DRAFT

2027 Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program (YRMI)

Request for Application (RFA)

Accepting public comment on the DRAFT Request for Application until:
December 22, 2026

California Department of Food and Agriculture
Inspection Services Division
Office of Farm to Fork
Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program
Website: https://cafarmtofork.cdfa.ca.gov/farm_to_fork/grants/infrastructure.html

Email: Year_Round_Market_Grants@cdfa.ca.gov

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Stakeholder Input

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) welcomes public comment on this Request for Applications (RFA) and all related solicitation materials. CDFA will review all comments received prior to finalizing the Year-round Market Infrastructure (YRMI) Grant Program RFA and may use this feedback to inform future funding rounds.

Stakeholders may submit public comments by completing this online form, or emailing a comment letter to Year_Round_Market_Grants@cdfa.ca.gov by 5 p.m. PT December 22, 2026. Please include "Stakeholder Comment for Draft YRMI RFA – Track #" in the email subject line.

CDFA will also host a public comment webinar to gather live feedback from interested parties. See registration links under Tentative Grant Timeline below. A recording of the webinar will be posted to the program webpage.

About the Program

The CDFA is pleased to announce the competitive application process for the 2027 YRMI Grant Program. This program was established through Section 93540 of Senate Bill 867, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 ("Climate Bond"), approved by voters as Proposition 4 in November 2024.

The YRMI Program provides funding to support the development, expansion, and enhancement of year-round infrastructure for the following Eligible Markets:

- Certified Farmers' Markets (as defined in Food and Agricultural Code Section 47004)
- Fishermen's Markets (as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 113780)
- Tribe-operated or Native-serving farmers' markets

The program aims to strengthen local and regional food systems by increasing access to safe, reliable, climate-resilient market infrastructure, particularly for small- and medium-sized agricultural and fisheries producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, and veteran producers.

For this program, the term "Eligible Community Food Markets" or "Eligible Markets" refers collectively to certified farmers' markets, fishermen's markets, and Tribe-operated or Native-serving farmers' markets, per Section 93540 of Senate Bill 867. Select program definitions appear in the Definitions section of this RFA.

Track 1 - Infrastructure Projects: Funding for infrastructure projects for new or existing year-round Certified Farmers' Markets, fishermen's markets, or tribe-operated or native-serving farmers' markets.

Track 2 – Pass-Through Grants: Funding for entities who will allocate funds to new or existing year-round Certified Farmers' Markets, fishermen's markets, or tribe-operated or native-serving farmers' markets for small-scale infrastructure projects. Organizations can use up to 10 percent of the funds to provide technical assistance to Eligible Markets.

Seasonal markets seeking infrastructure to transition to year-round may apply only if they provide a strong, detailed plan and timeline for transitioning to year-round operations.

Overview

	Track 1	Track 2	Track 2 (with TA)
Track Focus	Year-round market infrastructure for Eligible Markets	Administering a pass-through grant program for small-scale infrastructure projects	Pass-through program + technical assistance for small-scale infrastructure projects
Eligible Entities	➢ Certified Farmers' Market ➢ Fishermen's Market ➢ Tribe-operated or Native-serving farmers' market ➢ Nonprofit organizations ➢ Special districts ➢ Joint powers authorities ➢ Public agencies ➢ Local agencies	➢ Nonprofit organization ➢ California Native American Tribal Governments ➢ Tribal-based nonprofit organization ➢ Resource Conservation Districts	
Award Amounts	More than $50,000 in infrastructure costs up to $500,000	Subawards $50,000 or less each	Same subaward limit + additional TA budget (up to 10%)
Grant Term	24 moths	36 months	36 months
Required Letters	5 total for existing markets; 9 total for new or transitioning markets	2 total	3 total

Tentative Grant Timeline

Activity	Tentative Date
RFA Released for Public Comment	November 24, 2026
Public Comments Period Ends	December 22, 2026
Webinar for Live Comments	• December 1, 2026, 10:00 am, register here • December 2, 2026, 4:00 pm, register here • December 3, 2026, 12:00 pm (Tribes only), register here
RFA Comments Addressed and Application Opens	By January 22, 2027
Application Information Webinar Sessions - GOATS System Training	• February 3, 2027, 9:00 am, register here • February 4, 2027, 3:00pm, register here
Virtual CDFA Office Hours	TBD
Grant Applications Due	May 22, 2027
Application Review Process	May-July 2027
Anticipated Award Announcement	August 2027
Tentative Start Date for Grant Terms	November 2027

Available Funding

A total of up to $11 million is available for the 2027 YRMI Grant Program. Funds will be awarded across two tracks, with final award amounts dependent on application volume, program priorities, and geographic distribution.

CDFA expects to release a second funding opportunity for the remainder of the bond funds in Fall 2027.

This program cannot duplicate other funding sources and requires applicants to notify CDFA promptly if the applicant receives similar funding after being awarded funds from this program. The YRMI application requires applicants to describe other CDFA grants applied for and received, how the applicant will avoid duplication of costs and activities.

Eligibility

The following entities are eligible to apply for funding under the Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program (Public Resources Code section 90110):

Track 1 - Infrastructure Projects Eligibility:

- Nonprofit organizations
- CA Native American tribes
- Eligible Markets and entities applying on behalf of Eligible Markets
- Special districts (local government agencies created to provide one or more specific services, such as water, sewer, fire protection, parks, or pest control, to a defined area)
- Joint powers authorities
- Public agencies
- Local agencies

Eligible entities must be operating, or applying for funding to begin operating, an Eligible Market as defined in SB 867 (Certified Farmers' Market, Fishermen's Market, or Tribe-operated/Native-serving farmers' market).

Track 2 – Pass-Through Grants Eligibility:

- Nonprofit organizations
- CA Native American tribes
- Tribal-based nonprofit organizations*
- Resource Conservation Districts

**California-based nonprofit organizations with at least 50 percent of the Board of Directors and/or Leadership Team identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian and whose organizational mission or strategic plan expresses a commitment to serving and/or empowering California Native American Tribes or people.*

Not Eligible

The following entities are not eligible for either track of this program:

- For-profit entities, unless as subawardee under Track 2 with a non-profit lead
- Individual producers
- Producer cooperatives
- Private businesses seeking funding for privately operated retail markets
- Federal agencies
- K–12 school districts

Due to the limited funding available, applicants may submit no more than one proposal, selecting only one track. Partnership applications are allowed; however, one lead applicant must be designated for contracting and program administration.

