



Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

Program Details
&
Proposal Application Guidance

2024



Commissioner
Mike Strain, DVM

Louisiana's RFSI Program

Louisiana Department of Agriculture Staff

- Nicholas Cole, Program Director
- Kelly Ransome, Assistant Program Director
- Christopher Lowery, Program Manager
- Dr. Rebecca White, Grant Officer
- Dale Hunt, Accounting Technician
- Brandy Spears, Accounting Specialist Supervisor



Louisiana's RFSI Program

Contact Information

- Website - <https://www.ladaf.la.gov/business/grants-funding/resilient-food-systems-infrastructure>
- LA-RFSI Phone number - 866-295-0081
- LA-RFSI Email - RFSI@ladaf.state.la.us



Louisiana's RFSI Program

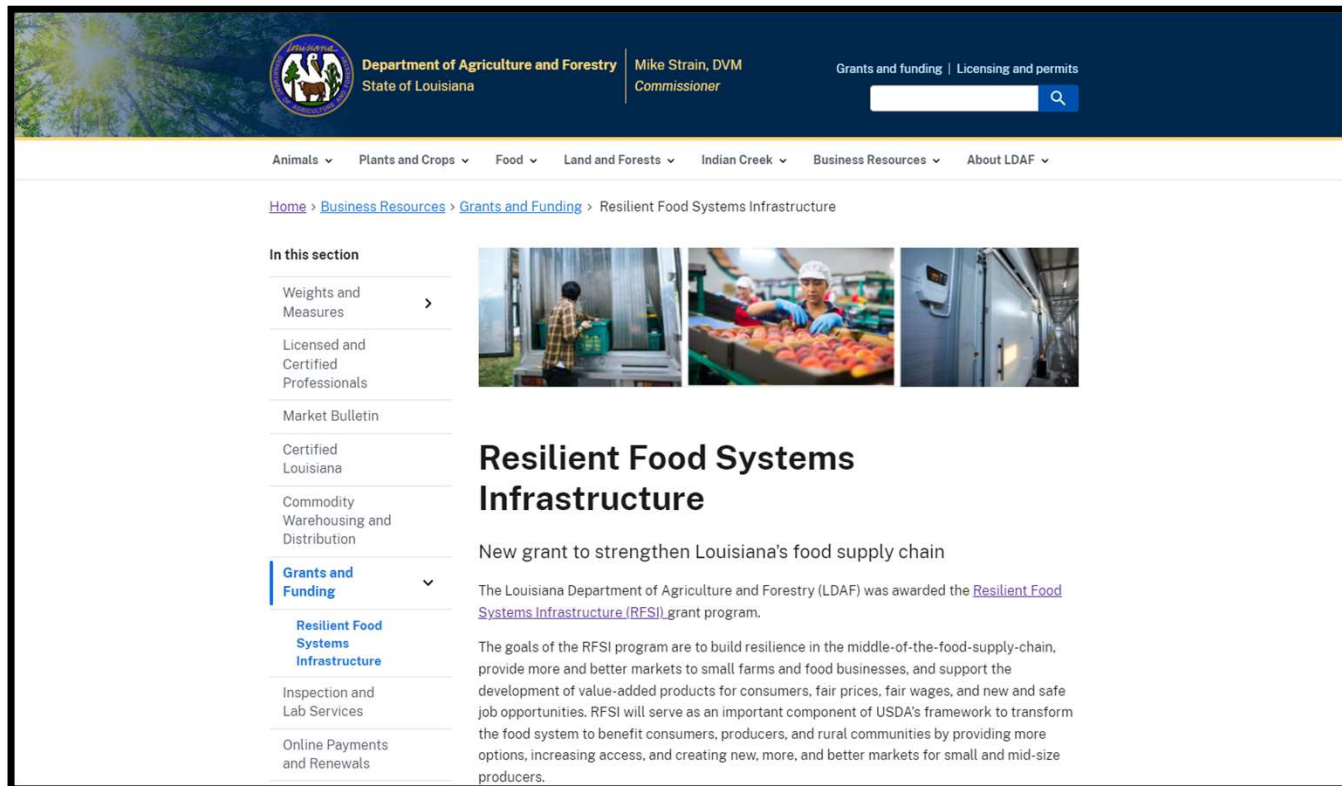
Louisiana Small Business Development Center



- Emily DiStefano, founder and principal of DiStefano & Associates, a consultancy firm
- Kathy Carroll, DiStefano & Associates contributor focusing on research and writing
- Abbe Turner, Ohio-based entrepreneur, farmer, grant writer, and local food distributor



LA RFSI Program Webpage



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) website, specifically the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) program page. The header includes the LDAF logo, the name of the Commissioner, Mike Strain, DVM, and navigation links for Grants and funding, Licensing and permits, and a search bar. The main navigation menu lists various categories: Animals, Plants and Crops, Food, Land and Forests, Indian Creek, Business Resources, and About LDAF. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Home > Business Resources > Grants and Funding > Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure. A sidebar on the left, titled 'In this section', lists various topics, with 'Grants and Funding' expanded to show 'Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure'. The main content area features a large heading 'Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure' and a sub-heading 'New grant to strengthen Louisiana's food supply chain'. Below this, there is a paragraph stating that the LDAF was awarded the RFSI grant program. A second paragraph describes the goals of the RFSI program, which are to build resilience in the middle-of-the-food-supply-chain, provide more and better markets to small farms and food businesses, and support the development of value-added products for consumers, fair prices, fair wages, and new and safe job opportunities. The page also includes three images: a person in a plaid shirt standing in a field, a person in a blue shirt and white cap working in a food processing facility, and a close-up of a food processing machine.



