companies, to over 30 other companies in the past five years, providing essential services to the industry.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Did not include a dedicated section to Stakeholder, Community Impact Project Viability.</p> <p>Some language in the External Project Support section.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

In the USDA portion, Construction Justification had a good list of 1-7 activities. No construction or design documents. But does have a map and photos.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive. Letter and box checked.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Math errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Positive. But don't have a match type in equipment or construction. Packaging materials are unallowable but a small amount. Still, enough match if removed. No personelle timeline.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">There are math errors in the letter.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;">Some issues – start date and formatting.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Developing a seaweed processing facility through this project will further the processing of fresh and dried crops, aggregation, and marketing of seaweed.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>The information was not in the correct section, but it was mentioned.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Investment in facility infrastructure improvements to support processing and packaging improvements. This includes wet and dry milling—distribution improvements for more efficient shipping and delivery.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The project expands value-added product capacity and resiliency by expanding new and existing pre-treatment and milling capabilities.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A, Mention of beginning farmers, women farmers, and disadvantaged areas. b. The application is missing details. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Performance measures are missing from the description. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application is missing details.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application does not mention specific farms. The application is missing details.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. More detail is preferred, but the application mostly meets the requirements.
- b. The start date is earlier than what is allowable.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application partially meets the stated requirements; there is no mention of viability after RFSI funding.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements.
- f. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

All requirements met for this category.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>All requirements met.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed LLC

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the stated requirements.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The Maine RFSI narrative was not in the correct order. Earlier than allowable start date on the USDA template.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Listed but not explained how

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Listed but not explained how

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">N missing from narrative</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N No explanation 0 Letters of support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P
**Box checked and letter is
signed**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not mathematically correct</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Not mathematically correct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total Direct costs is incorrect, 208,000 + 49200 = \$257,200 Not \$237,200 on budget</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total project costs = \$278,000 Not \$258,000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Personnel – not defined when work will be completed.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Springtide Seaweed

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not mathematically correct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not enough match if remove personnel and disposable supplies (not allowable)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Indirect costs on letter add up to \$68,800 not \$70,000</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Portions of Maine form are missing</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | Q |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Q, another federal funding program is involved.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/9/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Q, issue with another federal funding program. Project seems complete in year one but match provided during operations afterwards.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Q.</p> |
| <p>18)</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Q- need clarification on entity status</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Q- missing details here.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P- met criteria</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

P- mentioned, but only in context of farm operational context

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P- briefly mentioned

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">N- not clearly articulated</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q- lacks details to fully understand project</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- well documented in LOS. N- mentioned but not addressed</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>N- mentioned but not addressed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q- lacking some details to fully understand implementation timeline. Specifics on costs of equipment to be purchased.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letter complete

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget appears complete and correct</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- budget appears correct. Q- Personnel match costs not fully justified</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Creamery

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>P- match worksheet is complete but extends into year 2 and 3, so unclear of alignment with project timeline.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>N- Maine RFSI forms not signed. Word docs not submitted in PDF format. Missing signatures on critical infrastructure and match verification</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>P Ag producer</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>P Many Project Purchases are checked. Value-added organic dairy products.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>P Expansion and Modernization of Creamery.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Vague, not articulated. The executive summary did not include general tasks and activities to be completed.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>100% Maine</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Positive.
On-farm improvements.
Support processing and packaging.
Support storage and distribution.
Stakeholder support.
Improve challenges.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Value-added product capacity and resiliency.
Workforce impact.
Diversity of processing infrastructure.
More and better.

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RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>Negative. The applicant states there will not be a benefit. Checks directly benefits 7. Directly benefits Veteran Producer.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>On-farm production of value-added organic dairy products.</p> <p>Delivery of value-added organic dairy products to local schools and businesses.</p> |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>LOS from the Food Services Director fo MSAD 27, Burger Boy.</p> <p>Needed more in external project support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Needed more. Notes some but needs more and more articulation. Industry is in trouble, will serve several economically disadvantage communities and school districts.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Needs more. Vague.
The applicant states markets are in place, they have experienced dairy operation and business people, and they are ready.
Lacking more details and project planning and readiness.

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Positive. The letter included and box-checked. But not signed.

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Mathematically correct. Budget summary on template error.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Unable to determine if compliant. Due to the indication checking box for other federal or state funding.</p> <p>No timeline on personelle justification. No acquisition dates for equipment. No design or contract documents.</p> <p>Year 2 and 3 personnel are operations and not project.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p>Letter included. But unable to determine if matching is related to the other awards. Year 2 and 3 operating and not project specific.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>Missing signatures.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application does not specify the entity type in entirety.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The project does not propose in the middle of the supply chain activities.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The project does not propose middle of the supply chain activities.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The lack of a stable market for raw organic milk is not a middle-of-the-supply chain activity.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application meets the stated requirements.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Value-added organic dairy production is mentioned. All USDA priorities are mentioned but more detail is needed on how the project activities will address the priorities.

