

# 2022 Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program Technical Assistance Provider Request for Proposal

**Released April 28,2022**

**Proposals Due: June 10, by 5 pm PT**

**Late proposals will not be accepted.**

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Inspection Services Division  
Office of Farm to Fork  
Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program  
Website: <https://cafarmtofork.cdfa.ca.gov/hrqp.html>  
Email: [cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov)



CDFA OFFICE OF  
**FARM *to* FORK**

# Table of Contents

- Stakeholder Input: ..... 2
- About the Program: ..... 3
- 1. Outreach and Application Assistance: ..... 3
- 2. Technical Expertise: ..... 3
- Relation to Equipment Grant Round:..... 4
- Available Funding:..... 5
- Number and Amount of Grant Awards: ..... 5
- Grant Duration:..... 5
- Eligibility: ..... 5
- Grant Disbursement and Allowable Expenses: ..... 5
- How to apply: ..... 6
- Grant timeline and process: ..... 7
- Compliance and reporting: ..... 7
- Proposal review and evaluation: ..... 7
- Appeal rights: ..... 8
- Proposal Questions: ..... 8
- Proposal Evaluation Criteria:..... 8
- Questions About this RFP: ..... 10
- Call for External Reviewers: ..... 10
- Additional Information:..... 11

## Stakeholder Input:

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) considered feedback about this Request for Proposal (RFP) submitted during the public comment period, including during the informational webinar on March 28<sup>th</sup>, before finalizing this RFP. A summary of public feedback and CDFA responses is linked on the program [webpage](#). CDFA will also consider comments received when developing future RFPs.

## About the Program:

CDFA is pleased to announce a competitive grant proposal process for Technical Assistance Providers through the Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program (HRGP). HRGP funds energy-efficient refrigeration and cold storage equipment in corner stores, small businesses, and food donation programs in low-income and low food-access areas (see definition in Additional Information on page 10-11 of this RFP). Grant-funded equipment is to stock California-grown fresh produce, nuts, dairy, meat, eggs, and minimally processed foods, including culturally appropriate foods, grown in California to the extent possible. The program is established in California Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) [Section 49015](#) and select program definitions are provided on page 9 of this RFP.

This RFP solicits Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs) to conduct activities in one or both of the following categories:

- 1. Outreach and Application Assistance:** TAPs in this category will promote the program to corner stores and other eligible applicants (including small businesses such as small producers and others) in low-income and low food-access areas, and assist applicants to complete grant applications once CDFA releases the initial equipment RFP in fall 2022. Outreach may be at statewide, regional, Tribal, or other specified levels that fit program priorities as described in the FAC [Section 49015](#). Selected TAPs will support broadscale outreach for the program, ideally offered in multiple languages through various TAPs throughout the state, and TAPs should be ready to assist applicants that lack an existing local healthy retail program (a program that supports corner stores to stock more fresh produce and healthy food items) but seek to apply for CDFA equipment grants.

TAPs applying solely in this category should provide services to interested applicants in the pre-award period, before equipment grants are made, and not continuing through grant implementation at selected sites. A second equipment RFP is planned for fall 2023. TAPs are encouraged to plan a multi-year project to support applicants for both RFP cycles. One-year plans will also be considered and there is a possibility that another competitive RFP for TAPs could be held in 2023, pending remaining need and funding.

- 2. Technical Expertise:** Applicants will provide substantive subject matter expertise in one or both of the following areas:
  - a. Cold storage technology, energy efficiency (EE) and global warming potential (GWP) standards. TAPs in this category should be ready to advise corner stores and other applicants on options, EE and GWP of units, and help applicants and grantees with energy saving strategies; consult with applicants and make unit recommendations that meet their

needs, potentially connect stores to vendors and advise/assist with installation\*; and/or

- b. Healthy retail best practices, such as stocking, merchandising, promoting, and selling fresh foods in a profitable, sustainable way, including produce procurement solutions. TAPs applying to provide healthy retail expertise must be ready to assist HRGP applicants either regionally or statewide with best practices as well as consult with applicants to offer tailored recommendations and assistance when there is no local healthy retail program for applicants to join. TAPs should specify their capacity to work with equipment applicants and project costs based on activities/hours anticipated, which could include time consulting, possible travel, providing best practice guidelines, publishing materials, and etc. TAPs may be asked to help selected grantees complete pre and post surveys and potentially facilitate interviews for the program evaluation.