LA RFSI Program Webpage



Department of Agriculture and Forestry
State of Louisiana

Mike Strain, DVM
Commissioner

Grants and funding | Licensing and permits



- Animals ▾
- Plants and Crops ▾
- Food ▾
- Land and Forests ▾
- Indian Creek ▾
- Business Resources ▾
- About LDAF ▾

[Home](#) > [Business Resources](#) > [Grants and Funding](#) > Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure

In this section

- Weights and Measures >
- Licensed and Certified Professionals
- Market Bulletin
- Certified Louisiana
- Commodity Warehousing and Distribution
- Grants and Funding ▾**
 - Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure**
- Inspection and Lab Services
- Online Payments and Renewals



Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure

New grant to strengthen Louisiana's food supply chain

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) was awarded the [Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure \(RFSI\)](#) grant program.

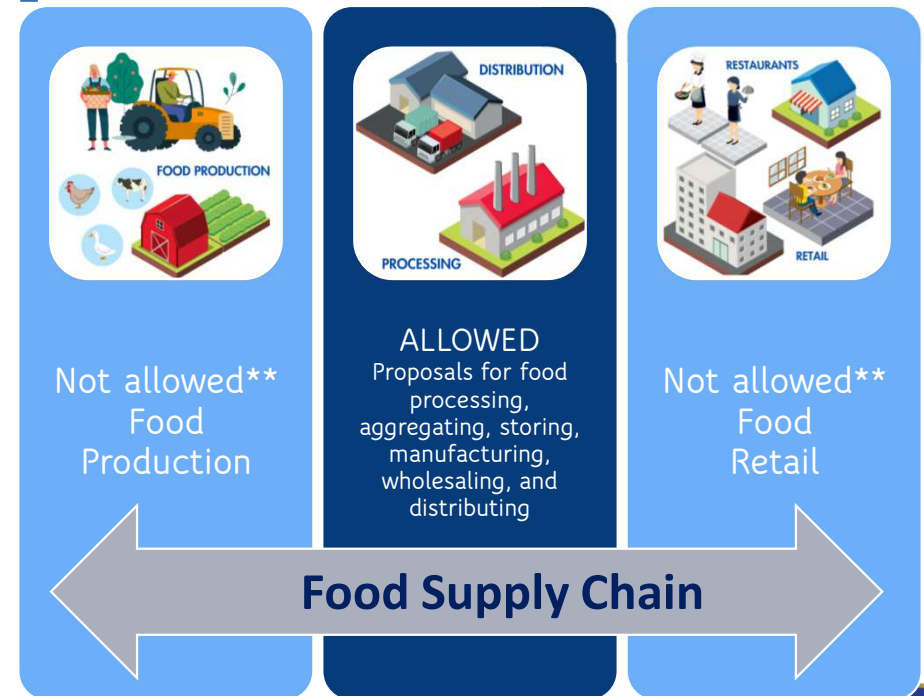
The goals of the RFSI program are to build resilience in the middle-of-the-food-supply-chain, provide more and better markets to small farms and food businesses, and support the development of value-added products for consumers, fair prices, fair wages, and new and safe job opportunities. RFSI will serve as an important component of USDA's framework to transform the food system to benefit consumers, producers, and rural communities by providing more options, increasing access, and creating new, more, and better markets for small and mid-size producers.

RFSI Program

Who Can Apply per USDA



- Middle-of-the-food-supply-chain businesses or entities who want to expand capacity
 - *Must be post harvest activity. This grant does not fund any food production activity.*
 - *Must be pre-market/retailer activity. This grant does not fund any market/retailer activity.*
 - *Includes food processing, aggregation, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distributing*
- Middle-of-the-food-supply-chain businesses including producers*, processors, aggregators, manufacturers, storers, transporters, wholesalers, and distributors
- Additional groups that can apply include entities that support middle of the food supply chain businesses
 - *Non profits that serve this area of food systems*
 - *Local government, tribal government, and institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals.*



Foods eligible for funding per **USDA**

Food enterprises or types allowed for this funding opportunity include specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture, grains for human consumption, eggs and honey.



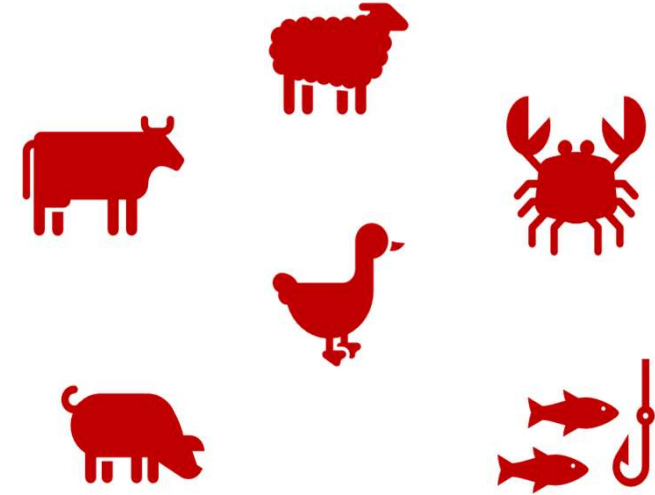
United States
Department of
Agriculture



Foods **NOT** eligible for funding per **USDA**

Meat, poultry, and wild caught seafood are not allowed.

These products are funded through other USDA programs



Eligible Activities for funding per **USDA**

Allowable activities or tasks that could be a part of such projects may include:

- Hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation activities
- Purchasing special purpose equipment.
- Analyzing potential facility upgrades and changes that meet regulatory requirements, obtaining design and/or architecture services, etc.
- Planning for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) or other food safety or worker safety measures or equipment recommendations



Eligible Activities for funding per **USDA**

Upgrading or building new facilities for processing specific agricultural products, such as:

- On-farm post-harvest processing, preservation, and storage/cold storage
- Post-harvest cleaning and grading
- Aggregator warehouse and storage, including cooperatives
- Purchase of freezing equipment, freezer, or cold storage
- Processing, canning, preserving and pasteurization
- Preparation and packing
- Drying, hulling, shelling, and milling
- Cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, fermenting