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Economically disadvantaged schools and communities are mentioned. b. Specific names are not given, broadly Aroostook County and the school districts within the county. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The delivery to the consumer may not be allowable. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application is missing details.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application is missing details.</p> |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. More details are needed.
- b. The start date is unallowable.
- c. More details are needed on project planning and readiness to implement.
- d. The application is missing details on how the business will be viable once RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

The application meets the requirements.

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The application states there is federal funding but it is not clear if federal funding is part of the proposed expenses.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Need more information on the personnel listed and the specific project activities.</p> |

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Personnel are listed, and the degree to which they will be involved in the project versus operations is questionable.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Multiple formatting issues and the project start date is earlier than allowable.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Project start date 2014??</p> <p>Received funding from School Food Innovation Grant</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>Q – see above</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>Stated but not described as to how</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">Stated but not described as to how</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P 100%</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Stated not described</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>No checkmarks in N/A boxes but 0 in expected numbers. Listed not described</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Listed not described</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">2 letters of support</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N – not enough information

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

**P
Box checked on letter**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Mathematically correct</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Mathematically correct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Personnel listed under Construction and Other on USDA template instead of personnel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Personnel titles/time line omitted</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Match in years 2 & 3 – operating expenses and not project related?</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Dairy

DATE: 5/09/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q - Received funding from School Food Innovation Grant, can we score?</p> <p>Budget shows personnel match at \$259,750 letter shows \$172,500.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Cover letter not signed Letters not signed</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q. No Maine Application Submitted</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q. No Maine Application Submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q. No Maine Application Submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Q. Identified but not articulated</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q. Not submitted.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q. Not sure that proposed match is eligible.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Q. Elements of application not submitted.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Rosemont Market**

DATE: **5/05/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Q- equipment needs do not have a specific benefit to Maine produced foods, only to the business to reduce costs to encourage consumer uptake.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- included in USDA form N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- included in USDA form N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- included in USDA form N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- included in USDA form
N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials
N- no letter of critical infrastructure included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

N- no letter of critical infrastructure included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget appears accurate and complete</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- included in USDA form N- Maine RSFI narrative is not included in application materials to compare to Project Objectives and expected outcomes</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">P- form included and is complete</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;">N- application incomplete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>For profit. Interesting history lesson about Somerset County. Demand for 160K pounds of Maine flour.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Maine RFSI not submitted.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Maine RFSI not submitted.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Maine RFSI not submitted.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Maine RFSI not submitted. Stone ground medium grind cornmeal from Liberation Farms. Rusted Rooster, implied woman owned but not a category.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Maine RFSI not submitted. But some information in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>LOS from Maine Grain Alliance, Maine Grains. 45 beneficiaries and underserved farmers and ranchers is checked.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>This was pretty thorough. Positive.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Could use more information. Missing letter of evidence of critical resources and infrastructure.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Negative. Not submitted.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Negative. Did not include Maine RFSI template.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>No errors. But missing some justification.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Positive and questioning. Match Verification Letter is included and covers three years, all match is in-kind staffing for salaries and wages. A portion of their match is business operation instead of project.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Missing Maine RFSI part. Edited templates.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Need verification that the business checks small business.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain <i>67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The project is to replace current ingredients with 100% Maine Grains.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application meets the requirement. The project supports value added processing improvements. Maine RFSI narrative form is missing.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The application is missing details. The project aligns with expanding value-added product capacity and resiliency.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application is missing the RFSI application form. The project is supporting several listed underserved farmers. b. A women owned business has demonstrated involvement with a letter of support. |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application is missing details. b. The application meets the requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>A. The application is missing details on how community impact will be achieved through the project. There are letters of support but from those involved in the project.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application is missing details.
- b. The application has a start date that is not allowable.
- c. The application is missing details.
- d. The application meets the requirements.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application is missing details.b. The application is missing details.c. The application is missing the Critical Infrastructure Form.d. The application does not have any examples of critical infrastructure already in place. |
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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>a. The application is missing details on how the proposed project activities align with the budget.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets requirements.</p> <p>b. The application is missing details.</p> <p>C. The application meets the requirements.</p> <p>d. The application is missing details.</p> <p>e. The application is missing details.</p> <p>f. The application meets requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market, Inc.