Grant Priorities & Community Benefits

The YRMI Grant Program prioritizes projects that expand access to California-produced foods, strengthen local food systems, and deliver meaningful and direct benefits to priority populations, including small- and medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged and beginning producers, Tribal producers, veteran producers, and communities identified as disadvantaged (DAC), severely disadvantaged (SDAC), or otherwise vulnerable.

Eligible Markets should prioritize offering agricultural or seafood products from priority populations; it will be prioritized in the scoring.

Equity Requirements

In accordance with the Climate Bond:

- At least 40 percent of total program funds must support projects that provide meaningful and direct benefits to disadvantaged communities (DACs), severely disadvantaged communities (SDACs), or vulnerable populations.
- Of this amount, at least 10 percent must provide direct benefits to SDACs. Definitions of DAC, SDAC, and vulnerable populations appear in the Definitions section.

Applicants must meet at least one of the following criteria:

• Be physically located in a DAC, SDAC, or vulnerable population, including CA Native American tribes which are considered vulnerable populations;
• Have at least 40 percent of participating producers based in DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable population areas;
• Have at least 40 percent of shoppers from DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations; or, demonstrate a combined total of at least 40 percent producers and shoppers from DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations.

Tools for Identifying DACs, SDACs, and Vulnerable Populations

All lands under the control of Federally recognized Tribes are automatically categorized as disadvantaged/priority populations for state climate and infrastructure investments. Other applicants may use the following tools to determine whether their projects are in or serve DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations:

• Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool — identifies DACs and SDACs statewide.
• Climate Change & Health Vulnerability Indicators for California (CCHVIz) — highlights populations at increased climate-related health risks.
• USDA Food Access Research Atlas — identifies low-income and low-food-access census tracts.
• California Climate Investments Priority Populations Map — visualizes priority populations under the State's climate programs.
• Opportunity Zones Mapping Tool — identifies federally recognized Opportunity Zones.
• Let's Get Healthy California Tool — maps community health indicators statewide.

Applicants who are not located in, nor have 40 percent of producers from, DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations may instead demonstrate that at least 40 percent of shoppers are from DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. Acceptable data sources include, but are not limited to, the percentage of CalFresh shoppers or EBT sales.

Award Amounts and Grant Durations

Two funding tracks are available through the Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program. Each track supports different project types and funding scales. Applicants should select the track that best fits the scope and total cost of their proposed project.

Track 1 — Direct Funding

Track 1 provides direct infrastructure funding for new or existing Eligible Markets that require more than $50,000 in total project support.

Funding Threshold

- Projects must request more than $50,000 and up to $500,000 in allowable infrastructure costs.

Grant Duration

Grant terms may last up to 24 months.

Additional Notes

- CDFA reserves the right to modify project scopes and make partial awards.
- Applications must clearly describe why the requested funding amount is necessary and appropriate for the project.
- Allowable expenses for this track can be found in the Allowable Expenses section of the RFA.

Track 2 — Pass-Through Grant for Small-Scale Infrastructure Projects

Track 2 provides pass-through grant awards to eligible organizations that will re-grant funds to multiple Eligible Markets seeking $50,000 or less for each local infrastructure project. Track 2 is designed to support equitable access to resources for small, rural, tribal, and underserved markets by enabling regional partners to administer subawards.

Track 2 grantees will:

- Administer a regional pass-through grant program
- Subaward funds (each under $50,000) to Eligible Markets
- Ensure subawardees meet year-round operation requirements
- Oversee procurement, implementation, compliance, and reporting

Track 2 consists of two distinct and separately budgeted components:

Allowable Administrative Costs (Separate from TA)

Administrative/operating costs cover the expenses required to run the pass-through program, such as:

- Processing applications and issuing subawards
- Fiscal and grant compliance oversight
- Monitoring, recordkeeping, and reporting
- Required financial management and documentation

Administrative costs may NOT include Technical Assistance activities.

Technical Assistance (TA) - Optional Component

Track 2 applicants may request a separate budget allocation for TA activities, however capacity-building activities must exclusively support Eligible Markets located within or serving Disadvantaged Communities (DACs), Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDACs), and/or Vulnerable Populations.

This TA component is optional, but if requested:

1. It must be budgeted as a distinct category separate from administrative costs.
2. It must directly support infrastructure access, capacity, compliance, or project implementation.
3. Pass-through grantees will need to track their general applicant support costs distinctly from the TA for (S)DACs and vulnerable populations.

TA capacity-building may include activities such as:

- Helping priority-population markets apply for subawards
- Supporting markets in DAC/SDAC/vulnerable areas to meet certification, permitting, or regulatory requirements

- Assisting with equipment procurement, installation planning, or vendor coordination
- Providing language interpretation or culturally informed outreach
- Supporting new or transitioning year-round markets serving priority populations

TA Restrictions

The TA budget cannot be used for:

- General administrative costs
- Standard staff time for pass-through grant program operations

Track 2 grantees must be able to separately track and report TA time, expenditures, and outcomes.

Track 2 grant terms may last up to 36 months. They must allow sufficient time for:

- Administering subawards
- Delivering TA (if requested)
- Procurement and installation by sub-awardees
- Monitoring and reporting

Cost Sharing (Track 1 and 2)

Cost sharing or matching funds are not required for this program. Applicants may include leveraged resources (such as partner contributions, in-kind support, or other funding sources), but these are not required for eligibility.

While cost sharing is not required for this program, applications that demonstrate leveraged resources may receive higher scores in relevant evaluation categories. Applicants are encouraged to explore additional funding sources to enhance project scope, sustainability, or long-term impact where applicable.

Allowable Expenses and Guidelines

All costs charged to the grant must be reasonable, necessary, and directly related to implementing the approved project. A cost is considered reasonable if it does not exceed what a prudent person would incur under similar circumstances.

If a proposed expense benefits both grant-funded and non-grant activities, applicants must document a fair and supportable method for allocating costs between the two uses.

Applicants must obtain quotes for all significant equipment purchases and installation costs and provide written justification if the requested infrastructure costs exceed typical costs for similar items. CDFA may request quotes or additional documentation.

