U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Foreign Agricultural Service

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Assisting Specialist Crop Exports: Provision of MRL Information

Application Submission Deadline: October 18, 2024

Summary
The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service announces this funding opportunity to support the Assisting Specialty Crop Exports (ASCE) Initiative by issuing a new award(s). This opportunity is available to eligible trade organizations and not-for-profit enterprises and is intended to assist farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses preparing products for export to understand the requirements for maximum residue limits for products in overseas markets.

A. Program Description

U.S. Specialty Crop producers feed the United States and the world with nutritious fruits, nuts, herbs, and vegetables. Yet, U.S. specialty crop producers face many unique barriers to successfully exporting their high-value products to international markets. Specialty crops are disproportionately affected by maximum residue limit (MRL) related trade barriers, including residue tolerances of pesticides, fungicides and herbicides. Differences among registration systems, monitoring, and inspection programs, and the values of MRLs across different markets pose a significant difficulty for trade of these products. Exporters can be limited in access to markets where an MRL is set lower than their domestic market or where an MRL is absent. Missing or restrictive MRLs force producers to either discontinue use of best practices or modify their use pattern in such a way as to make them ineffective. Missing MRLs are a particular problem for specialty crops as many do not have established Codex Alimentarius (Codex) MRLs, and there are differences in registration assessments and data requirements across countries when establishing national MRLs.

The Assisting Specialty Crop Exports (ASCE) Initiative goal is to expand specialty crop exports by helping U.S. exporters address non-tariff trade barriers. Through USDA's extensive and ongoing consultations with industry groups, access to MRL information has been identified as a concern of U.S. producers. As such, this project will ensure access to MRLs affecting U.S. specialty crops exports and promote understanding and awareness of MRLs in key foreign markets.

Under this award, the recipient will facilitate ready access to MRL information, in order to enable U.S.-based food and agriculture producers, agribusinesses, and exporters, U.S.-based researchers, and groups representing U.S. agriculture stakeholders to understand requirements in diverse markets; and assist them in understanding how to interpret those requirements. This should be available at no cost to eligible users; although this does not preclude the recipient from offering relevant supplemental resources (for example, in-person training or additional data or analysis) for a fee; refer to Section H for more information on post-award program income.

In facilitating ready access to MRL information, the recipient will arrange for eligible users, as defined below, to have access to one or more web-based databases which include the following information:

- Registered U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/Food and Drug Administration (FDA) active ingredients for pesticides and veterinary drugs on which the EPA/FDA has set one or more MRLs.
- Pesticide and veterinary drug MRL standards currently in effect for foreign markets.
- U.S. and foreign MRLs for the individual commodities on which the U.S. EPA/FDA sets MRLs.
- General MRLs (currently in force) which includes processed commodity MRLs, Default MRLs, U.S. Section 18 MRLs, U.S. Regional MRLs, and U.S. CFR Prescribed Use MRLs.
- Regulatory notes which include the published regulation commodity term on which the MRL is set; and additional regulatory information noted for the MRL in the regulation.
- Global MRL standards on active ingredients and commodities for which the U.S. EPA/FDA has set an MRL.
- Deferral paths for countries which defer to Codex or other regional standard-setting bodies and/or use a complex decision pathway to determine MRLs. The deferral path policy must be a clear, logical, and linear decision tree.
- MRL source label for countries which defer to other markets' regulations.
- Market information reports.
- Residue definitions.
- Response to user support queries for technical issues and pesticide MRL questions within the scope of data listed in this section.

This program's intended beneficiaries are U.S.-based food and agriculture producers, agribusinesses, and exporters, U.S.-based researchers, and groups representing U.S. agriculture stakeholders. As a practical matter, however, eligible users will consist of all users with verifiable IP addresses in the United States should be able to participate without further verification requirements, other than acceptance of commercially reasonable terms of use.

NOFO Goal & Objectives

In assisting eligible users to understand how to interpret MRL-related requirements, the recipient will host virtual training sessions, not less than quarterly, describing how to obtain access to this information, how to run queries, and how to interpret the findings. The recipient should ensure that this is scheduled for a reasonable hour in all U.S. time zones. The recipient should make clear, however, that any data, advice, or assistance made available through this project is strictly informational, and that no party can guarantee entry to a foreign market for any particular commodity or shipment.