DATE: 5/05/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the requirements.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Maine RFSI project narrative form is missing. Critical Infrastructure form is missing.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N – form not submitted They did but not on correct form.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N – form not submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N – form not submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">N – form not submitted</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

**Maine App is missing, not
enough info.
2 Letters of Support**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

N – letter missing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p><u>When personnel perform duties missing from justification.</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Rosemont Market

DATE: 5/02/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N – baker is operational beyond project end life...match is short.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N</u></p> <p><u>Missed a check box (2.8) on the RFSI App</u></p> <p><u>Maine App missing</u></p> <p><u>When personnel will perform duties missing from justification.</u></p> <p><u>Critical Infrastructure letter missing</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Q, Maine Application not submitted.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q, Maine application not submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Q, Budget not submitted?</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- addresses market impact, limited articulation</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>N- Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative not included</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N- Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative not included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N- Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative not included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>N- Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative not included</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- addressed in USDA proposal template N- Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative not included</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P- addressed in USDA template but not clearly demonstrated</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- addressed in USDA template but not clearly demonstrated</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- addressed in USDA proposal template
N- see contractual section for item that should have been included in equipment
N- Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative not included
RFSI budget match worksheet not included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q- Evidence letters provided do not adhere to USDA format and guidelines

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- addressed in USDA proposal template N- Maine RFSI Budget match worksheet not included</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- addressed in USDA proposal template N- see contractual section for item that should have been included in equipment N- Maine RFSI Budget match worksheet not included</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Associatoni

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>N- Match amounts are unclear as RFSI budget match worksheet is not included</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>N- application incomplete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>P Ag producer and not for profit.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Permanent cold storage, wash pack and cold storage infrastructure at Hurricane Valley, and install solar panels at Liberation Farms.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Probably, inferred.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Did not include a Maine RFSI Application Form.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Did not include a Maine RFSI Application Form.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Did not include a Maine RFSI Application Form.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">Did not include a Maine RFSI Application Form. but some in the Usda template</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Cultivating Community ex dir and board president. Maine Community Foundation.</p> <p>Supported by organizations and institutions that purchase culturally relevant produce. Maine Medical Center Food Pantry, Preble Street Resource Center, and Portland Public Schools.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Did not include a Maine RFSI Application Form. Some numbers are included but little documentation. Not shovel-ready.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Applicant had letters but not from the Hurricane Farm owner. Essential phrasing was removed from forms/letters.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Some categories are misaligned. Math error in supplies category. No match worksheet included.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Some errors are within budget (multiple). Solar and heat pumps are more operations and not project expenses.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: SBCA

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>No match worksheet included. Applied for the 25% match.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Did not include a Maine RFSI Application Form</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements by increased market development, increasing processing capacity, and aggregation of produce.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>The Maine RFSI application form is missing.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The Maine RFSI application form is missing.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The Maine RFSI application form is missing.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">The Maine RFSI application form is missing.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Maine RFSI application is missing. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements. Specific organizations that will benefit are listed.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements. Specific organizations that will benefit are listed. Letters of support are not in the application.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application is missing information.
- b. The application has an earlier-than-allowable date and is missing information.
- c. The application is missing information.
- d. The application is missing information.
- e. The application is missing information.
- f. The application partially meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application meets the stated requirements.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>a. The RFSI Budget Match worksheet is missing from the application. The budget is difficult to read due to formatting.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>b. The application partially meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>c. The budget is difficult to read and information is missing.</p> <p>d. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> <p>e. The application is missing information.</p> <p>f. The application partially meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Association

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Budget Match Worksheet is missing from the application.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The Maine RFSI narrative form is missing and the Budget Match worksheet is missing from the application. The formatting made the application difficult to read and understand.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N – Maine App missing and on USDA it is not specifically stated but the project does. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>N – Maine App missing and on USDA it is not specifically stated but the project does.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p><u>N – form is missing</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N – form is missing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N- form is missing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">N – form is missing</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">N – Maine form is missing P – USDA form this is demonstrated</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>N- Maine Form is missing</p> <p>P – USDA form lists many entities that will receive support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>N – Maine Form missing</p> <p>No letters of support but list.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

**N- Maine form Missing
USDA form has 3 sections
with expected numbers**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

2 letters attached but neither has the mandatory box to be checked.

No documentation to support

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>N- No budget match worksheet Items in personnel and Fringe that don't belong there and not included in summary. Supplies not mathematically correct</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N- No budget match worksheet Items in personnel and Fringe that don't belong there and not included in summary. Supplies not mathematically correct (Unit cost \$4100, they only need one but they are showing a match value of \$4250) - request is too high or cost is inaccurate. Construction - \$72,900 in cost justification, requesting \$72,900 but showing match of \$25,000 - request is too high or cost is inaccurate. Utility trailer listed in justification but not included in budget line above. Under contractual/consultant they have purchasing a cut-greens washer listed. Other – Trailer rental cost is \$1000 per month, they are requesting \$1000 (assuming per month) and matching \$250 month – request is too high or monthly cost is inaccurate.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Somali Bantu Community Assoc