Allowable Infrastructure Expenses (Track 1 Applicants and Track 2 Subawardees)

The following allowable infrastructure expenses for Track 1 direct awards and Track 2 subawardees include, but are not limited to:

A. All-Weather Infrastructure

- Canopies and shade structures
- Market stalls, tables, and seating
- Restrooms (portable or permanent)
- Handwashing stations
- Tent weights and tie-downs
- Barricades and bollards for traffic and pedestrian safety
- Bicycle racks
- Other essential all-weather infrastructure needed to support year-round operations

B. Facilities Supporting Food Preparation & Nutrition Education

- Handwashing stations
- Produce washing stations
- Demonstration equipment
- Signage
- Other equipment used to support nutrition education

C. Technology and Digital Tools

- Mobile apps
- Digital market tools
- Tablets
- Wi-Fi hotspots
- Point-of-sale systems

- Wireless EBT terminals for: CalFresh, WIC FMNP and Equivalent Tribal programs*

**The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) provides free Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Point of Sale (POS) devices to certified farmers' markets, direct marketing farmers, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs or farm stands operated by 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. Applicants requesting additional devices must demonstrate that they need additional devices outside of what the CDSS program can provide.*

D. Nutrition Incentive and Food Access Equipment

- Tokens or scrip for incentive programs

E. Refrigeration and Freezer Equipment

- Units meeting program specifications (see Appendix B)
- Temperature-monitoring systems
- Units must be used exclusively to store, transport, sell, or distribute agricultural products as defined in the RFA

Selection of climate-friendly equipment will strengthen application competitiveness, consistent with the program's climate-aligned scoring factors.

F. Market Operations Equipment and Supplies (must prioritize climate-friendly materials; avoid single-use plastics)

- Boxes, bags, and packaging
- Baskets
- Signage
- Pallets
- Hand trucks

Other essential equipment needed for year-round market operation

General Infrastructure Installation Costs

Installation costs criteria:

- Directly required to install or place allowable infrastructure into service
- Necessary to ensure safe functionality and compliance
- Supported by at least one quote

Allowable installation expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Assembly and installation of market structures (stalls, shade systems, tents, etc.)
- Placement, anchoring, securing, or mounting equipment
- Minor site preparation required solely for installation
- Labor to unload, position, or set up infrastructure

Refrigeration-Specific Installation Costs

Allowable costs include:

- Installation labor
- Unloading, placement, anchoring
- Removal and environmentally compliant recycling of replaced units

CDFA recommends selecting turnkey installation packages (unloading, placement, removal/recycling) whenever feasible.

Permits and Fees

Permits are allowable only when directly tied to allowable infrastructure installation, such as:

- Environmental health permits
- Building permits
- Regulatory permits required for installation

Permits associated with non-allowable activities are not reimbursable.

Vehicle-Related Infrastructure Costs

A vehicle is allowable only when it:

- Is required for transporting, storing, or displaying agricultural products at a year-round Eligible Market, and
- Is equipped or retrofitted with market-related infrastructure (e.g., refrigeration units)

Eligible vehicles include trucks, vans, buses, carts, or similar equipment.
Energy-efficient, low-emission vehicles are strongly encouraged, and will be considered for scoring purposes.

Contingency Reserves

Applicants may include up to 10 percent of total quoted costs to account for cost increases between application and contract execution.
Covers:

- Equipment
- Installation
- Unloading/placement
- Removal/recycling
- Electrical work

Technical Assistance Costs (Track 2 Only — Limited to Eligible Activities)

Track 2 applicants may request a separate, clearly itemized TA . TA funds for capacity-building activities must be used exclusively to support DACs, SDACs, and vulnerable populations.

TA Budget Limit

TA is allocated up to a maximum 10 percent of the Track 2 award. Exceptions above this threshold may be considered if additional support is warranted.

Indirect Costs (IDC)

IDC is allowable for Track 2.

IDC Rules

- The baseline IDC rate for CDFA grant programs is 10 percent of total direct costs.
- Applicants may alternatively apply:
    - A federally negotiated rate
    - A state-negotiated rate used within the last five years
    - The de minimis indirect cost rate specified in Part 200 of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The de minimis rate is located in subsection (f).
    - A program-proposed IDC rate with justification if no federal/state rate exists

IDC must be:

- Clearly calculated
- Adequately documented
- Separate from:
    - Direct infrastructure costs
    - Track 2 administrative costs

- Track 2 TA budgets

Unallowable Expenses

Unallowable costs include, but are not limited to:

- Costs incurred outside the grant term
- Costs unrelated to the approved project scope
- Infrastructure not used for year-round Eligible Markets
- Permits related to non-allowable activities or general operations
- Activities outside the allowable expense categories above

Full list of unallowable costs under CDFA grant regulations is available in Appendix E.

Scoring Criteria - Track 1 and 2

Each Track has its own set of evaluation criteria.

Track 1 — Direct Infrastructure Grants

Track 1 applications will be scored out of 100 points, using the criteria below.

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points	Scoring Criteria
Community Need & Equity Impact	20	**16-20 points (Exceptional)**: Very clearly explains who benefits from the project and how well the project addresses community needs. The applicant makes a compelling case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **11-15 points (Good)**: Clearly explains who benefits from the project and how well the project addresses community needs. The applicant makes a good case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broadly explains who benefits from the project and how well the project addresses community needs. The applicant makes a sufficient case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat explains who benefits from the project and how well the project addresses community needs. The applicant makes an inadequate case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not explain who benefits from the project and fails to describe how the project addresses community needs.
Market Access & Food System Benefits	20	**16-20 Points (Exceptional):** Very clearly demonstrates how the project expands food access and strengthens local food systems. **11-15 points (Good)**: Clearly demonstrates how the project expands food access and strengthens local food systems.

		6-10 points (Standard): Broadly demonstrates how the project expands food access and strengthens local food systems. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat demonstrates how the project expands food access and strengthens local food systems. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Doesn't answer question or very unclear as to how the project expands food access and strengthens local food systems.
Project Readiness & Feasibility	15	**15 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly explains the project implementation plan including specific tasks, responsible parties, timelines, and required permits as applicable. **11-14 points (Good):** Clearly explains the project implementation plan including specific tasks, responsible parties, timelines, and required permits as applicable. **6-10 points (Standard):** Broadly explains the project implementation plan including specific tasks, responsible parties, timelines, and required permits as applicable. **1-5 points (Poor):** Somewhat explains the project implementation plan including specific tasks, responsible parties, timelines, and required permits as applicable. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not explain the project implementation plan including specific tasks, responsible parties, timelines, and required permits as applicable.
Climate & Sustainability Benefits	20	**16-20 Points (Exceptional):** Very clearly describes the environmental benefits and sustainability alignment of the proposed infrastructure. **11-15 points (Good)**: Clearly describes the environmental benefits and sustainability alignment of the proposed infrastructure. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broadly describes the environmental benefits and sustainability alignment of the proposed infrastructure. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat describes the environmental benefits and sustainability alignment of the proposed infrastructure. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Doesn't answer question or the environmental benefits and sustainability alignment of the proposed infrastructure are very unclear.
Budget & Cost Effectiveness	20	**16-20 Points (Exceptional):** Very clear and reasonable budget plan, very clearly details how resources will be used, and very clearly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **11-15 points (Good)**: Clear and reasonable budget plan, clearly details how resources will be used, and clearly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broad but reasonable budget plan, broadly details how resources will be used, and broadly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat describes the budget plan, somewhat details how resources will be used, and somewhat demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Budget plan is missing or incomplete.
Organizational Capacity	5	**15 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly describes prior experience and readiness to manage a state grant, operate a year-round market, and measure project outcomes. **11-14 points (Good):** Clearly describes prior experience and readiness to manage a state grant, operate a year-round market, and measure project outcomes.