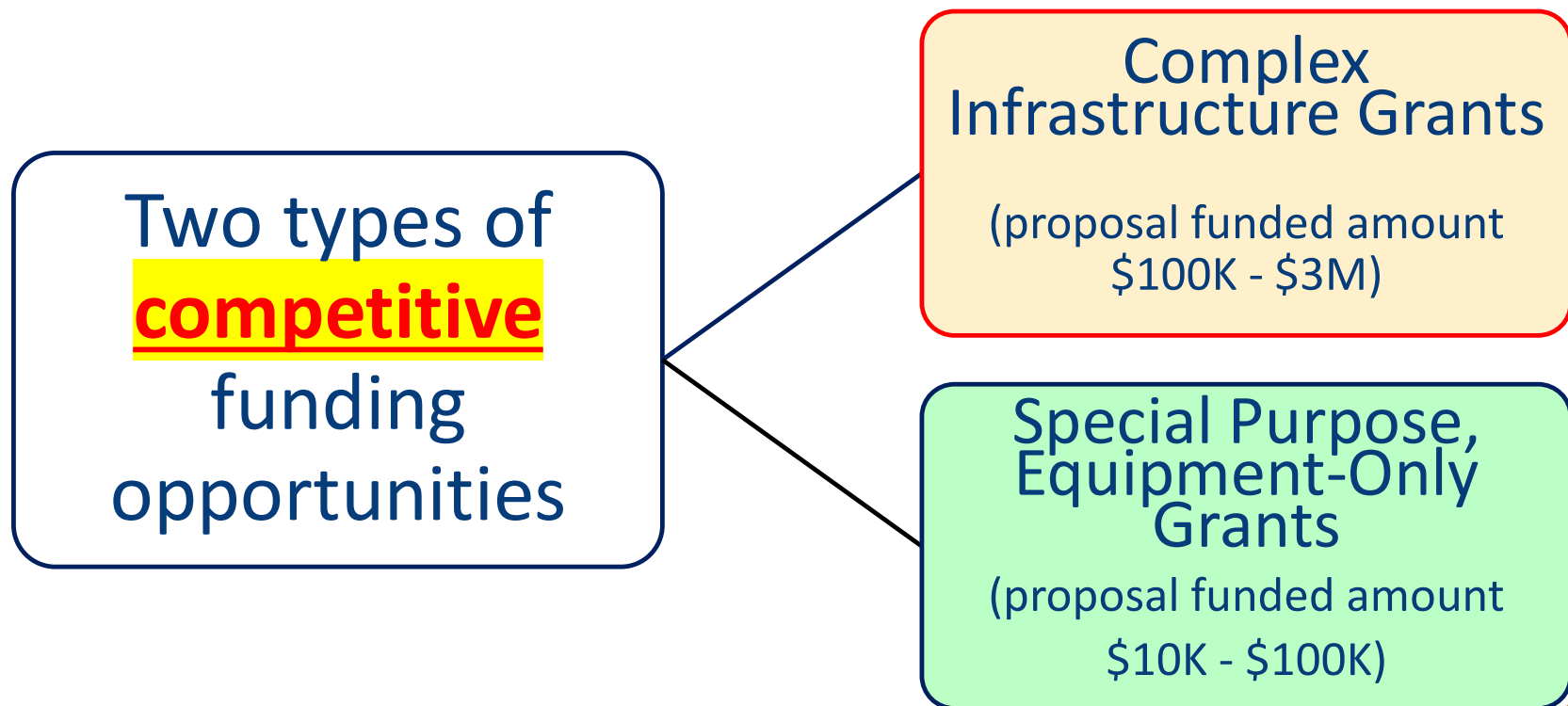
Non-Eligible Activities for Funding per USDA

The following activities will not be eligible for this Infrastructure grant funding opportunity:

- Acquiring real property (including land purchases), or any interest therein
- Proposals that propose the production of raw food activities. This grant program funds middle-of-the-food-supply-chain activities.
- Projects focused on meat and poultry processing or other ineligible agricultural products. Ineligible products include meat and poultry (excluding eggs), wild-caught seafood, exclusively animal feed and forage products, fiber, landscaping products, tobacco, or dietary supplements.
- Activities that have received a Federal award from another Federal award program
- Claiming expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any Federal, State, or local government funding.



RFSI Types of Grant Opportunities



Louisiana RFSI Funding Priorities

- Upgrade or create new facilities for processing, preserving, or storing agricultural products
- Purchase freezing and cold storage equipment for agricultural products
- Purchase food preparation and packing equipment for agricultural products
- Purchase equipment for the distribution of agricultural products
- Propose hiring term-limited personnel to assist with implementation activities that enhance capacity of middle-of-the-supply-chain infrastructure
- Plan for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) for food safety or worker safety measures or equipment recommendations



Competitive Proposal Process

- Submitted Proposals will be scored by a panel of independent, industry experts.
- A scoresheet will be used to assign points to application content.
- The review panel will make recommendations on which proposals to submit to USDA based on project score sheet.
- Multiple proposal can be submitted by an entity, but only one proposal can receive RFSI funding.



Proposal Score Sheets

LRFSIP Infrastructure Grant Proposal Score Sheet

Organization Name: _____

Organization Contact: _____ Contact #: _____

CRITERIA	MAX POINTS	POINTS
Project Purpose		
How well does proposal define the issue, problem, or need the project will address regarding strengthening La's middle of the food supply chain?	5	
Does this project address one of the program priorities listed in the RFP? List priority _____	5	
Is this project relevant and timely to address resiliency in Louisiana's middle of the food supply chain?	5	
Is any external project support for the need for this project indicated?	5	
Potential Impact		
Does project clearly demonstrate how it will have a direct benefit to and impact on Louisiana's middle of the food supply chain?	5	
Expected Measurable Outcome		
Does project have at least one quantifiable, measurable objective that is realistic, obtainable and supports the project purpose?	5	
Are the project's goals and objectives realistic and obtainable?	5	
Work Plan		
Are the tasks and activities related to accomplishing middle of the food supply chain impact for Louisiana?	5	
Is the timeline reasonable to successfully accomplish the project by the LRFSIP deadline?	5	
How well do the activities match the needs or problems of Louisiana's middle of the food supply chain?	5	
Budget		
Do requested budget items correlate to the purpose/goals/objectives of the project?	5	
Is the budget narrative clearly outlined and itemized with a justification of expenses?	5	
Are the expected benefits proportionate to the total investment?	10	
Achievability		
Is the project realistically achievable within the time frame presented?	10	
Overall Application		
Does the project have adequate management to endure proper oversight and administration?	5	
Does the overall application present a clear, focused, and viable plan to enhance Louisiana's middle of the food supply chain?	5	
The extent to which the project will make an important contribution to enhance Louisiana's middle of the food supply chain?	5	
Is the application complete, answering all questions and providing sufficient detail?	5	
TOTAL	100	
Extra Credit - Does the project address any of the following?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project directly benefits a member of a USDA's historically underserved group or SBA's small, disadvantaged group • Project serves more than a single beneficiary • Project is in at least one county/parish that is designated by DCI as at risk or distressed • Project demonstrates positive environmental impact in some capacity • Proposing entity is member of Certified Louisiana 	5	
GRAND TOTAL with Priority Recognition Points, if applicable	105	