DATE: 5/0272024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p><u>3 match letters provided</u></p> <p><u>N – budget match worksheet not provided</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p><u>N – Maine App missing</u> <u>Budget Worksheet missing</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q. Maine RFSI Form not submitted.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N. No application submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Q. Maine Application not submitted</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Q. Maine Application not submitted</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q. Maine Application Not Submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q. Form not submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q. Not sure proposed match is eligible.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Q. Items not submitted</p> |
| <p>18)</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongs Wild Blueberries**

DATE: **5/07/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Unclear in USDA form</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Pass</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongus Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>P- Addressed with pilot of new technology</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>N- Maine RSFI form not included in application</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongs Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N- Maine RSFI application not included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongus Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N- not included in RFSI application

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongus Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>N- RSFI application not included</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- included in USDA form</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongus Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>N- RSFI application not included</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- potential for community impact N- RSFI application not included</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongus Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P- project has capacity to increase viability
N- RFSI application not included
Q- budget difficult to understand given the formatting issues
Q-uncertain of ongoing technical assistance/maintenance with equipment

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongus Wild Blueberries**

DATE: **5/07/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letters provided

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongs Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>P- budget appears mathematically correct Q-formatting issues on budget create some challenges for understanding</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>P- sections appear complete Q-formatting issues on budget create some challenges for understanding</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescongs Wild Blueberries**

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Q-blueberries included in match</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>N- missing Maine RSFI application</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Did not submit a Maine RFSI application portion</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Positive</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Positive but did not submit a Maine RFSI application portion</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Did not submit a Maine RFSI application portion

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Did not submit a Maine RFSI application portion

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>Did not submit a Maine RFSI application portion</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Not a good description but did identify.</p> |

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>LOS from Sen. Moore. Blue Sky business. Need more information on external support.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Positive but could use much more information. Include more regional blueberry farmers and other community stakeholders Did not submit Maine RFSI narrative.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Shovel ready? Would have liked to see them partner with more resources to help the business such as U of ME extension. Did not demo capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

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DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Negative. No evidence of critical infrastructure. Demo exp?

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EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Diff to read, too diff to evaluate. Budget match worksheet is difficult to read. Not good with total project cost.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Budget formatting and changed the headings. Can't use blueberries as a match. Unclear, personnel does not give a timeline. Travel is for education not the middle of the supply chain. Budget and video production could be promotional and not the middle of the supply chain.</p> |

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Negative. Consulting services match for ed video is not allowable. Discount is in cash but should be in kind.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Did not submit a Maine RFSI application portion</p> |

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RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
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| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>More information is needed on whether or not this entity is eligible.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

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DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact on increasing Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g., processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application meets the stated requirements in the USDA template.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain <i>67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application does not specifically state this but wild blueberries are only grown in Maine.</p> |

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The Maine RFSI Application Form is missing.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The Maine RFSI Application Form is missing.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>The Maine RFSI application form is missing.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application is missing details on performance measures.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements. The application included two letters of support.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application states that Washington County will benefit but is missing details on how this will be accomplished.</p> |

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EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application lacks detail.b. The beginning date is not allowable.c. The application meets the stated requirements.d. The application is missing details on how the business will be viable after RFSI funding.e. The application meets the stated requirements.f. The application meets the stated requirements. |
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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application meets the stated requirements.b. The application meets the stated requirements.c. The application meets the requirements, although there is a question of whether blueberries are an allowable cost.d. The application meets the stated requirements. Same question as above. |
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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>a. The budget was difficult to read, RFSI budget match worksheet. The USDA budget meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>b. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>c. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>d. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>e. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>f. The application meets the stated requirements.</p> <p>The RFSI budget match worksheet was difficult to read.</p> |

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>A. The match letter was not high enough, at \$1000. It is unclear where the rest of the money will be committed.</p> <p>b. The application lacks details.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The RFSI narrative form was missing. The format of the budget made it impossible to read.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Wescogus Wild Blueberry**

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>Q – does the \$35k discount count towards the match?</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>No Maine App</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>No Maine App</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">No Maine App</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>P – 100%</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

No Maine App

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

No Maine App

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|-----------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>P</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>N form missing</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>N form missing</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>List only no description of how they would be supported.</p> <p>2 Letters of support</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

**Maine form missing – not
enough information to
determine.**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

No check box and not signed

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>N - Total Project costs column is not mathematically correct.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N - Total Project costs column is not mathematically correct.</p> <p>Blueberries not allowable for match</p> <p>When employees will provide service is not outlined in the Personnel section.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Wescogus Wild Blueberry

DATE: 5/06/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p><u>N – check box section is missing, once removing unallowable blueberries, they don't make match requirement.</u></p> <p><u>Indirect costs in both match and requested column on USDA app, can't be both.</u></p> <p>Q – does the \$35k discount count towards the match?</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p><u>N – Maine App is missing</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Q.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>P.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Q.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters Co.