		6-10 points (Standard): Broadly describes prior experience and readiness to manage a state grant, operate a year-round market, and measure project outcomes. **1-5 points (Poor):** Somewhat describes prior experience and readiness to manage a state grant, operate a year-round market, and measure project outcomes. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not answer the question.
TOTAL	100	

1. Community Need & Equity Impact — 20 points

Evaluates who benefits from the project and how well the project addresses community needs.

Example Scoring Factors:

- Percentage of shopper and/or customers from priority populations as defined in the Definitions Section
- Located in underserved or priority communities
- Quality of community partnerships
- Clarity of the barriers addressed by the project
- SNAP/EBT readiness or implementation plan

Requirements & Prioritization:

- Clearly define the community served and describe local needs.
- Projects serving priority populations receive higher priority.
- Reviewers will verify priority population status using available mapping tools and applicant-provided documentation.

2. Market Access & Food System Benefits — 20 points

Evaluates how the project expands food access and/or strengthens local food systems.

Example Scoring Factors:

- Increased operating days
- Increased vendor capacity
- Expanded customer reach and/or sustaining and deepening relationships with existing customers
- Increased comfortability of the market experience

Requirements:

- Describe the public benefits of the project.

3. Project Readiness & Feasibility — 15 points

Evaluates the likelihood that the project can be implemented successfully and on schedule.

Example Scoring Factors:

- Clear and realistic implementation plan
- Permits status (if relevant)
- Logical project schedule and milestones

Requirements:

- Implementation Plans must include specific tasks, responsible parties, and timelines.
- If the project requires permits, indicate permit status and upload documentation if available.
- If environmental review is required, applicants must demonstrate adequate planning.
- Demonstrate ability to implement and oversee infrastructure projects.

4. Climate & Sustainability Benefits — 20 points

Evaluates the environmental benefits and climate alignment of the proposed infrastructure.

Example Scoring Factors:

- Clearly outline climate responsiveness, climate adaptation, or sustainability benefits
- Use of energy-efficient, climate-friendly equipment
- Reduction of GHG emissions or improvement of climate-smart operations

Requirements:

- Identify and justify the environmental benefits of their project.

- If refrigeration equipment or vehicles are included, efficiency and climate performance will be evaluated.
- Applicants may justify use of less efficient equipment only if supported with documentation.

5. Budget & Cost Effectiveness — 20 points

Evaluates whether the budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and aligned with project goals.

Example Scoring Factors:

- Reasonableness of costs
- Cost per beneficiary
- Community impact
- Leveraged partnerships

Requirements:

- Budgets must directly correspond to activities in the Project Implementation Plan.

6. Organizational Capacity — 5 points

Evaluates the applicant's experience and readiness to manage a state grant and operate a year-round market.

Example Scoring Factors:

- Prior experience operating markets or food access programs
- Administrative and financial management systems
- Prior CDFA grant performance
- Adequate staffing, governance, and oversight structure
- Measurability of project outcomes.

Track 2 — Pass-Through Grant & Technical Assistance Grants

Organizations re-granting funds to multiple markets. Track 2 applicants may propose one of two eligible models:

1. **Model A: Pass-Through Only**, or
2. **Model B: Pass-Through + Technical Assistance (TA)**

To ensure fairness between applicants who do and do not include TA activities, CDFA evaluates each model using **parallel scoring paths**, each totaling **100 points**. Applicants must identify their selected model in their application. CDFA does not prioritize one model over the other.

Model A: Pass-Through Only Applicants (Total: 100 points)

Applicants selecting this model propose to administer a pass-through grant program and distribute subawards, but **do not** propose Technical Assistance activities.

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points	Scoring Criteria
Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework	20	**16-20 points (Exceptional):** Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are very detailed and very much in alignment with the application. The applicant very clearly describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **11-15 points (Good)**: Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are detailed and in alignment with the application. The applicant clearly describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are broadly detailed and mostly in alignment with the application. The applicant broadly describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are somewhat detailed and somewhat in alignment with the application. The applicant somewhat describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Doesn't answer question or the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are inadequate.
Community Reach & Market Impact	25	**20-25 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, very clearly describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and very clearly describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes a compelling case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **16-20 points (Great)**: Clearly demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, clearly describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and clearly describes significance

		to the community/region. The applicant makes a compelling case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **11-15 points (Good)**: Demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and broadly describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes a good case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broadly demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, broadly describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and broadly describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes a sufficient case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, somewhat describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and somewhat describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes an inadequate case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not demonstrate why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, fails to describe who will be impacted by this grant program, and fails to describe the significance to the community/region. The applicant does not make the case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project.
Organizational Capacity & Partnerships	25	**20-25 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, very clearly outlines staff capacity and all staff have very relevant experience for their designated roles, and very clearly demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **16-20 points (Great)**: Clearly describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, clearly outlines staff capacity and all staff have relevant experience for their designated roles, and clearly demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **11-15 points (Good)**: Describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, outlines staff capacity and most staff have relevant experience for their designated roles, and demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broadly describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, broadly outlines staff capacity and some staff have relevant experience for their designated roles, and broadly demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, somewhat outlines staff capacity but staff lack relevant experience for their designated roles, and somewhat demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not answer the question or fails to describe experience administering grants or pass-through programs, fails to outline staff capacity, and fails to demonstrate strong relationships with community or producer partners.