Funding Opportunity Number

USDA-FAS-10621-0750-10.-24-0006

Assistance Listing Number

10.621 Assisting Specialty Crop Exports

Authorizing Legislation
Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act, as amended, 15 USC § 714c(f)

B. Federal Award Information

Total Available Federal Funding:	Total Available Federal Funding $2,500,000 With an initial award of up to $500,000. *Subject to the availability of funding a cumulative total of $2.5 million, may be available throughout the period of performance of the award. See Section H, Other Information, for additional information on incremental funding.*
Anticipated Number of Awards:	1
Cost Share/Match Requirement:	None/Not Required
Projected Period of Performance Start:	January 1, 2025
Projected Period of Performance End:	December 31, 2029

Extensions are not available under any circumstances; the recipient must ensure that all activities have concluded by the end date.

Type of Assistance Instrument:
USDA/FAS anticipates that a Grant Agreement will be funded pursuant to this funding opportunity.

In this type of agreement, the recipient is expected to implement the project autonomously with little programmatic involvement from USDA/FAS. However, USDA/FAS maintains an oversight role, and the recipient must ensure that USDA/FAS is kept apprised of project activities and progress.

Additional Awards
USDA/FAS reserves the right to make additional awards under this solicitation, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

No Awards
USDA/FAS reserves the right to make no awards under this competition.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants: Eligible trade organizations as defined at 7 USC 5623(b)(1); Nonprofit organizations with or without 501(c)(3) status

All applicants must have an active registration in the U.S. Government System for Award Management (www.sam.gov) before the application submission deadline of the announcement; applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. Please contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, if you have questions about this requirement. Applicants with inactive, expired, pending, or excluded listings will be deemed ineligible. Exceptions, waivers, or extensions will not be considered. Please contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, if you have questions about this requirement.

Threshold Criteria
Cost Share/Match Requirement: None/Not Required

Ineligible activities: If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

Multiple Applications/Awards
An individual applicant may not submit more than one application in response to this NOFO, and may not be offered more than one award.

Substantial Compliance
All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described in Section C to be considered eligible. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section D of this solicitation or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section D with respect to the application, or parts thereof, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.

Evidence of Eligibility
Applicants are responsible for including documentation, if necessary, establishing that they meet the stated eligibility requirements, when it is not immediately obvious. Applicants should not presume that USDA/FAS is sufficiently familiar with their organization that this is unnecessary, and USDA/FAS will not make assumptions as to the nature of the applicant's organization.

D. Application and Submission Information

This announcement contains all information necessary to apply to this funding opportunity.

Deadline for Question Submission: September 30, 2024

Applicants may submit questions about this funding opportunity to the Section G contact.

Submission Dates and Times

Application Submission Deadline: October 18, 2024 at 11:59pm EDT (UTC -04:00)
Applications received after this time will not be accepted. Applicants are advised to make their submissions 1-2 days before this deadline in case of computer problems.

Anticipated Award Date: November 1, 2024

Content and Form of Application Submission

A complete application package must include:

- Standard Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, showing the Unique Entity Identifier, and signed by the applicant
- Standard Form SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, showing the budget categorization. Applicants are advised to consult 2 CFR 200 Subpart E for guidance on proper categorization of cost items. An improper categorization will not itself be grounds for a determination of ineligibility, but may delay approval and/or adversely impact the application's evaluation scoring.
- A detailed budget and budget narrative, in which cost items are quantified and described in sufficient detail to enable USDA/FAS to independently determine that the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable for the project and consistent with applicable regulations. Applicants should quantify and describe any voluntary cost share in their budget and budget narrative.
    - Since this award will be incrementally funded, the detailed budget and narrative should reflect a total of $2,500,000 for 5 years with a break down for every year, including $500,000 for the first year.
    - If indirect costs are included in the budget, attach a copy of the latest indirect cost rate agreement negotiated with a cognizant federal agency. If a negotiated indirect cost agreement does not exist, please attach a description of the basis for the indirect cost calculation. If electing to utilize the de minimis rate, consistent with 2 CFR 200.414(f), please include a statement of election.
- A detailed project narrative or plan of operation no more than eight (8) pages in length, single spaced. Supplemental documents (CVs, etc.) are not subject to page limits, but should be submitted only if relevant and, at the agency's discretion, may be excluded from consideration in scoring. The project narrative should describe in plain language:
    - A description of the activities to be undertaken, described in detail, indicating locations, timelines, personnel, and any other factors that the applicant feels will demonstrate applicant's capacity to support the objectives described in Section A in a credible, effective, and time-bound manner. This includes a clear plan for establishing and maintaining access to the data required, ensuring its currency and quality. Insofar as a third-party vendor or other subcontract/subaward is leveraged for this purpose, reasonable assurance should be conveyed that the vendor will perform at the quoted price for the duration of the award.
    - A review of the expertise possessed by or available to the applicant relating to understanding of the context and inter-related issues for maximum residue levels,