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q.</p> |
| | |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Blackstone Point Oyster Company**

DATE: **5/03/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Appears to be a PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain <i>67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i.** Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii.** Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii.** Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Blackstone Point Oyster Company**

DATE: **5/03/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p>N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p>P- USDA form is completed for this N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |
| <p>12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form</p> | <p>P- USDA form is completed for this N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness. b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027). c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project. d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended. e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management. f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact. | |
| <p>13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or</i></p> | <p>P- applicant has letter Q- does not mention the ownership arrangements of the newly acquired building.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p><i>documents submitted with the Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships. b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place. c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project. | |
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application budget section is thoroughly | <p>P- budget appears complete and accurate</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived. c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile. d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project. e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes. f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives. | <p>P- USDA form is completed for this N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the | <p>P- form appears complete</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/03/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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| <p>format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p>N- Maine RFSI application form narrative was not included in the review materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

p

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>OK but not very clear.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>Does not say.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

Negative.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Negative.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>The applicant checked New and beginning farmers and ranchers on page 4 of the USDA application. Number: 10. Distressed Communities for Lincoln County score of 24.9</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>Vague.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Negative. And no Letters of Support.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>Describes some support in the template but missed it in the narrative section. No letters either. But they do mention wanting to buy from other farms.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Is this shovel ready?

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Articulated but not described.
Evidence letter was included.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Calculation errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Errors. Negative.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oysters

DATE: 5/6/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>Multiple errors in calculation. Match verification letter included.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>Cover page, litigation Environmental prescreen, debarment included.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The proposed start date is too early which may affect the end date of the project.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The Maine RFSI application form narrative is missing. The USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal template meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The Maine RFSI application form narrative is missing. The application partially meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p>The application does not clearly state this information.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application is missing the Maine RFSI application form project narrative section.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The details on the USDA template most closely align with “safe job opportunities” with the objective descriptions. It is stated that there will be “safe and comfortable working conditions”.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>The Maine RFSI application form projective narrative section is missing from the application.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The application is missing the Maine RFSI application form project narrative section. b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application is missing the Maine RFSI application form project narrative section.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application is missing the Maine RFSI application form project narrative section. External support is described in the USDA template. There are no letters of support.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application is missing the Maine RFSI application form project narrative section. Missing information.
- b. The proposed activities cannot start as soon as the July start date in the application which may affect the end date of the project.
- c. The application is missing information.
- d. The application is missing information.
- e. The application meets the requirements.
- f. The application meets the requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application is missing information.
- b. The application partially meets the requirements.
- c. The application meets the requirements.
- d. The application is missing information.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>The application meets the requirement.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>A. The application meets the requirement.</p> <p>b. The application is missing information.</p> <p>c. The application meets the requirement.</p> <p>d. The application is missing information.</p> <p>e. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> <p>f. The application partially meets the requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster Company

DATE: 5/3/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The match verification letter is partially filled out. It is unclear of the breakdown of the matching funds.b. The application meets the requirements. |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p>* <i>Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The application is missing the Maine RFSI application form project narrative section.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | P |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | N – no document provided (Proj Narrative) |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Assuming 100%</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">0 Letters of Support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

P

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

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**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

14) Budget Completeness

*** Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.**

- a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.

N .
– Budget worksheet – equipment math is incorrect.
Match is not negative.

| Equipment | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----|-----------|
| Walk-in Cold Storage Cooler | Leer Walk-In Cooler (8'6" x 15'3" x 7'6" Indoor Remote w All Stainless Steel Floor | \$ | 17,433.75 |
| Industrial Ice Maker | Mantowoc IDT1500A Indigo NXT 48" Air Cooled Cube Ice Machine with Bin | \$ | 6,479.25 |
| Heat Pump | Mitsubishi Wall Mounted 2-Zone System - 60,000 BTU | \$ | 7,260.00 |
| Loading Dock Ramp | Edge-of Dock Leveler FM-2072 | \$ | 1,461.75 |
| Garage Door 10x10 | Insulated Heavy Duty Commercial 22 Gauge Steel Roll Up Door | \$ | 3,337.50 |
| Electric Pallet Jack | ApolloLift Electric Stackle Stacker with 95" Lift and 3300 lb Cap Pallet Stacker - A-3022 | \$ | 4,827.00 |
| Equipment Total | | \$ | 31,179.00 |

This totals \$40,805.25

Total Equipment Budget should be \$51,198.25

Equipment match totals \$13601.75 not \$10,393.