Monitoring, Accountability & Reporting	10	**6-10 points (Exceptional)**: Very detailed and clear plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting, very clear description of monitoring DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact, and very clear description of climate-benefit alignment. **4-5 points (Standard)**: Broadly detailed and clear plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting, broad description of monitoring DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact, and broad description of climate-benefit alignment. **1-3 points (Poor):** Somewhat detailed and clear plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting, vague or lacking description of monitoring DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact, and vague or lacking description of climate-benefit alignment. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not answer the question OR doesn't include any plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting.
Budget & Cost Effectiveness	20	**16-20 Points (Exceptional):** Very clear and reasonable budget plan, very clearly details how resources will be used, and very clearly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **11-15 points (Good)**: Clear and reasonable budget plan, clearly details how resources will be used, and clearly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broad but reasonable budget plan, broadly details how resources will be used, and broadly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat describes the budget plan, somewhat details how resources will be used, and somewhat demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Budget plan is missing or incomplete.
TOTAL	100	

Model B: Pass-Through + Technical Assistance Applicants (Total: 100 points)

Applicants selecting this model propose to administer a pass-through grant program, distribute subawards, and provide Technical Assistance (TA). To ensure equity across models, the TA category is added while point ceilings for other categories are proportionally reduced.

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points	Scoring Criteria
Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework	20	**16-20 points (Exceptional):** Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are very detailed and very much in alignment with the application. The applicant very clearly describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **11-15 points (Good)**: Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are detailed and in alignment with the application. The applicant clearly describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized

		producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are broadly detailed and mostly in alignment with the application. The applicant broadly describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Both the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are somewhat detailed and somewhat in alignment with the application. The applicant somewhat describes how the funding will support small- or medium-sized producers, socially disadvantaged producers, beginning producers, veteran producers, Tribal producers, and/or producers located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Doesn't answer question or the Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework are inadequate.
Community Reach & Market Impact	20	**16-20 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, very clearly describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and very clearly describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes a compelling case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **11-15 points (Good)**: Clearly demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, clearly describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and clearly describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes a good case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broadly demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, broadly describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and broadly describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes a sufficient case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat demonstrates why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, somewhat describes who will be impacted by this grant program, and somewhat describes significance to the community/region. The applicant makes an inadequate case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not demonstrate why the funding is needed and how it will support improvements in food access, fails to describe who will be impacted by this grant program, and fails to describe the significance to the community/region. The applicant does not make the case that the need has urgency/seriousness and can be addressed by the project.
Organizational Capacity & Partnerships	20	**16-20 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, very clearly outlines staff capacity and all staff have very relevant experience for their designated roles, and very clearly demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners.

		11-15 points (Good): Clearly describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, clearly outlines staff capacity and all staff have relevant experience for their designated roles, and clearly demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broadly describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, broadly outlines staff capacity and some staff have relevant experience for their designated roles, and broadly demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat describes experience administering grants or pass-through programs, somewhat outlines staff capacity but staff lack relevant experience for their designated roles, and somewhat demonstrates strong relationships with community or producer partners. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not answer the question or fails to describe experience administering grants or pass-through programs, fails to outline staff capacity, and fails to demonstrate strong relationships with community or producer partners.
Monitoring, Accountability & Reporting	10	**6-10 points (Exceptional)**: Very detailed and clear plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting, very clear description of monitoring DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact, and very clear description of climate-benefit alignment. **4-5 points (Standard)**: Broadly detailed and clear plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting, broad description of monitoring DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact, and broad description of climate-benefit alignment. **1-3 points (Poor):** Somewhat detailed and clear plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting, vague or lacking description of monitoring DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact, and vague or lacking description of climate-benefit alignment. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Does not answer the question OR doesn't include any plan to track subawardee performance and required reporting.
Budget & Cost Effectiveness	15	**11-15 points (Exceptional):** Very clear and reasonable budget plan, very clearly details how resources will be used, and very clearly demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Broad but reasonable budget plan, broadly details how resources will be used, and demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **1-5 points (Poor)**: Somewhat describes the budget plan, somewhat details how resources will be used, and somewhat demonstrates alignment with overall with program plan. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Budget plan is missing or incomplete.
Technical Assistance Capacity	15	**11-15 points (Exceptional):** Very clearly describes ability to provide high-quality assistance and capacity building support to subawardees, particularly DAC/SDAC/vulnerable communities as required by program rules. **6-10 points (Standard)**: Clearly describes ability to provide high-quality assistance and capacity building support to subawardees, particularly DAC/SDAC/vulnerable communities as required by program rules.

		1-5 points (Poor): Somewhat describes ability to provide high-quality assistance and capacity building support to subawardees, particularly DAC/SDAC/vulnerable communities as required by program rules. **0 points (Not Addressed):** Fails to describe ability to provide high-quality assistance and capacity building support to subawardees, particularly DAC/SDAC/vulnerable communities as required by program rules.
TOTAL	100	

1. Regranting Strategy & Equity Framework — 20 points Model A and Model B

Evaluates how effectively the applicant will distribute subawards to Eligible Markets, especially those serving priority populations.

Scoring Factors:

Transparent and fair regranting process. Examples:

- Tribal engagement strategy
- Outreach to underserved or underrepresented markets
- Geographic representation of intended subawardees

2. Community Reach & Market Impact — 25 points Model A / 20 points Model B

Evaluates total anticipated impact of the subaward network.

Scoring Factors:

Improvements in food access. Examples:

- Expected number of markets served
- Geographic reach across regions
- Expected customer and producer impact
- Support for markets transitioning to year-round operations

3. Organizational Capacity & Partnerships — 25 points Model A / 20 points Model B

Evaluates whether the applicant has the systems and collaborators to operate a regional subaward program.

Scoring Factors:

Experience administering grants or pass-through programs. Examples:

- Ability to manage financial and reporting requirements
- Staff capacity
- Community or producer partnerships
- Experience running equitable selection processes

4. Monitoring, Accountability & Reporting — 10 points both Model A and B

Evaluates how the applicant will oversee subawardee performance, climate-benefit alignment, and required reporting.

Scoring Factors:

Data collection and reporting processes. Examples:

- Tracking systems
- Ability to measure public benefits
- Monitoring of DAC/SDAC/vulnerable-population impact
- Measurability of project outcomes

5. Budget & Cost Effectiveness — 20 points Model A / 15 points Model B

Evaluates whether administrative, TA, and subaward budgets are appropriate and maximize funding for local markets.

Scoring Factors: Reasonableness of overall budget. Examples:

- Proportion of funds distributed to markets, and capacity building for the TA track
- Budget should correspond well with program plan and offer sufficient detail to understand how resources will be used and the project will work
- Cost effectiveness of TA delivery
- Alignment with Scope of Work
- Alignment with the Climate Bond priorities

6. Technical Assistance Capacity (Model B only) — 15 points

Evaluates the ability to provide high-quality assistance and capacity building support to subawardees, particularly DAC/SDAC/vulnerable communities as required by program rules.

