



State of New Jersey

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March 10, 2025

Due to recent Executive Orders, federal funding may be reduced or cancelled. Publishing this request for proposals (RFP) does not commit the state to awarding any federal funds.

Re: Request for Proposals – Jersey Fresh For All Local Food Purchase Assistance Program (NJ-LFPA25)

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) invites qualified organizations to submit proposals for funding available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) **Jersey Fresh For All Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (NJ-LFPA25)**. This program builds upon the success of the previous Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) and LFPA Plus initiatives, focusing on the procurement of unprocessed or minimally processed domestic foods, which will be distributed to underserved communities across the state.

Program Overview:

The overarching goals of this funding initiative are to bolster the NJ's agricultural sector and ensure that fresh, local food reaches underserved populations that face challenges accessing nutritious and culturally relevant foods. We are particularly focused on supporting entities that prioritize purchasing from historically underserved farmers, producers, fishers, and small businesses, and those that distribute food to populations outside traditional food access networks.

Program Goals and Objectives:

The NJ-LFPA25 Program aims to:

- **Enhance food and agricultural supply chain resiliency** by supporting the procurement of locally sourced, unprocessed, or minimally processed agricultural commodities from New Jersey-based producers.
- **Support historically underserved farmers, fishers, and small businesses** in New Jersey, including processors, aggregators, and distributors, by facilitating partnerships that prioritize purchases from these entities.

- **Increase food access to underserved communities**, particularly those with limited access to traditional food distribution networks, by building sustainable and diverse local food systems.
- **Incorporate culturally relevant foods** (e.g., kosher, halal, and other culturally appropriate options) that meet community preferences and dietary needs.

In order to achieve these objectives, NJDA encourages projects that foster lasting relationships and develop procurement and distribution channels that extend beyond the funding period of the NJ-LFPA25 program.

Eligible Funding Categories:

A total of **\$9,902,456** is available for this competitive funding opportunity under the following four categories:

1. **Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs)**: For large-scale Emergency Feeding Organizations recognized by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (6 State-approved EFOs).
2. **Community/Soup Kitchens, Food Banks, Pantries, and Smaller Organizations**: For food security organizations not formally recognized as State EFOs. This includes faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, and other local food providers.
3. **Gleaning, Food Recovery Organizations, and Aggregators/Cooperatives**: This category supports organizations engaged in gleaning, food recovery, and food aggregation activities that support local food systems.
4. **Innovation in Food Procurement and Distribution**: This category seeks innovative approaches to food procurement and distribution. Projects must demonstrate new, creative strategies for building food access and food systems resilience.

Please note that interested entities may submit applications in both the main categories and the Innovation category, but separate applications are required for each. Additionally, there is no matching fund requirement for non-state EFOs. However, State-recognized EFOs must provide a description of their use of the 10% allocated for local purchases, along with an accurate accounting of expenditures to date.

Key Eligibility Criteria:

Eligible entities include:

- **Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs)** as recognized by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture.
- **Community/Soup Kitchens, Food Banks, Pantries, and Smaller Organizations** such as faith-based and community-based organizations involved in food security and food distribution.
- **Gleaning, Food Recovery Organizations, Aggregators/Cooperatives** that engage in activities related to food recovery, food distribution, or the aggregation of local foods.

- **Innovation in Food Procurement and Distribution Applicants** must demonstrate a partnership with one or more of the above-listed entities involved in food procurement, distribution, or emergency response activities.

Applicants applying for the **Innovation in Food Procurement and Distribution** category must provide detailed evidence of their collaboration with partners actively engaged in agricultural activities, food distribution, emergency feeding, or other related functions. The partnership must clearly demonstrate how the applicant intends to collaborate with these organizations to enhance food procurement and distribution efforts.

NJDA reserves the right to award multiple grants within each category based on the quality of proposals received, or to award a single grant in each category. Selection will be based on a thorough review of each application, with priority given to those proposals that best align with the program's goals of supporting underserved communities and strengthening local food systems.

Program Restrictions:

- **No indirect or administrative costs** covered by NJ-LFPA25 funds.
- Recipients must confirm the availability of nonfederal funds for the administration of the program, ensuring that grant funds will be used for direct costs related to food procurement, distribution, and program implementation.

Application Submission Instructions:

Interested entities must submit their completed applications via email to **NJDA.Grants@ag.nj.gov** no later than **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 10, 2025**. Late applications will **not** be considered.

Please ensure that all required documentation is included in the application, which should clearly outline the scope of the proposed project, the partners involved, and a detailed budget plan.

Contact Information:

For any questions or further clarification, please contact me directly at:

- **Phone:** (609) 913-6628
- **Email:** deelip.mhaske@ag.nj.gov

If you do not receive a confirmation email following your submission, please reach out to me via phone or email to ensure that your application has been received.

We encourage you to forward this opportunity to other relevant parties or organizations that may be interested in applying. We look forward to reviewing your proposals and working together to improve food access and strengthen New Jersey's local food systems.

Sincerely,

Deelip Mhaske

Grants Administrator

New Jersey Department of Agriculture

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