Requested Equip total + Match total does not = Total Costs.
Direct cost subtotals do not add up to total cost

15) Budget Narrative and Justification

*** Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.**

- a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the [USDA General Terms and Conditions](#)
- b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.
- c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.
- d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.
- e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.
- f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between

N
– Budget worksheet – equipment math is incorrect.
Match is not negative.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Blackstone Point Oyster

DATE: 5/04/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award. b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The letter matches the budget which is not mathematically correct.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N-missed signing form - Litigation form blank On RFSI Application – section A incomplete (location of property)</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | Q, Maine form not submitted |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | Q, Maine Form not submitted |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | Q |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | P |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | P |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N, Maine form not submitted

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Q

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/8/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Andrew Kendall

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>N, Maine form not submitted</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PASS</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>N- Maine RSFI proposal not included in materials</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% <i>or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>N- Maine RSFI proposal not included in materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N- Maine RFSI proposal not included in materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N- Maine RFSI proposal not included in materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners. b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>N- Maine RSFI proposal not included in materials</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>P- USDA form is completed N- Maine RSFI proposal not included in materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>N- Maine RSFI proposal not included in materials Q- no specific mention of customers included</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>P- mentioned, not clearly demonstrated N- Maine RSFI proposal not included in materials</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Ellen Maling**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N- Maine RFSI proposal not included in materials

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P- letter included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>N- budget is very disorganized</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>N- no quotes provided</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Ellen Maling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Economic and Community Development

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|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>N-match verification letter incomplete. Justification is difficult to understand.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>N- did not follow RFA guidelines</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant.</p> | <p>Ag producer, talk about themselves instead. Not very articulate on market impact,</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain <i>67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>No Maine RFSI Application.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

No Maine RFSI Application.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

**** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a.** The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i.** Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii.** Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii.** Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

No Maine RFSI Application.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>No Maine RFSI Application.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <p>No Maine RFSI Application. Some identified but little demonstration or articulation</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>Low, architect letter not the best but blueberry one rates high.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>This section is light.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: **5/7/2024**

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

Shovel ready? Says they will be ready to hire two people. Any estimate paperwork?

No capacity to report outcome and indicator – no narrative included.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

Letter is signed but not checked
box

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: **Smithereen Farm**

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: **Gus Nelson**

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|---|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>Negative. Math error and no match listed. Error on match worksheet, not submit any matching funds. They were filled out incorrectly. Some parts did not reconcile. Multiple errors.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>Equipment costs can't be justified. The personnel section has 100% which is not allowable. No timeline for personelle. No timeline for the contract but there is justification. Some calcuatoiron erros. Crane's use is confusing. Indirect is calculated wrong.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/7/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Gus Nelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p style="text-align: center;">Incomplete budget match.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p style="text-align: center;">No Maine RFSI Application.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>The application meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|--|---|
| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>The application needs more specific details.</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain <i>67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</i></p> | <p>The application is missing details.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** *Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.***

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

The application is missing details.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

The application is missing details.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application. | <p>The application is missing details.</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The application is missing details.b. The application meets the stated requirements. |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p>The application partially meets the stated requirements.</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p>The application partially meets the stated requirements.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

- a. The application partially meets the requirements.
- b. The proposed timeline doesn't go into specifics but is allowable.
- c. The application partially meets the requirements.
- d. The application is missing details.
- e. The application meets the stated requirements with hiring new employees.
- f. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

- a. The application meets the stated requirements.
- b. The application meets the stated requirements.
- c. The form is not error-free.
- d. The application meets the stated requirements.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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|---|--|
| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>If the project activities are within one year the budget was complete, if they aren't, which is what is stated in another place, the budget needs more detail. The match calculation was incorrect.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes and objectives.</p> | <p>The application had multiple errors.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farms

DATE: 5/08/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jane Kirsling

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project. | <p>A. The match calculation was incorrect. The application is missing details.</p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA. | <p>The Maine RFSI Narrative Form is missing.</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

| <u>Scoring Criteria</u> | <u>Individual Evaluator Comments</u> |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Eligible Entity <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant is an eligible entity as described in Part 1 Section C of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> <p>Project name is longer than 15 words</p> |
| <p>2) Eligible Project Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes an eligible Project that meets the Project definition and terms as described in Part 2 Section A of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |
| <p>3) Middle of the Supply Chain Activities Proposed <i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template.</i></p> <p>a. The Application describes a Project that is based on allowable middle of the supply chain activities as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA.</p> | <p>P</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>4) Market impact to increase Maine’s middle of the supply chain capacity (specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address).</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Specific Issue, Problem, or Need that this Project will Address section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates market impact and articulates how the Project is designed to solve challenges and increase middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency (e.g. processing, aggregation, and distribution) of Maine-produced agricultural food and beverage products in the state or region and contribute to more and better markets for the targeted agricultural products of farmers and ranchers in the state. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the degree to which the Project proposes to solve challenges in Maine’s food system by increasing, or improving, middle of the supply chain capacity and resiliency.ii. The degree to which the Project adds additional, or improved, sales channels for the Applicant. | <p>Per the USDA form but no explanation as to how.</p> <p>Maine form is missing</p> |
| <p>5) The Project funded foods contain 67% or more Maine grown, harvested, or produced ingredients.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. Priority points will be granted to Project Applications for middle of the supply chain activities where the funded foods contain 67% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in Maine by weight or volume. Water is excluded from this requirement.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N</u></p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