Scoring Factors:

TA delivery methods and work plan. Examples:

- Staff expertise and capacity to deliver TA
- Languages and cultural competency
- Experience supporting small organizations or markets

Required Supporting Letters and Documents

Track 1 Supporting Letters – Required

1. Market Site Control / Host Letter (1 letter)

A signed letter or a valid permit confirming permission to operate the market.

2. Producer / Fishermen Support Letters (New markets or transitioning markets: 4 letters, Existing year-round markets: 2 letters)

Demonstrates vendor commitment and market demand. May come from:

- Certified Producer
- Commercial fishermen
- Tribal producers
- Aquaculture producers

3. Community Support Letters (New markets or transitioning markets: 4 letters, Existing year-round markets: 2 letters)

If you are a priority population or serving a priority population at least one of the community support letters must come from a community leader or group from the priority population

Demonstrate community need, partnerships, and alignment with local priorities. Examples:

- Tribal government or tribal-based non-profit organization
- Community-based organizations
- Local nonprofits
- Public health departments
- Schools or school districts

- Food access groups

Track 2 Support Letters – Required

1. Community or Regional Support Letters (2 letters)

Letters showing the applicant is recognized and trusted by the communities and markets they intend to serve. Examples:

- Community-based organizations
- Tribal governments
- Local nonprofits
- Market associations or networks
- Regional food system partners

Required ONLY for Track 2 Model B TA Applicants (1 letter)

Required if the applicant proposes TA capacity building activities. Must demonstrate real and credible capacity to provide TA services, such as:

- Community-based organizations
- Tribal governments
- Local nonprofits
- Market associations or networks
- Regional food system partners

How to Apply

Applicants must submit their complete application online through the Grant Opportunity Administration and Tracking System (GOATS):
https://applications.cdfa.ca.gov/grants/s/

Applicants with questions during the application period may email:
Year_Round_Market_Grants@cdfa.ca.gov

All application materials must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM Pacific Time on May 22, 2027. Late or incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

This grant uses a one-phase application process. Applications must be submitted with all required materials at once; incomplete submissions will be disqualified.

A complete application includes:

- Application Form (submitted through GOATS) including:
  - Project Implementation Plan
  - Project Budget
- Supporting Documents and Letters
- All other required documents referenced throughout this RFA as needed (e.g. permits and quotes)

Applicants are encouraged to prepare materials in advance so the full application package can be uploaded without delay. Applications be submitted directly into the GOATS system.

Program staff will be available throughout the application period to answer questions related to program requirements, allowable expenses, and the GOATS submission process.

Limited Waivers of Sovereign Immunity

In limited circumstances assessed for each grant program, CDFA will require federally-recognized tribes to provide limited waivers of sovereign immunity as a condition of accepting the Climate Bond grant funds. CDFA recognizes the serious nature of requesting a limited waiver of sovereign immunity and public access. CDFA is committed to working collaboratively with California Native American tribes on tailoring limited waiver of sovereign immunity terms, deed restrictions, and public access requirements to support tribal priorities while also meeting the state's legal obligations in administering bond funds and funds derived from public tax dollars.

Virtual Application Workshop

CDFA will host a virtual workshop covering program requirements and how to submit an application via GOATS. The workshop will be recorded and posted to the program webpage. All dates and times are to be determined (TBD) at this stage.

Weekly Office Hours

CDFA will offer weekly virtual office hours to assist applicants with program and process-related questions. Office hours will also be recorded and posted to the program webpage. All dates and times are to be determined (TBD) at this stage.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

CDFA will regularly update an FAQ document to address common program and application questions. Responses to questions from webinars, office hours, public comments, and email inquiries will be posted to the program webpage.

Program webpage:
https://cafarmtofork.cdfa.ca.gov/farm_to_fork/grants/infrastructure.html

CDFA will offer optional draft application reviews for a limited number of eligible applicants. This service is available on a first-come, first-served basis and is limited.

Eligible for Draft Review Services

- California Native American Tribes
- Tribal-based nonprofit organizations
- Organizations operated by members of historically or socially disadvantaged groups (as defined in the Farmer Equity Act)

To request draft review, email: Year_Round_Market_Grants@cdfa.ca.gov

CDFA staff can

- Review draft application responses and budgets
- Provide verbal feedback via phone or Zoom
- Offer guidance on strengthening project descriptions and alignment with scoring criteria
- Clarify whether proposed costs meet allowable expense requirements

CDFA staff cannot

- Write or edit the application
- Direct applicants on how to carry out their project
- Conduct research on behalf of applicants
- Guarantee selection or favorable scoring
- Participation in this service does not guarantee funding or higher technical review scores.

Staff involved in draft reviews will not participate in scoring those applications.

CDFA can provide free language interpretation for applicants who wish to participate in office hours, workshops, or draft-review discussions and speak limited English. CDFA cannot translate application materials themselves, and the application must be submitted in English.

All technical assistance provided by CDFA program staff is free of cost to applicants.

Two-stage review process

The Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program uses a two-stage review process to evaluate all submitted applications: Administrative Review and Technical Review.

Only applications that pass Administrative Review will proceed to Technical Review.

Reviewers will use this solicitation document and any Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) posted during the application period as a guide throughout the review process. Misrepresentation or omission of required information may result in application rejection.

1. Administrative Review

During Administrative Review, CDFA will evaluate whether the application is:

- Eligible
    - Applicant fits eligibility requirements
- Accurate
    - No clearly inconsistent, contradictory, or knowingly false information
- Complete
    - All required materials submitted using the required GOATS system
    - All questions answered; all required documents uploaded

Please see below for a list of reasons an application may be disqualified at this stage. Note that examples provided are not all-inclusive:

- The applicant is not an eligible entity.
- The application includes activities with dates outside the allowable grant duration.
- The funding amount requested is less than the minimum award amount allowable or exceeds the maximum award amount allowable.
- The application has been funded in full by another funding source or duplicates other received CDFA funding.
- The application is incomplete, including an application with one or more unanswered questions or missing, blank, or unreadable attachments.
- The application has answers lacking in sufficient detail as to evaluate the project.
- The application includes unallowable costs or activities.

- The application attempts to circumvent length or character limits, such as including links or responding to a question in the space provided for a different question.
- The application does not meet the purpose as defined in the Request for Proposal.
- The application would provide an improper benefit if funded.
- The application is submitted after the submission period has ended.

Applications that meet all administrative requirements will proceed to Technical Review.

2. Technical Review

Applications that pass Administrative Review undergo a scoring-based Technical Review using the criteria defined in this RFA (including Track-specific criteria).