1/18/2024

There is a different scoring sheet Infrastructure Proposals and Equipment-Only Proposals.



Equipment-Only Funding Facts

- Must be special purpose equipment tied to the middle-of-the-food-supply chain.
- No match is required for this proposal.
- More than one piece of equipment can be purchased.
- Total equipment cost can be more than \$100,000, but only \$100,000 will be awarded.
- All equipment purchased must work together cohesively within LRFSI priorities.



Equipment-Only Funding Examples

Produce co-op submits a proposal to purchase canning equipment to make pickled peppers, pickled okra, and pickled green beans.



Item	Cost
Washer	\$20,000
Sealer	\$13,000
Sterilizer	\$30,000
Cooling Station	\$20,000
Labeler	\$15,000
Total	\$98,000



Equipment-Only Funding Examples

Catfish farm submits a proposal to expand refrigeration of catfish and packaging for distribution.



Item	Cost
Washer	\$22,000
Skinner	\$20,000
Cutter	\$20,000
Blast Freezer	\$36,000
Packager	\$25,000
Total	\$123,000



Equipment-Only Funding Examples

Strawberry producer submits a proposal to increase on site refrigeration and storage capabilities



Item	Cost
Freezer	\$35,000
Refrigerator	\$30,000
Company Truck	\$35,000
Total	\$100,000

Total amount of funds eligible to be reimbursed will only be \$65,000.



Complex Infrastructure Facts

- Funds requested can range from \$100K to \$3M.
- 50% match generally required, unless applicant qualifies for 25% reduced match.
- Proof of matching funds is required.
- Reduced match qualifiers include historically underserved entities or small disadvantaged businesses.
- Proposal can not request funds to purchase new property.
- Project must be completed by April 30, 2027.



Important Dates (subject to change)

Application Period Opens	February 7, 2024
Proposal Submission Deadline	April 15, 2024 @ 4:30 p.m.
Grant Proposal Competitive Review	April 16, 2024 to May 15, 2024
Grant Proposers Informed of USDA Approval	July 31, 2024
LRFSIP Funding Period Begins	August 1, 2024
Infrastructure Project Completion Deadline	April 30, 2027



Proposal Submission



1. Proposal Cover Page

**Louisiana Resilient Food System
Infrastructure Grant 2024
Cover Page**

Organization Name: _____
 Organization Contact: _____
 Full Mailing Address: _____

 Phone: _____ Fax: _____
 Email: _____
 Website: _____
 UEI #: _____ Tax ID #: _____

Type of Proposal: Complex Infrastructure Grants (funding can range from \$100K - \$3M) Special Purpose-Equipment-Only Grants (funding can range from \$10K - \$100K)

Amount requested from USDA-RFSI: \$ _____

Louisiana RFSI priority/priorities addressed: *(select all that apply)*

Upgrade or create new facilities for processing, preserving, or storing agricultural products Purchase freezing and cold storage equipment for agricultural products
 Purchase food preparation and packing equipment for agricultural products Purchase equipment for the distribution of agricultural products
 Propose hiring term-limited personnel to assist with implementation activities that enhance capacity of middle-of-the-supply-chain infrastructure Plan for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) of other food safety or worker safety measures or equipment recommendations

Attachments:	Yes	No
Statement of Understanding		
Infrastructure Only		
Match Verification Letter		
Evidence of Critical Resources Infrastructure Attachment A		
Collaborator Organization Letter (if applicable)		

FOR LDF&LAF&L USE ONLY
Applicants please leave this section blank

Received by: _____	Entered by & date: _____
Received Date: _____	Checked by & date: _____
Record Locator Number: _____	

01/23/2024

- Complete the Proposal Cover Sheet (except for the Total Amount that will be filled in after completing the proposal form)



1. Proposal Cover Page

**Louisiana Resilient Food System
Infrastructure Grant 2024
Cover Page**

Organization Name: _____

Organization Contact: _____

Full Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

UEI #: _____ Tax ID #: _____

Type of Proposal: Complex Infrastructure Grants (funding can range from \$100K - \$3M) Special Purpose-Equipment-Only Grants (funding can range from \$10K - \$100K)

Amount requested from USDA-RFSI: \$ _____

Louisiana RFSI priority/priorities addressed: (select all that apply)

Upgrade or create new facilities for processing, preserving, or storing agricultural products Purchase freezing and cold storage equipment for agricultural products

Purchase food preparation and packing equipment for agricultural products Purchase equipment for the distribution of agricultural products

Propose hiring term-limited personnel to assist with implementation activities that enhance capacity of middle-of-the-supply-chain infrastructure Plan for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) of other food safety or worker safety measures or equipment recommendations

Attachments:	Yes	No
Statement of Understanding		
Infrastructure Only		
Match Verification Letter		
Evidence of Critical Resources Infrastructure Attachment A		
Collaborator Organization Letter (if applicable)		

FOR LIDAR/LAFA USE ONLY
Applicants please leave this section blank

Received by: _____	Entered by & date: _____
Received Date: _____	Checked by & date: _____
Record Locator Number: _____	

01/23/2024

- Name of business
- Contact information
- Type of proposal
 - *Complex Infrastructure*
 - *Simplified Equipment-Only*
- Amount requested from USDA-RFSI
- Louisiana RFSI priority that the proposal addresses
- Statements of Understanding




2. Statements of Understanding

- This document includes statements you must agree to for LAFA-LDAF to accept your proposal.
- Your agreement will be indicated by initialing each statement and then signing/dating the page.