including not only the theoretical policy-making aspect, but also the scientific basis through which they are determined, and most importantly, the practical implications for producers, exporters, and agribusiness in interpreting and applying those policies, and how this affects trade
    - Awareness of challenges and opportunities for export-oriented agricultural producers and exporters, including evidence that the applicant has experience in managing projects with a diverse set of stakeholders who may not be known to them ex ante. This includes reasonable assurance that the applicant can present as an objective and impartial conveyer of information to those stakeholders, and that all stakeholders are included.
    - A specific plan to consult with industry stakeholders and facilitate collaboration among and between them, in order to ensure that the information is available in a manner most useful to them.
    - A specific plan to disseminate the effort and how it can enhance public and policy-maker understanding of MRL issues, and of the existence of and benefits to accessing MRL information, and an assessment of the extent to which the plan is likely to be effective at reaching target audiences throughout the lifetime of the project.
    - To the extent that the applicant will identify dedicated staff or partners for this activity, include a clear and reasonable description of how this will occur.
- Standard Form SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable to the applicant

Specific application formats
While these guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the application.

Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)
Each applicant is required to:

(i) Have an active registration in SAM before submitting its application;
(ii) Have assented to the federal assistance certifications in the SAM platform;
(iii) Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in its application; and
(iv) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

SAM.gov Registration Instructions
Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using login.gov[1] to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned an entity by SAM.gov, and requires assertions,

[1] Login.gov a secure sign in service used by the public to sign into Federal Agency systems including SAM.gov and Grants.gov. For help with login.gov accounts you should visit http://login.gov/help.

representations and certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the Entity Registration Checklist for details on this process.

Entities outside the United States (defined at 2 CFR 200.1 as "foreign organizations" and "foreign public entities") must obtain a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) Code prior to SAM.gov registration An NCAGE is required for all foreign entities prior to registering in SAM.gov. You can complete the registration once you enter the NCAGE. You can submit your request for an NCAGE Code by going to the NATO Support Activity (NSPA) NCAGE Request Tool at CAGE/NCAGE Code Request which contains detailed instructions.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the Frequently Asked Question on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the Federal Service Desk for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm ET.

Intergovernmental Review
Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. USDA implemented the Executive Order in 2 CFR 415.5. USDA/FAS may require applicants selected for funding to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review. These reviews are not required before submitting an application. Only applicants that USDA/FAS selects for funding under this announcement are subject to the Intergovernmental Review requirement. For more information about USDA's implementation for Intergovernmental Review, please visit https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental-review

Funding Restrictions
Generally, funds may not be used in any manner that is prohibited by applicable regulations, including 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 400. Awards issued pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity may only be used for the purpose set forth in the award, consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Capital expenses, such as the purchase of equipment, not entirely attributable to this award, must be pro-rated.

For example, agreement funds and other support may not be used for matching contributions for other federal grants or cooperative agreements, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Federal employees are prohibited from acting as an agent of the

applicant in any capacity (paid or unpaid) on any proposal submitted under this program. Also, federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal Government or any other government entity.

Compensation for personal services: Employees, consultants, or other personnel, including those of subrecipients, and regardless of the method of engagement, may not exceed the pro-rata equivalent of GS-15 on the General Schedule (for 2024, $159,950 per year, $612.84 per day, or $76.60 per hour). Non-monetizable fringe benefits, such as health insurance coverage, are not included to this ceiling.

Indirect Costs: In general, costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective but not readily assignable to specific awards, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved, are considered indirect costs. These may include facilities not specific to individual projects, enterprise-wide services such as IT, and enterprise management. Pursuant to USDA Departmental Regulation DR2255-001, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with a cognizant U.S. Government agency will be honored, except where prohibited by statute.

Other Submission Information
Applications should be submitted through the ezFedGrants system at https://grants.fms.usda.gov/

Applicants who require assistance with any USDA-managed computer system should reach out to the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, at least 5 business days in advance of the application submission deadline. Applicants should provide as much detail as possible to facilitate resolution of the issue.