TAPs applying in this category may provide services both in the pre-award period for equipment grants and during grant implementation after equipment grants are made.

Ideally CDFA will find TAPs in a few different regions of California that can provide services regionally. CDFA will also consider applications proposing to work in smaller geographic areas if a compelling case can be made for need for the specific services a TAP is uniquely qualified to conduct, such as outreach to a particular underserved group with many eligible small businesses.

\*While TAPs are encouraged to make connections to relevant vendors when possible, TAPs may not require applicants to procure specific units or use favored contractors, vendors, or service providers. TAPs must also declare all conflicts of interest including sponsorship or funding by any corporation that may profit from CDFA's HRGP.

Technical assistance must be provided free of cost to applicants and grantees and outreach materials prepared by TAPs must indicate that the assistance is free, with no fees or costs to corner stores, small businesses, or food donation programs.

**Relation to Equipment Grant Round:** Organizations wishing to provide equipment in addition to hands-on technical assistance to a set of local corner stores or other eligible entities should instead apply during the equipment grant round in

fall 2022, when 20% of the total grant award can fund technical assistance (and 80% will fund equipment). This can include outreach to identify/solidify partnering sites that will receive the equipment. Organizations that can provide broader technical assistance for the program and also work with a specified set of stores or other eligible entities to install equipment may apply to both this round and the equipment grant round and could potentially be funded to provide both kinds of technical assistance.

**Available Funding:** Up to \$900,000 is available for grants to TAPs, which is approximately 5% of total grant funding available through HRGP. If less than \$500,000 is awarded or outstanding needs for technical assistance remain, a second RFP for TAPs may be held in the future.

**Number and Amount of Grant Awards:** There is no minimum or maximum amount TAPs may request within the available funding pool. Pending proposals submitted, CDFA expects to make three to seven awards, targeting at least one to two TAPs focusing on equipment, EE and GWP expertise; and two to five TAPs for outreach, application assistance, and healthy retail practices and assistance at a statewide, regional, Tribal, or other specified level that fits program priorities.

**CDFA reserves the right to work with applicants to modify proposed projects and to make awards of different or lesser amounts than requested.**

**Grant Duration:** CDFA will consider one year and multi-year grants, with a target start in October 2022 and that end by December 2026.

**Eligibility:** Eligible applicants are nonprofits, small businesses including business consultancies, cities, counties, Tribal governments and Tribal organizations with the expertise, networks, and capacity to identify target applicants, provide outreach and application assistance, and/or technical expertise.

Multiple organizations may partner on a single application, with one clear lead applicant. CDFA encourages statewide cooperation among regional TAPs.

## **Grant Disbursement and Allowable Expenses:**

Grantees will be reimbursed for their spending on allowable costs monthly, quarterly, or annually, generally within 45 days of invoicing CDFA. Nonprofits and small businesses may receive grant advances for up to three months of expenses at a time, totaling no more than 90% of the total award, if certain criteria are met and procedures followed.

See advance payment regulations [here](#). Cities and counties are generally not eligible for advance grant payments.

Allowable Expenses	Nonallowable Expenses
Staff time & fringe benefits	Refrigeration/cold-storage equipment for corner stores & small businesses (this will be funded through a separate RFP)
Travel (as allowable per state travel policy <a href="#">guidelines</a> )	
Materials* & printing costs	
Subcontracting (with justification of why necessary & contractor qualifications)	
Indirect rate of 10% of total direct cost**	
Equipment*, facility rental, communications, or other program costs	

\*Materials are considered to be supplies that cost less than \$5,000 per unit. Equipment for this grant is considered to be (non-refrigeration) items costing \$5,000 or more per unit. Equipment purchases may not be necessary for TAPs budgets, but will be considered if proposed as critical to the project on a case-by-case basis.