2. Statements of Understanding

 Louisiana Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

Appendix 1

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

STATEMENTS OF UNDERSTANDING

Please read and initial each paragraph *in blue ink only by hand* if you agree.

Duplication of Benefits (SBA, USDA assistance, etc.): The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry/Louisiana Agricultural Finance Authority (LDAF/LAFA) will review all applicants for "Duplication of Benefits." The undersigned understands that the RFSI Program has the authority to confirm unreimbursed costs associated with this award.

Income Tax Reporting: The undersigned understands that an IRS 1099G will be issued to grant award recipients. Award recipient understands that all or a portion of the grant funds may be treated as taxable income for U.S. or State income tax purposes.

No-pay Federal Registry: The undersigned certifies that the applicant is not listed on the System of Award Management (SAM.gov) website which would bar it from receiving federal grant money.

Public Announcements: If the award recipient wishes to issue a public announcement concerning this award, the text of the proposed announcement must be submitted to LDAF/LAFA for review and approval prior to the release date. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry/Louisiana Agricultural Finance Authority and the United States Department of Agriculture must be mentioned in any public announcements.

No Right of Assignment or Delegation: The award recipient may not assign or otherwise transfer its rights or delegate any of its obligations under this letter unless expressly approved by LDAF/LAFA.

Revocation: LDAF/LAFA reserves the right to revoke this award if the funds are not used for the stated purpose. The award recipient understands and agrees that revocation of this award will require the return of all funds disbursed. The recipient will be obligated to repay some or all funds received under this program in the event that (a) its application including any information provided therewith or thereafter contains any material misrepresentations; or (b) the award was made in error and the applicant is not entitled to some or all assistance under the Program Guidelines.

Monitoring & Records:

- This award may be used only for the purposes stated herein. Documents providing evidence of the use of the funds from this award shall be retained by award recipient for five years after the close out of the program.
- LDAF/LAFA reserves the right to monitor usage of award funds. Such monitoring will include review that the entire amount of the award was used only for the expenses as specified above in accordance with your proposal.
- LDAF/LAFA may, during regular business hours and on reasonable notice to award recipient, inspect, audit, or copy records, as well as inspecting any items purchased with proceeds purchased from this award. It is further agreed that the LDAF/LAFA, Legislative Auditor of the State of Louisiana, and/or the U.S. Department Agriculture (USDA) auditors or auditors contracted by them, shall have the option of auditing all records and accounts of award recipient that relate to this grant at any time during normal business hours, as often as deemed necessary, to audit, examine, and make excerpts or transcripts of all relevant data.
- Awardee's failure to cooperate in such review will result in forfeiture of the award amount and awardees will be responsible for repaying the full amount of funds disbursed.

01/17/2023

1



Proposal Application

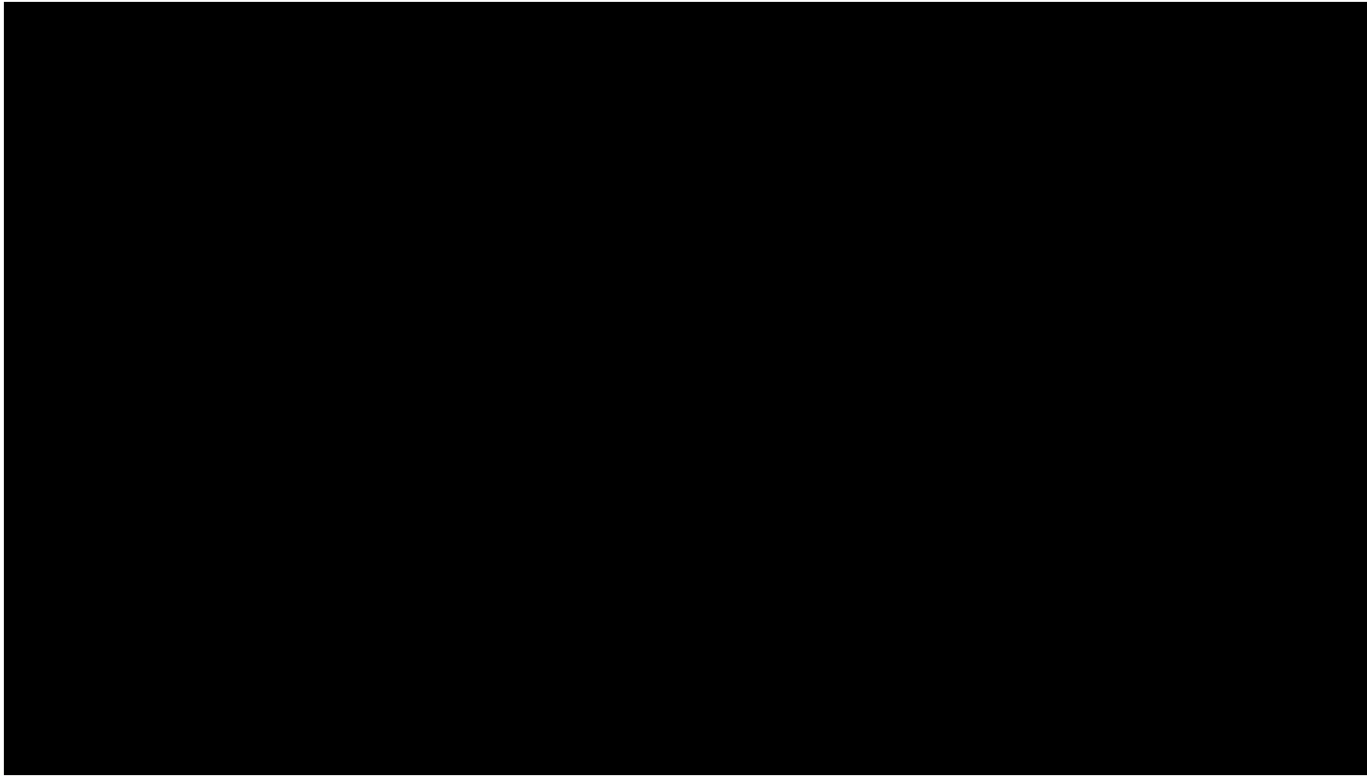


3. Proposal Form

- **ALL PROPOSALS MUST USE** the fillable proposal form from USDA. It is available on our LA-RFSI Program webpage
- **KEY NOTE: Download and save this proposal form to your computer.**
- This PDF is fillable, so you'll only have so much space to type each section