6) Maine RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the Maine RFSI Infrastructure Grant priority areas.
 - i. Projects that will achieve on-farm facility infrastructure improvements (including expansion and modifications to existing buildings and/or construction of new buildings at existing facilities) to resolve middle-of-the-food-supply chain challenges.
 - The on-farm facilities to receive upgrades, repairs, or reconfigurations must be facilities that enhance middle-of-the-food-supply chain activities and not production-related activities.
 - ii. Projects that support processing and packaging improvements (including value-added processing, hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation, co-packing and packaging investments, and processing, canning, and preserving as an area most in need of investment, drying, hulling, shelling, milling, cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, and fermenting).
 - iii. Projects that support storage and distribution improvements (including cold storage, aggregator warehouse and storage space, and delivery and distribution investments).

N
Form missing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

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BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

7) USDA RFSI Priorities

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.**

- a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will address one or more of the USDA RFSI Priorities
- i. Expand value-added product capacity and resiliency
 - Projects that support the development of value-added products available to consumers.
 - Focus on small and medium-sized enterprises that add options and choices for consumers and producers (emphasis on value-added);
 - ii. Workforce/economic impact
 - Projects that support proposals that provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities.
 - Projects that offer family-supporting job quality and treatment/safety of workers;
 - iii. Diversity of processing infrastructure
 - Projects that increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography, and availability to underserved communities.
 - Applications that are submitted by cooperatives, farmer- and worker-owned enterprises
 - Projects that offer more and better market opportunities and new streams of revenue to small and mid-sized agricultural producers, including those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

N – form is missing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>8) Benefit to Underserved or Underrepresented food producers.</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section.</i></p> <p>a. The Application clearly articulates how the Project will directly benefit underserved farmers and ranchers, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran producers, or processors or other middle-of-the-supply chain businesses owned by socially disadvantaged individuals including Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Producer Partners.</p> <p>b. For projects intending to serve these entities, the Applicant has demonstrated involvement of those beneficiaries when developing the proposed Projects and Application.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Form is missing</p> |
| <p>9) Expected Performance Measures</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template Expected Performance Measures Section.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant thoroughly articulated the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures. The Applicant provided a description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill the Project's purpose, deliverables, expected outcomes, and performance measures.</p> <p>b. The Applicant must identify at least one of the predetermined indicators listed under Outcome 2: Capacity in the middle of the supply chain for local/regional food products OR Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors. The Applicant must provide quantifiable expected outcomes (expected numbers) based on the Project's projects scope of work.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Some numbers filled in – not thoroughly articulated</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>10) Stakeholder Support</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates stakeholder support for the Project. Successful applicants will effectively demonstrate community impact and support. Applicants must describe the stakeholders that support the need for the Project and why (other than the Applicant and organizations involved in the project). Up to three letters of support are encouraged and may be assigned points.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N Not enough information to Determine on application</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 Letters of support</p> |
| <p>11) Community Impact</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template External Project Support Section and any submitted letters of support.</p> <p>a. The Application clearly demonstrates community impact including labor and workforce considerations.</p> <p>i. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project directly addresses a specific gap or barrier within Maine’s local and regional food supply chain.</p> <p>ii. The Application articulates the specific farms, processors, food businesses and community stakeholders the Project will benefit.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N Not enough information to Determine</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

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DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

12) Project Viability, Feasibility, and Readiness

*** Demonstrated in the Maine RFSI Application Form Project Narrative section and the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template, submitted letters of support, the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet, Match Verification Letters, Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter, and any documents submitted with the Application.**

- a. The Application demonstrates the Applicant and Project's financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness.
- b. The Project description of activities and purpose is clear, reasonable, and achievable by the proposed Project end date (no later than May 24, 2027).
- c. The Applicant has demonstrated a sufficient state of planning and readiness to implement the proposed Project.
- d. The Project will improve the Applicant's business resiliency and will create opportunities to build upon these efforts after the Project is completed. The Applicant has demonstrated reasonable assurances that the entity will viable and economically sustainable after RFSI funding has ended.
- e. The specific Project outcomes will increase the viability of the Applicant entity's infrastructure such as: workforce capability, workforce safety, operational efficiency, food safety, waste, or wastewater management.
- f. The Applicant has demonstrated the capacity to report outcomes and indicators to demonstrate investment impact.