During Technical Review, CDFA reserves the right to:

- Request clarifying information from applicants
- Work with selected applicants to modify project scopes
- Issue partial awards if appropriate
- Consider technical review scores, alignment with program goals, and geographic distribution when determining final awards

Final award decisions rely on more than scores alone; CDFA also considers program goals, fair distribution of funding across the state, and ensuring that communities with the greatest needs have real access to the program.

Appeal Rights

Applicants who are disqualified during Administrative Review may appeal the decision. Appeals must be submitted to the CDFA Office of Hearings and Appeals within 10 calendar days of receiving the disqualification notice. Late appeals will not be considered.

Appeal Requirements

Your appeal must be:

- Written and signed by the responsible party listed on the application (or their authorized agent)
- Detailed, clearly explaining the reason for appeal
- Submitted with a copy of the disqualification notice and any supporting documentation
- Complete — All materials must be submitted together in one package

Submission Methods (Choose only one)

- Option A — Email (preferred): CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov
- Option B — Mail:
  California Department of Food and Agriculture
  Office of Hearings and Appeals
  1220 N Street, Suite 315
  Sacramento, CA 95814

Reporting and Evaluation

Climate Bond Reporting Requirements:

- CDFA is responsible for reporting on the status and use of Climate Bond funds. The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), which administers the Bond, will require the CDFA to report data collected from the program.
- CDFA will post summary information about the applications submitted, the projects awarded, and outcome information, including project final reports.
- Data associated with these grant programs are subject to public disclosure through the California Public Records Act (CPRA). The CPRA states that every citizen has the right to inspect and obtain a copy of any public record. Certain records are exempt from disclosure under the CPRA. The CDFA Legal Office shall determine if a record is exempt from disclosure.
    - CDFA recognizes that Tribal Governments and Tribal-based organizations retain full ownership, control and authority over their data. Because of the historic misuse of Tribal data and Traditional knowledge, Tribal applicants may limit or restrict the disclosure of sensitive information such as cultural resources, sacred sites, Traditional knowledge, ecological observations, or other data that could be exploited if released to the public.
    - CDFA will work directly with Tribal grantees and legal counsel to determine appropriate confidentiality protections, including redaction, alternative reporting methods, or confidentiality agreements. Tribal grantees may notify CDFA at any time if requested materials contain culturally sensitive information, and CDFA will meet and confer with the Tribe to prevent unnecessary disclosure and ensure reporting obligations are met without compromising Tribal data sovereignty.

Track 1 and Track 2 grantees will be required to complete the following:

- **Beginning Interview:** Core team members listed on application will participate in an interview with CDFA staff. The interview will occur sometime between when the project is selected for funding and when the project begins. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the project plan and confirm roles.
- **Invoices**: Submit quarterly invoices to CDFA (utilizing a template that CDFA will provide) along with documentation to demonstrate proof of payment, detailing spending to be reimbursed for actual allowable costs incurred. If eligible and approved for an Advance Payment, submit regular invoicing in accordance with Advance Payment regulations.
- **Quarterly Check-in Surveys**: Submit quarterly check-in surveys to CDFA throughout the entire grant term. Surveys will summarize project progress, successes, and challenges.
- **Annual Report:** Grantees will use a template CDFA provides to submit an annual report covering progress made during the first 12 months of the project. The Track 1 grant term is 24 months, so only one Annual Report is required for Track 1.
    - Annual reports are due within 30 days of the end of the 12-month reporting period.
    - Annual reports should summarize accomplishments, challenges, and progress toward expected outcomes. This may include updates to the climate and sustainability, revenue, and community-reach metrics.
- **Final Report**: Grantees will use a template CDFA provides to submit a final report covering progress made during the entirety of the project. It is due within 30 days of the termination of the grant agreement.
    - Final reports must include final annual metrics, overall outcomes, lessons learned. This may include an update and summary of the project's community, economic, and climate impacts and metrics.
- **Final Interview and Site Visit**: At minimum, the main point of contact listed on the application will participate in a final interview and optional site visit with CDFA after the grant term concludes to discuss project successes, challenges, and other relevant information. CDFA highly encourages all listed team members to attend, if possible.

Grant Disbursement

CDFA provides two primary methods for grant disbursement under the Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program: Reimbursement, and Advance Payments (if eligible). Awardees may use either or both methods, provided all requirements are met.

Reimbursement (Standard Disbursement Method)

Reimbursement is the standard method for grant disbursement.
Grantees may submit reimbursement claims quarterly or on a pre-determined schedule.

Reimbursement Requirements

- Only allowable and approved project costs may be reimbursed.
- All claims must include supporting documentation (invoices, receipts, quotes, proof of payment, etc.).
- CDFA aims to process approved reimbursements within 90 days of receiving a complete reimbursement package.

Advance Payments (Optional for Eligible Grantees)

Advance payments are intended to support grantees who would experience significant cash-flow burden under a reimbursement-only model. CDFA may provide advances of up to three months of projected expenses at a time.

Advance Payment Eligibility

To qualify, grantees must:

- Attest that they have low cash flow
- Be prepared to provide supporting documentation if requested (e.g., financial statements)

Cities, counties, and universities are not eligible for advances.

Advance Payment Request Requirements

Each advance request must include:

- An advance request form provided by CDFA
- A cost forecast similar to a reimbursement invoice
- Quotes and supporting documents for all forecasted expenses (such as equipment or installation)

Advance Payment Rules

- Advances may cover up to three months of projected approved expenses.
- Grantees must spend down the full amount of an advance before requesting the next.
- No more than 25 percent of the total grant award may be advanced at a time.
- Any interest earned on advanced funds must be returned to CDFA, and grantees must document fund location and interest (if any).

Combining Reimbursement and Advance Payments

Eligible grantees may use a combination of reimbursement and advance payment methods. This hybrid approach allows grantees to maintain cash flow while ensuring compliance with State of California fiscal requirements.

Find all requirements for Advance Payment in Section 316.1 of CDFA's Grant Administration Regulations. Please note, federally recognized tribes will have to provide limited waivers of sovereign immunity to utilize advance payments.

Call for External Reviewers

CDFA is seeking individuals interested in serving as external reviewers for the Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program. External reviewers play an important role in supporting a fair and objective evaluation process.

Interested individuals should email:
Year_Round_Market_Grants@cdfa.ca.gov

Reviewers must be prepared to disclose any conflicts of interest, including affiliations with any organization applying for funding through this program. CDFA may request additional information to confirm eligibility to serve as a reviewer, including professional background, relevant experience, or areas of expertise.