3. Proposal Forms



Proposal Form - Applicant Information

- Applicant organization (your farm or business name)
- Entity type (producer, processor, non-profit organization, institution, etc.)
- SAM.gov UEI (Unique Entity ID) – you'll need one of these to participate in most USDA programs (we'll cover this in the next two slides)
- Phone
- Email
- Physical address of business
- Mailing address



Applicant Information - SAM.gov UEI

- This validates your business's legal name and address
- Entities must have a UEI number prior to the state's submission to USDA.



SAM.gov - Unique Entity ID - UEI



Quick Start Guide for Getting a Unique Entity ID

Quick Start Guide for Getting a Unique Entity ID (SAM)

You can get a Unique Entity ID (SAM) for your organization without having to complete a full entity registration. If you only conduct certain types of transactions, such as reporting as a sub-awardee, you may not need to complete an entity registration. Your entity may only need a Unique Entity ID (SAM).

If you want to only get a Unique Entity ID (SAM) and do not want to complete a full entity registration in SAM.gov, choose one of the following links that best describes your entity:

[Your entity has a DUNS Number and is registered in SAM.gov](#)

[Your entity has a DUNS Number and is not registered in SAM.gov](#)

[Your entity does not have a DUNS Number and today's date is before April 4, 2022](#)

[Your entity does not have a DUNS Number and today's date is after April 4, 2022](#)

Your entity has a DUNS Number and is registered in SAM.gov

If you have an active or inactive registration in SAM.gov today, you've already been assigned a Unique Entity ID (SAM). It's viewable on your entity registration record in SAM.gov. [Learn how to view your Unique Entity ID \(SAM\) here.](#)

Your entity has a DUNS Number and is not registered in SAM.gov

If you currently have a DUNS Number, only need to get a Unique Entity ID (SAM), and do not want to complete a full entity registration in SAM.gov, follow these steps to get a Unique Entity ID (SAM):

A Quick Start Guide
for Getting a
Unique Entity ID
will be posted on the
Louisiana RFSI webpage.



Proposal Form - Primary Point of Contact

- **Authorized Organization Representative** – name of the person who is responsible for project (person that will sign necessary documents)
- Contact information
- Mailing address



Proposal Form - Distressed Communities Index

- [2022 DCI Interactive Map - Economic Innovation Group \(eig.org\)](#)
- Be sure to include the Parish/County and the Distress Score for **each** community that will be impacted by your project
- Add lines in the application form for each parish/county as needed



Proposal Form - Distressed Communities Index

The screenshot displays a Google Chrome browser interface. At the top, a search history dropdown menu is open, listing several search queries: "distressed community index - Google Search", "louisiana certified appraisers", "kami", "state of louisiana jobs", "how to stop screen recording in powerpoint", "native sons james baldwin", "james baldwin books", and "james baldwin". Below the history menu is a row of ten shortcuts: Mail, Amazon.com..., Agricultural..., YouTube, Freepik, USDA, DocuSign Lo..., Log In, Resilient Foo..., and Add shortcut. The main content area shows search results for "distressed community index". The results are organized into a grid. The top row contains three results: "Distressed Communities - Economic Innovation Group" (with a thumbnail of a city street), "Get the Data - Economic Innovation Group", and "Home - Economic Innovation Group". The bottom row contains two results: "2022 DCI Interactive Map - Economic Innovation Group" (with a thumbnail of a map) and a list of three search suggestions: "Distressed community index pdf", "Distressed community index formula", and "distressed communities index by zip code". In the bottom right corner, there is a "Customize Chrome" button.

Proposal Form - Type of Applicant

- Select your applicant type
 - Agricultural producer or processor, or groups of ag producers and processors
 - For profit entity
 - Non-profit organization
 - Local government
 - Tribal government
 - Institutions



Proposal Form - Project Title

- *15 words or less*



Proposal Form - Duration of Project

- Anticipated Start Date: July 1, 2024
- End Date: April 30, 2027 (no RFSI funding is available beyond this date)
- Give yourself more time than you think you may need



Proposal Form - Executive Summary

- 250 words or less
- Four areas to include:
 - *Name of applicant organization*
 - *Purpose*
 - *Deliverables/outcomes*
 - *Tasks*



Proposal Form - Executive Summary: Purpose

- First sentence might begin with:
 - *(NAME OF APPLICANT) will establish an agreement with the Louisiana Agricultural Finance Authority to... (STATE YOUR PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT)*



Proposal Form - Executive Summary: Deliverables

- The first half of the second sentence might include the project deliverables (goods and services provided upon completion of a project)
- Examples:
 - *Deliver (fruit or vegetable) to _____ new locations*
 - *Process _____ new food products*
 - *Construct a new food processing facility*
 - *Purchase _____ pieces of equipment*



Proposal Form - Executive Summary: Outcomes

- The second half of the second sentence might identify your outcomes (how will this project help you and other producers or processors?)
- Examples:
 - *Number of new jobs created*
 - *Number of producers that benefit from your facility*
 - *Number of new products you process, store, and/or distribute*
 - *Number of new markets you reach*



Proposal Form - Executive Summary: Tasks

- The third sentence might include activities you will complete during the project to fulfill this goal
- **Examples:**
 - *Construct a storage facility (summarize the steps it will take to complete the construction project)*
 - *Purchase a specific type of processing equipment*
 - *Modernize/upgrade a processing line*
 - *Train employees on new equipment*
 - *Provide worker safety training*



Proposal Form – Project Purpose

- Select ONE OR MORE project purposes
- Keep in mind the Louisiana RFSI funding priorities.