N
Not enough information to
Determine

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFPA TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

13) Evidence of Critical Infrastructure

**** Demonstrated in the Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Letter and supported by any forms and/or documents submitted with the Application.***

- a. The Applicant has demonstrated experience with the proposed work, including past Projects and/or appropriate staff/business relationships.
- b. The Application provides evidence that the critical resources and infrastructure that are necessary for the proposed Project to be successful are in place.
- c. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Evidence of Critical Infrastructure Form that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA.
- d. Applicants must submit evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a Project are in place. Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other essential resources for the proposed project activities. Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission. The Form must indicate the critical resources necessary for initiating and completing the project and certify that they are in place and committed prior to the start date of the Project.

P – letter is signed and includes paragraph

**STATE OF MAINE
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EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| <p>14) Budget Completeness</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application budget section is thoroughly complete and mathematically correct. The budgets align with the budget narrative and the proposed Project activities.</p> | <p>N – no match listed in the match column, all funds listed in Requested column</p> <p>Direct costs \$500 variance from requested to total column</p> <p>Match calculator is not correct – 50% of \$632,580.65 = \$316,290.33 not \$62,500.</p> |
| <p>15) Budget Narrative and Justification</p> <p>* Demonstrated in the USDA Infrastructure Grant Proposal Template budget sections and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</p> <p>a. The Application demonstrates compliance with allowable costs as described in Part 2 Section D of this RFA and the USDA General Terms and Conditions</p> <p>b. The budget clearly demonstrates the total cost for the Project and articulate how category costs listed in the budget are derived.</p> <p>c. The budget sections are free of mathematical and accounting errors, the budget sections reconcile.</p> <p>d. The budget section includes a complete description of and justification for each cost including how it furthers the objectives of the Project.</p> <p>e. The budget justification provides enough detail for reviewers to easily understand how costs were determined and how they relate to the Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes.</p> <p>f. The budget demonstrates a relationship between work planned and performed to the costs incurred. The review team will consider the degree to which the Project represents a good return for the investment (money, time, etc.) as well as whether the Project work and cost estimates (deliverables and budget) are reasonable for the expected</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p>The personnel section has 100% processor and support staff, only eligible during project and not 100% for operational needs.</p> <p>Equipment prices cannot be verified</p> <p>\$0 in Contractual but paragraph in justification.</p> <p>Mathematically incorrect – 2 cranes @ \$5k = \$10k. or is only one crane needed and the 2 is a typo??</p> |

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFA #: 202403071

RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

BIDDER NAME: Smithereen Farm

DATE: 5/07/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Joy Bonenfant

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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| outcomes and objectives. | |
| <p>16) Matching Funds</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated in the Match Verification Letters and the RFSI Budget Match Worksheet.</i></p> <p>a. The Applicant has submitted an error-free Matching Funds Verification Letter and Budget Match Worksheet that is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFA. The matching funds documentation must demonstrate that all matching contributions will be committed or secured at the time the Applicant is recommended for an award.</p> <p>b. All eligible entities must provide a 50% match OR a 25% graduated match of the total project cost. Applicants must submit written and signed verification of match commitment from any party, including the eligible entity, who will contribute a match of non-Federal resources to this project.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Match calculator is mathematically incorrect</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>No match shown on budget or in calculator</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Personnel does not count as match, operational work not project work.</u></p> |
| <p>17) Application Completeness</p> <p><i>* Demonstrated by all forms and supporting documents submitted.</i></p> <p>a. The Application and all required documents are complete and adhere to the format outlined in the RFA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>N</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Maine Application missing</u></p> |



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry**

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

**AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFA #: (Insert RFA #202403071)
RFP TITLE: Maine Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program**

I, Andrew Kendall accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Kendall', written over a horizontal line.

Date April 30, 2024



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture,
Conservation, and Forestry**

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

**AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202403071
RFP TITLE: Resilient Food Systems Program**

I, Jane Kirsling accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

DocuSigned by:
Jane Kirsling
31ADC157D1D54E8

4/30/2024

Signature

Date



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner**

**AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFA #: (Insert RFA #202403071)
RFP TITLE: Maine Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program**

I, **Ellen Maling** accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

DocuSigned by:
Ellen Maling
43043B73450346B

Signature

April 30, 2024

Date



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner**

**AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFA #: (Insert RFA #202403071)
RFP TITLE: Maine Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program**

I, **Gus Nelson** accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

DocuSigned by:

Gustav Nelson

DECAE358BE0C464

April 30, 2024

Signature

Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION, AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202403071
RFP TITLE: RFSI Infrastructure Project

I, Joy Bonenfant accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

Joy Bonenfant

Signature

4-30-24

Date