E. Application Review Information

Review and Selection Process
In all cases, the agency will conduct an initial responsiveness review of all applications submitted to determine:

1) the application was submitted on time as specified in this announcement (See Section D. Application and Submission Information);
2) the applicant is eligible (see Section C. Eligibility Information);
3) all the required forms and documents are submitted no later than the Application Submission Deadline specified in Section D. Application and Submission Information, Content and Form of Application Submission.

If an applicant is determined to be ineligible or an application is determined to be incomplete, the agency will notify the applicant prior to commencing with evaluation of applications, usually within 15 business days of the Application Submission Deadline. An applicant that feels such a determination is made in error may request reconsideration, highlighting evidence supporting their claim, by email to the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact, within 3 business days of notification.

The agency will convene a review panel, which may include both federal and non-federal reviewers, to review the eligible applications against the evaluation criteria described below. The

reviewers will ensure that the applicant is capable of delivering the programs/activities as described in the announcement based on the applicant's project narrative and assign a score and provide summary comments based on the evaluation criteria identified below. The review panel will make a recommendation to the selecting official, who is not a member of the panel.

The selecting official may select applications out of rank order in consideration of strategic program priorities, such as geographical distribution, incorporation of minority-serving institutions, or congressional directive. Selection determinations are final and cannot be appealed.

Prior to selection, the agency may contact the highest ranking applicants to seek clarification and to negotiate technical and programmatic aspects of the application. If an application includes a subaward, FAS may request to speak with all parties included in the application to ensure sufficient planning and coordination has taken place prior to making an award.

Evaluation Criteria
Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capabilities, staff, and resources to successfully perform the project as described in Section A. Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they present a clear and convincing vision of the project reflective of the identified needs as described in Section A.

Factor 1: Technical awareness of maximum residue levels (25 Pts)
The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate an understanding of the context and inter-related issues for maximum residue levels, including not only the theoretical policy-making aspect, but also the scientific basis through which they are determined, and most importantly, the practical implications for producers, exporters, and agribusiness in interpreting and applying those policies, and how this affects trade.

Factor 2: Applicant's capacity (40 Pts)
The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capacity to implement the project described in a credible, effective, and time-bound manner. This factor includes an assessment of the applicant's ability to obtain and maintain access to the information requested. USDA/FAS will consider evidence that the applicant has experience in managing projects with a diverse set of stakeholders who may not be known to them ex ante. USDA/FAS will also consider whether the applicant can present as an objective and impartial conveyer of information to relevant stakeholders, and that all eligible stakeholders in the United States are included. To the extent that the applicant will need to identify dedicated staff or partners for this activity, a clear and reasonable plan should demonstrate how this will occur.

Factor 3: Dissemination and Collaboration (25 Pts)

- Dissemination and Training Plan (15 Pts)
    - Applicant's explanation of the plan to disseminate the effort and how it can enhance public and policy-maker understanding of MRL issues, and of the existence of and benefits to accessing MRL information. This sub-factor includes

an assessment of the extent to which the plan is likely to be effective at reaching target audiences throughout the lifetime of the project.

- Planned Collaboration (10 Pts)
    - Applicant's explanation of a plan to consult with industry stakeholders and facilitate collaboration between stakeholders, in order to ensure the most comprehensive and current information is available in a manner useful to those stakeholders.

Factor 5: Professional formatting, spelling, and grammar (10 Pts)

The applicant will be evaluated on the extent to which their budget documents are detailed, organized, in-scope, and appropriate including demonstration of professional organization and formatting throughout the project narrative and supporting documents with limited spelling and grammatical errors.

Integrity in Performance

Prior to making a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency is required by 31 USC 3321 and 41 USC 2313 to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant: (1) financial stability; (2) quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards; (3) history of performance in managing federal award; (4) reports and findings from audits; and (5) ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

Prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently $250,000, the federal agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (currently FAPIIS).