Proposal Form - Specific Issue, Problem, or Need

- Very important section
- YOU are the expert
- Address the needs that food systems or your food entity is facing
- Address what facilities or resources are currently available
- Keep in mind the Louisiana RFSI funding priorities
- Make your case as to why this project is critically needed



Proposal Form - List of Objectives

- Be as specific as possible
- Examples:
 - *Construct _____ new facility for the purpose of...*
 - *Provide facility access to _____ more producers*
 - *Create _____ more value-added products*
 - *Increase vegetable sales by \$_____ or _____%*



Proposal Form - Project Beneficiaries

- Estimate the number of project beneficiaries – who will have access to what this project creates?
- Looking for the number of food producers, processors, aggregators, distributors, NOT consumers!
- Identify, if any, of the special, underserved groups that the project will directly benefit.



Proposal Form - Other Support

- You MUST indicate if ***THIS PROJECT*** is receiving support from another Federal OR State grant program
- If it is, identify the program and describe the level of support (funding amount, how long the project will be funded, etc.)



Proposal Form - External Project Support

- Who supports the need for this project?
 - Other farmers, processors, aggregators, distributors, and other food related entities
- Be sure to think about your end user:
 - *Schools and other institutions*
 - *Local markets*



Proposal Form - Expected Performance Measures

- Respond to each indicator
- If the answer is NONE or the indicator doesn't apply to your project, please check N/A in the far-right column



Proposal Form- Budget



Matching Funds

- Matching funds can include:
 - *Cash*
 - *Buildings*
 - *Equipment*
- ALL matching funds must be documented with a Match Verification Letter
- One letter is required for each different entity that is providing a match
- A Match Verification Letter is a required piece of your proposal
- A Match Verification Template letter is available on the LA-RFSI website
LAFA-LDAF will verify this information



Match Funds Template Letter

[Use Letterhead of Organization Providing the Match]

MATCH VERIFICATION LETTER

[Application Authorized Organizational Representative]
[Applicant Organization Address]

Dear [Application Authorized Organizational Representative]:

We commit to providing the following matching funds to the [Current Year] [Grant Program] application: [Project title]

1. Cash in the total amount of \$XXX, which we will provide during the grant period September 30, [insert year begins] through September 29, [insert year project will terminate].
 - a. Funds will be used for [provide particular item(s) corresponding to the budget narrative or describe how the applicant will otherwise use the funds].
 - b. We will provide the following amounts per year:
 - i. Year 1:
 - ii. Year 2:
 - iii. Year 3:
2. In-kind contributions in the total amount of \$XXX, will be contributed as follows:
 - a. Salaries and wages of staff time for the following employees:

Employee Name (add additional lines as needed)	Title	Description of Duties	Base Rate (\$/hr or % FTE)	Year 1: # of Hours or \$ Equivalent	Year 2: # of Hours or \$ Equivalent	Year 3: # of Hours or \$ Equivalent

 - b. The following items/activities with a total fair market value of \$XXX:

Item/Activity (add additional lines as needed)	Fair Market Value per Unit:	How Fair Market Value Determined (must provide documentation):	Amount Donated Year 1:	Amount Donated Year 2:	Amount Donated Year 3:

Sincerely,

[Signature of Matching Organization Representative]
[Printed Name of Matching Organization Representative]
[Title]
[Email, address and phone number if not already included on letterhead.]

Use this template found on the LA-RFSI webpage <https://www.ladaf.la.gov/business/grants-funding/resilient-food-systems-infrastructure>



Complex Infrastructure Funding Example

Aquaculture – Farm-raised catfish processing and distribution expansion with 50% matching funds

Item	Cost
Building	\$1,750,000
Catfish processing	\$500,000
Cold Storage	\$750,000
Refrigerated trucks	\$750,000
Personnel and Benefits	\$250,000
Total Project Costs	\$4,000,000
50% Match	\$2,000,000
Total RFSI Funds Requested	\$2,000,000



25% Matching Funds

- If you qualify for the 25% match as described in the proposal, please select the appropriate box(es) describing your reduced match justification AND the certification box that states your entity qualifies for the reduced match
- Documentation proving reduce match qualifications will be required
- LAFA-LDAF will verify this information



Complex Infrastructure Funding Example

Aquaculture – Farm-raised catfish processing and distribution expansion with qualified 25% matching funds (veteran owned business)

Item	Cost
Building	\$1,750,000
Catfish processing	\$500,000
Cold Storage	\$750,000
Refrigerated trucks	\$750,000
Personnel and Benefits	\$250,000
Total Project Costs	\$4,000,000
25% Match	\$1,000,000
Total RFSI Funds Requested	\$3,000,000



Proposal Form - Budget Summary

- It can be helpful to complete the Budget Summary after completing the other budget information
- Look through the categories on the following slides and think about how the items you will need to complete your project will fit



Proposal Form - Personnel

- List the person's name and title, level of effort, TOTAL funds requested
- Describe each person's role in detail under Personnel Justification



Proposal Form - Personnel Example

Name/Title	Level of Effort	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
James Dean, Processing Line Manager	100% FTE	\$120,000	\$0	

- Justification: *James Dean will serve as a processing line manager for the duration of the program (May 2024-May 2027). Mr. Dean will oversee daily line activities, ensure line workers are cooperating with worker safety protocols, and perform routine maintenance on equipment.*



Proposal Form - Fringe Benefits

- These are additions to an employee's compensation, most often things like healthcare, retirement plans, FMLA leave, use of a company car, etc.
- Most pertinent to Institutions and sometimes non-profits



Proposal Form - Travel

- Can be used to travel to meet with potential partners, growers, processors (mileage)
- List out expenses on individual lines
- Include a detailed justification for the trip, the approximate dates, and how it's related to the outcomes of the project