\*\*Applicants from the University of California or California State University must follow their established policy.

**How to apply:** Effective April 2022, CDFA is utilizing a new online grant platform for this program. Applicants are required to complete and submit their proposals online using the AmpliFund system, accessible [here](#). Applicants will be prompted to create a user account with a login. Email [cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov) with any questions.

Grant proposals and required attachments must be submitted no later than 5 pm PT on June 10, 2022. All proposal questions must be answered. Applicants will receive a confirmation email within two business days of submission. Please contact the Office of Farm to Fork at [cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov) if a confirmation email is not received.

## Grant timeline and process:

Public Comments Addressed and Request for Proposal Released	April 28, 2022
Grant proposals due	June 10, 5:00 pm PDT
Anticipated Awards Announcement	Late July 2022
Tentative Start Date for Technical Assistance Provider Grant Terms	October 2022
Anticipated Date to Release 2 <sup>nd</sup> RFP (for applicants seeking refrigeration equipment)	December 2022

## Compliance and reporting:

Grantees are required to submit annual and final reports to CDFA and participate in the program evaluation, which may be conducted by an external evaluator. Evaluation activities are likely to include survey completion and/or facilitating equipment grantees' pre and post survey completion, and may also include participating in interviews with evaluators and/or helping facilitate interviews at participating equipment grantee sites.

Recipients must comply with all state and local regulations. Documentation that businesses hold required permits or fit small business definitions may be requested.

## Proposal review and evaluation:

CDFA will conduct an initial administrative review of proposals to determine whether all proposal requirements have been met. Misrepresentations in the proposal are grounds for rejection. Proposals that have met all proposal requirements will receive a technical review to evaluate the merits of the grant request based on the published scoring criteria.

**CDFA reserves the right to ask applicants clarifying questions about their proposals and to work with selected applicants to modify their proposals, including scopes of work and budgets.**

**Appeal rights:**

Any discretionary action taken by the Office of Farm to Fork may be appealed to CDFA’s Office of Hearings and Appeals within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a notice of disqualification from CDFA. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the grant proposal or his/her authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the decision being challenged. The submission must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Suite 315, Sacramento CA 95814 or emailed to [CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov). If submissions are not received within the timeframe provided above, the appeal will be denied.

**Proposal Questions:** See document linked on the HRGP [webpage](#). Note that requested attachments include:

- References and/or Letters of Support;
- Resumes of participating staff; and
- Organizational annual budget or other statement reflecting organizational budget.