External reviewers will evaluate applications using the scoring criteria described in Section. The CDFA will hold training sessions prior to reviewing and will provide additional guidance. Reviewers must maintain confidentiality and follow CDFA's evaluation guidelines.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to the Year-Round Market Infrastructure Grant Program. These terms support consistent interpretation of eligibility requirements, allowable expenses, scoring criteria, and compliance obligations.

Agricultural Product

A fresh or processed product produced in California, including fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs, mushrooms, dairy, shell eggs, honey, pollen, unprocessed beeswax, propolis, royal jelly, flowers, grains, nursery stock, raw sheared wool, livestock meats, poultry meats, rabbit meats, and fish—including shellfish produced under controlled conditions in California waters. Products combining agricultural and non-agricultural components in a way that increases the purchase price do not qualify as agricultural products.

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

a farmer or rancher who has not actively operated and managed a farm or ranch with a bona fide insurable interest in a crop or livestock as an owner-operator, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper for more than five crop years, as determined by the United States Secretary of Agriculture and as defined in Section 1502 of Title 7 of the United States Code.

California Native American Tribe

A Federally-recognized or a non-Federally recognized Native American tribe listed by the Native American Heritage Commission.

Certified Farmers' Market (CFM)

A California agricultural point-of-sale location registered under Food and Agricultural Code 47020 and 47004. The operator must establish a clearly defined marketing area where only agricultural products may be sold, and all producers must comply with §47020.

Certified Producer

A legally recognized grower authorized to sell certified agricultural products directly to consumers at CFMs, holding a valid Certified Producer's Certificate issued by the county agricultural commissioner.

Certified Producer's Certificate

A certificate issued by the county agricultural commissioner authorizing the transportation and sale of certified agricultural products. Certificates are valid for up to 12 months and must be renewed annually.

Certifiable Agricultural Products

Fresh, unprocessed agricultural goods from verified producers, such as fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs, cultivated mushrooms, shell eggs, honey, cut flowers, unprocessed grains, and nursery stock.

Climate-Friendly Equipment

Equipment or infrastructure that reduces environmental harm or avoids contributing to climate impacts. This includes equipment that improves energy performance, uses lower-impact materials, reduces emissions, supports climate adaptation, or otherwise aligns with the intent of the State climate bond by not creating additional climate burden.

Disadvantaged Community (DAC)

A community with a median household income of less than 80 percent of the area average or less than 80 percent of statewide median household income.

Eligible Entities

Public agencies, local agencies, nonprofit organizations, special districts, joint powers authorities, Tribes, public utilities, local publicly owned utilities, and mutual water companies operating, or seeking funding to begin operating, Eligible Markets.

Eligible Markets

Certified Farmers' Markets as defined in Section 47004 of the Food and Agricultural Code, fishermen's markets as defined in Section 113780 of the Health and Safety Code, and Tribe-operated or Native-serving farmers' markets.

Energy-Efficient Equipment

Equipment designed to reduce electricity or fuel consumption compared to standard models. This includes refrigeration units, freezers, digital tools, appliances, lighting, and other infrastructure that demonstrates higher efficiency or reduces energy demand during year-round market operations.

Fishermen's Market

A market operated by a licensed commercial fisherman or an entity representing two or more licensed commercial fishermen or California-registered aquaculturists. Fishermen's markets may sell raw edible aquatic plants, raw fresh fish, or fresh frozen fish caught by licensed commercial fishermen or produced by registered aquaculturists.

Infrastructure

Physical equipment, fixtures, structures, or technology necessary to support the safe and effective year-round operation of an Eligible Market, including all-weather infrastructure, food-preparation facilities, refrigeration units, digital tools, and other allowable equipment described in this RFA.

Noncertifiable Agricultural Products

Processed products from the same producer – such as dairy, wool, meat, honeybee products, or aquaculture goods – may be sold only if all required state and county regulations are followed. Once a certified product is processed, it is treated as a noncertifiable product for direct marketing.

Priority Populations

The specific groups identified in Section 93540 of the Climate Bond as receiving priority for funding. These include small- and medium- sized farms, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, beginning farmers or ranchers, and veteran farmers or ranchers.

Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC)

A community with a median household income of less than 60 percent of the area average or less than 60 percent of statewide median household income.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher

A member of a group subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice, including but not limited to African Americans, Native American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Applicants may also identify as Middle Eastern or North African.

Small- and Medium-Sized Farms

A farm with annual gross sales up to $400,000 or a dairy operation with annual gross sales up to $1,000,000.

Subawardee (Subrecipient)

An Eligible Market receiving funding through a Track 2 Pass-Through Grant administered by a Track 2 grantee.

Technical Assistance (TA)

Direct support provided to Eligible Markets located in or serving DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations to help them install, operate, maintain, or comply with requirements related to grant-funded infrastructure. TA may include regulatory navigation, procurement or installation support, interpretation services, and capacity-building linked directly to infrastructure implementation.

Tribal-Based Non-Profit Organizations

California-based nonprofit organizations with at least 50 percent of the Board of Directors and/or Leadership Team identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian and whose organizational mission or strategic plan expresses a commitment to serving and/or empowering California Native American Tribes or people.

Tribe-Operated or Native-Serving Farmers' Market

A Tribe-Operated or Native-Serving Farmers' Market is a market owned or administered by a California Native American Tribe or tribal operated organization, or a market that primarily benefits Californian Native American communities through its location, vendor composition, or culturally relevant activities.

Veteran Farmer or Rancher

A farmer or rancher who has served in the U.S. Armed Forces; meets specific veteran criteria under Title 38; and has operated a farm or ranch for no more than five years, consistent with federal definitions.

Vulnerable Population

A subgroup of population within a region or community that faces a disproportionately heightened risk or increased sensitivity to impacts of climate change and that lacks adequate resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from such impacts. (Note: tribes are considered vulnerable populations).

Year-Round Operation

A market that operates regularly throughout all seasons of the year, with a consistent and publicly listed schedule demonstrating ongoing availability to customers and producers.

Minimum operational frequency may be further clarified by CDFA during the grant agreement process.

Other State Grant Opportunities

Please note that not all state programs allow the use of other state grants for the same project. Applicants are responsible for confirming eligibility requirements and restrictions for each external funding source they intend to use.

To explore other opportunities:

CDFA Grant Programs

A complete list of CDFA-administered grant programs is available at:
https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants/

California State Grants and Loans

The California State Library maintains a searchable statewide portal of grants and loans from all state agencies:
https://www.grants.ca.gov/

Applicants are encouraged to use these resources to identify complementary funding opportunities that can support year-round market infrastructure, producer participation, food access, climate resiliency, or community engagement activities.