Proposal Form - Travel Example

Destination	Type of Expense	Units of Measure	# of Units	Cost per unit	# of Travelers	Funds Requested	Match Value
Potential Partnership Meetings	Mileage	Miles	200	0.655	1	\$131.00	-

- Justification: *Clark Kent will travel to farms within close proximity to his project to educate other farmers about his new facility and form partnerships with other growers and processors in the area. Mr. Kent will make these visits from August 2024-December 2024. Mr. Kent aims to leave with at least three new partners and/or new market opportunities as a result of these meetings.*



Proposal Form - Equipment

- Specific use to the project – must directly meet an objective
- Equipment >\$5000 per unit (less than \$5000 per unit is a different category)
- General purpose equipment is NOT allowed for purchase
- Including but not limited to office equipment and furnishings, modular offices, telephone networks, IT equipment and systems, air condition equipment, printing equipment, and motor vehicles



Proposal Form - Equipment Example

Item Description	Rental or Purchase	Acquire When?	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
IQF Freezer	Purchase	October 2024	\$100,000	-	-

- Justification: *The (BrandName) IQF Freezer will allow blueberries, strawberries, and peaches to be frozen and stored, increasing the shelf life of these highly perishable crops. This system will be made available for scheduled access by other small fruit growers in the region.*



Proposal Form - Supplies

- Includes materials, supplies, and fabricated parts less than \$5000



Proposal Form - Supplies Example

Item Description	Per-Unit Cost	# of Units Purchased	Acquire When?	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
Polyethylene Freezer Packs (1000)	\$59.99	500	May 2025	\$3,000	-	-

- Justification: *Polyethylene packs will be used to contain IQF-frozen products that can be easily retailed to grocers, education systems, and other institutions.*



Proposal Form - Construction

- Includes:
 - *Administrative and legal expenses (NEPA)*
 - *Structures*
 - *Relocation expenses*
 - *Architectural and engineering fees*
 - *Project inspection fees*
 - *Site work*
 - *Demolition and removal*
 - *Construction*



Proposal Form - Construction Example

Item Description	Acquire When?	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
Construction of cold storage	May 2024	\$100,000	-	-

- Justification: Cold storage construction is necessary to house the following items prior to processing and market sale: broccoli, squash, green beans. Removing field heat is critical for maximizing the shelf life of these types of produce. Design documents are attached to this application***.



Proposal Form - Construction Example - Match 1

Item Description	Acquire When?	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
Construction of cold storage	May 2024	\$50,000	\$50,000	Cash

- You could include a portion of the construction fees as part of your match
- In the example above, the \$100,000 was split between federal money and private cash funding



Proposal Form - Contractual/Consultant

- Includes expenses associated with procuring services performed by an individual other than the applicant
- Structural engineer and architect fees
- NEPA expenses



Proposal Form - Contractual/Consultant Example

Name/Organization	Hourly Rate/Flat Rate	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
Architectural fees	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	-

- Justification: *Architectural fees will cost 10% of the cost of the building; therefore, the consultant fee for the cold storage building will cost \$5,000.*



Proposal Form - Other

- Includes expenses that do not fit within the other expense categories



Proposal Form – Indirect Costs

- Louisiana Department of Agriculture does not allow indirect costs as a budget request on competitive grant subawards
- Leave this section blank
- In the Match Type box, select N/A



Proposal Form - Budget Summary

- Now go BACK to your Budget Summary, fill it in and make sure all columns match the remainder of your budget narrative



5. Evidence of Critical Resources & Infrastructure

- Documentation is required if critical resources or infrastructure is necessary to complete a project
- Examples of these types of resources may include land, structures, etc.
- An Evidence of Critical Resources and Infrastructure Template letter is available on the LA-RFSIP website at <https://www.ldaf.la.gov/business/grants-funding/resilient-food-systems-infrastructure>



[On Letterhead of Organization Providing the Critical Resource or Infrastructure]

EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

[Name of Applicant's Authorized Organization Representative/Project Director]
[Applicant Organization]
[City, State]

Date: [Enter date]

Dear [Applicant's Project Director]:

We [include a statement about committing/approving/granting permission, etc. of the critical resource or infrastructure] to the 20XX [Program Title] [Program Project Title], for the time period of [include dates of commitment within proposed project period] in the following way:

[Describe the approved use of the critical resource or infrastructure approved for the project, any costs associated with its use, and any qualifying circumstances for its use.]

By checking this box, I confirm that the critical resource(s) and infrastructure¹ listed above are in place and usable for the start-up, implementation and completion of the proposed project activities. If requested by AMS, I will submit supporting documentation (e.g., copy of lease agreement, licenses, permits, picture(s) of facilities, etc.) as evidence.

Sincerely,

[Signature of Partnering Organization's Authorized Representative (AR)]

Printed Name of AR

AR's Title (e.g., Executive Director)

Address and telephone number if that information is not already on the letterhead

¹ Critical resources and infrastructure can be facilities, land, structure, use of city street/parks, shared-used kitchen, and/or other resources that are essential for the proposed project activities.

Use this template found on <https://www.ldaf.la.gov/business/grants-funding/resilient-food-systems-infrastructure>

Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM



Proposal Final Tips

- Start applications early
- Have multiple people with different areas of expertise look over your application
- Focus on how your project will address Louisiana's RFSI Priorities



Important Dates (subject to change)

Application Period Opens	February 7, 2024
Proposal Submission Deadline	April 15, 2024 @ 4:30 p.m.
Grant Proposal Competitive Review	April 16, 2024 to May 15, 2024
Grant Proposers Informed of USDA Approval	July 31, 2024
LRFSIP Funding Period Begins	August 1, 2024
Infrastructure Project Completion Deadline	April 30, 2027



Louisiana's RFSI Program

Contact Information

- Website - <https://www.ladaf.la.gov/business/grants-funding/resilient-food-systems-infrastructure>
- LA-RFSI Phone number - 866-295-0081
- LA-RFSI Email - RFSI@ladaf.state.la.us



Questions???



Evaluation Form