- An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.
- The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.206

Conflict of Interest

The Applicant's Conflict of Interest (COI) Point of Contact as defined in USDA/FAS Conflict of Interest Policy must notify the USDA/FAS contact identified in Section G of this solicitation of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the Applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for USDA/FAS financial assistance awards within 10 calendar days of becoming aware of the conflict of interest. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an USDA/FAS employee reviewed and commented on or drafted all or part of an applicant's application. Note

that USDA/FAS does not generally consider receiving information from an USDA/FAS employee limited to whether the applicant or the applicant's proposed project is eligible to compete for funding to confer an unfair competitive advantage. In addition, assistance agreements made under this solicitation will include a term and condition notifying recipients of their COI disclosure obligations and responsibilities under the award including the need to have systems in place to address, resolve and disclose COIs to USDA/FAS.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified of the status of their application/award by email. This notification is not authorization to proceed, and such notification should be construed as provisional.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants for all grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with the applicable General Administrative Terms and Conditions, which can be found at https://www.fas.usda.gov/grants/general_terms_and_conditions/default.asp. The applicant is presumed to have read, understood, and accepted these terms when accepting a USDA/FAS award. Applicants with questions about the applicable terms should contact the program officer(s) listed in Section G, Federal Awarding Agency Contact.

The applicable Terms and Conditions will be for the last year specified at that URL.

Before accepting an award, the applicant should carefully read the award package for instructions on administering the award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under Federal Awards. Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any Special Terms and Conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.

Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the subaward and executive total compensation reporting requirements established at 2 CFR 170, unless they quality for an exception from the requirements, should they be selected for funding.

Mandatory Disclosures

As required by 2 CFR 200.113, non-federal entities or applicants for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.339 including suspension and debarment.

Reporting

Financial Reports, using form SF-425, Federal Financial Report (FFR), must be submitted annually, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. A final financial report must be submitted within 120 days of the end date of the agreement.

Performance Progress Reports must be submitted annually, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. A final performance progress report must be submitted within 120 days of the end date of the agreement. The recipient may use any appropriate format for performance progress reports, provided the report includes:

a) A comparison of actual accomplishments to those projected for the period;
b) The reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and
c) Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.

In addition, on a quarterly basis, the recipient will provide FAS with use data describing:

- Number of unique covered user accounts accessing the system during that quarter
- Aggregate number of searches by covered users during that quarter

The recipient is encouraged to include supplemental information to accompany these reports, to demonstrate to USDA the value and application of MRL information.

Recipients are encouraged to include photographs and other supplemental material in performance progress reports. For awards in which the total lifetime value exceeds $500,000, additional reporting may be required as described in Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

Monitoring

USDA/FAS through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems and to provide such technical assistance as may be required. During site visits, USDA/FAS will review recipients' files related to the program.

As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, grant recipients must permit USDA/FAS, upon reasonable notice, to review assistance agreement-related records and to interview the organization's staff and clients regarding the program, and to respond in a timely and accurate manner to FAS requests for information relating to the program.

Closeout

Within 120 days after the end of the period of performance, recipients must submit a final FFR and final progress report detailing all accomplishments and a qualitative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance. After final reports have been reviewed and approved by the agency, and any residual amount due to the recipient or due to be returned to the agency, the award is subject to closeout. Acceptance of final reports by the agency constitutes a closeout of the award with no further notice or obligation to either party. This acceptance will indicate the period of performance has expired, and any remaining funds will be deobligated. Records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the final reports are submitted.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact

For all inquiries, contact:

Name: Jim Suits
Email Address: jim.suits@usda.gov
Phone Number: 202-720-6328
Hours of Operation: 7:00AM – 3:30PM EDT

H. Other Information

Incremental Funding

This award may be incrementally funded with a potential cumulative total of $2,500,000 over the 5-year period of performance. The first year of funding will be up to $500,000. The detailed budget and narrative should reflect a total budget of $2,500,000 for 5 years with a break down for every year, including up to $500,000 for the first year. All incremental funding will be based on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

Budget Revisions

Transfers of funds between direct cost categories in the approved budget when such cumulative transfers among those direct cost categories exceed ten percent of the total budget approved in this Award require written approval from the agency. The total budget amount may not be increased without a bilaterally executed amendment to the award.

Post-award program income

In the event program income becomes available to the recipient post-award, it is the recipient's responsibility to notify the USDA/FAS Program Manager to explain how that development occurred, as part of their request for guidance and/or approval. If approval is granted, an award modification will be issued with an explanatory note in the remarks section of the face page concerning guidance and/or options pertaining to the recipient's approved request. All instances of program income shall be listed in the progress and financial reports.

Electronic Signatures

Consistent with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN Act), USDA/FAS uses and accepts electronic signatures for application and award documents. USDA/FAS will neither solicit nor send physical copies of documents.