**Proposal Evaluation Criteria:** 100 Points Possible

Criteria	Maximum Points
<p><b>Reach:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is project reach clearly indicated?</li> <li>• Will TAPs provide services in program priority areas and to target populations, in locations with many low-income or low food-access census tracts or other barriers to food access, such as affordability, language, cultural or other?</li> <li>• Will TAPs serve a particular underserved population or location or community, such as rural and hard to reach locations or Tribal groups, or procure produce from socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers*?</li> <li>• Does project reach help meet CDFA program goals?</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Subject Matter Expertise:</b></p> <p><b>For Category 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can TAPs provide assistance in languages other than English?</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do TAPs have expertise with identifying target clients and populations and with outreach/marketing of programs?</li> <li>• Is staff qualified to implement the project?</li> </ul> <p><b>For Category 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do TAPs have substantive, relevant technical expertise with equipment, EE and GWP regulations, and capacity to ensure highest standards and state targets are met? And/or:</li> <li>• Can TAPs help businesses lower energy costs? And/or:</li> <li>• Do TAPs have expertise with healthy retail practices and/or procurement solutions?</li> <li>• Is staff qualified to implement the project?</li> </ul>	20
<p><b>Experience and Networks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do TAPs have significant previous experience doing outreach (for Category 1) and working in low-income or low food-access areas?</li> <li>• Do TAPs have experience working with small businesses, producers/suppliers, healthy retail programs, food donation programs, or as technical assistance providers for other government programs?</li> <li>• Do TAPs have experience helping applicants with programmatic grant proposals or providing expertise to small businesses?</li> <li>• Are TAPs able to identify, find, and work with target applicants based on their current network and experience (for Category 1)?</li> <li>• Are TAPs well networked, able to partner successfully with other organizations as relevant?</li> <li>• Do References and/or Letters of Support and Commitment reflect TAPs good standing, effectiveness, and capacity to complete the project?</li> <li>• If a partnership application from multiple TAPs, are roles clearly identified and complementary, including providing broader reach than each organization could alone?</li> <li>• If applicant is a previous CDFA grantee, past performance on grant implementation will be considered.</li> </ul>	20
<p><b>Implementation Plan, Timeline, Goals and Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are proposed implementation plan, timeline, goals, and outcomes reasonable and realistic?</li> <li>• Will they help meet overall HRGP goals?</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there sufficient information to demonstrate TAP’s capacity to complete the project?</li> <li>• Does organization have a thoughtful and actionable approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including for program delivery?</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Budget:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are proposed budgets reasonable, efficient, sufficient to meet goals, and sufficiently detailed to show how resources will be used and project plan will work?</li> <li>• Are proposed materials and/or equipment necessary for implementation plan?</li> <li>• Is the budget consistent with the implementation plan?</li> <li>• Is any (optional) match or in-kind funding included that will strengthen the program?</li> </ul>	15
<p><b>Overall TAPs Composition as a Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Technical Review Committee with CDFA will assess the overall expertise TAPs are able to provide as a group to HRGP applicants, seeking to offer a balance and range of expertise and reach, including geographic reach, to program applicants statewide.</li> </ul>	15

\*A farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group – meaning a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice, including African Americans, Native American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, as defined in the California Farmer Equity Act of 2017 (AB [1348](#)). Applicants may also designate Middle Eastern or North African for this program.

**Questions About this RFP:** Email [cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov) with questions about this RFP. Questions and answers will be anonymized and posted in a Questions and Answers document on the program website.

**Call for External Reviewers:** Interested in joining the Technical Review Committee for this program? Email [cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov) with your interest by May 31, 2022, and be ready to submit information about any conflicts of interest, including affiliation with any organization applying for funding through this program.

## **Additional Information:**

Select Definitions for the Grant Program: (per Food and Agricultural Code [Section 49015](#), where more detail can be found)

Corner store: a small-scale store or grocery store, either independent or chain, that sells a limited selection of foods and other products and that is located in a low-income or low food-access area in a rural, urban, or suburban area. Corner stores do not need to be located on street corners.

Low-income area: a census tract in which the income of at least 20% of the population is at or below the federal poverty level by family size, or if the median family income of the population is at or below 80% of the median family income of surrounding census tracts.

Low food-access area: a census tract in which there are significant barriers to accessing a supermarket or large grocery store, which may include, but are not limited to, a census tract where at least 500 persons or 33% of the population live more than one mile, for nonrural areas, or more than 10 miles, for rural areas, from a supermarket or large grocery store. Affordability, cultural, and other barriers to food access may also be considered.

Small businesses: independently owned, with 100 or fewer employees, average annual gross receipts of \$15M or less and **must be authorized to accept EBT/SNAP/CalFresh benefits**.

Minimally processed foods: Food prepared using: traditional processes to make food edible, safe for consumption, or to preserve it, including smoking, roasting, freezing, drying, and fermenting; or using physical processes that do not fundamentally alter the raw product or that only separate a whole, intact food into component parts, for example, grinding meat, separating eggs into albumen and yolk, and pressing fruits to produce juices.