



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee members
From: Sorsha Anderson, Senior Staff Associate
Date: February 9, 2024
Subject: Grant/LSP Request – JFO #3186

Enclosed please find one (1) item, which the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the Administration.

JFO #3186: \$4,525,801.81 to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The majority of funds to be sub-awards to Vermont's agricultural businesses and organizations to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain and to support market development for small farms and food businesses. Includes full funding for one (1) limited-service position, Agriculture Development Specialist II and 50% support for one (1) limited-service position, Contracts and Grants Specialist I. The other 50% for the position will come from already approved JFO #2982.

[Received February 8, 2024]

Please review the enclosed materials and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Sorsha Anderson: sanderson@leg.state.vt.us) if you have questions or would like this item held for legislative review. Unless we hear from you to the contrary by **February 29, 2024**, we will assume that you agree to consider as final the Governor's acceptance of this request.



State of Vermont
 Department of Finance & Management
 109 State Street, Pavilion Building
 Montpelier, VT 05620-0401

Agency of Administration

[phone] 802-828-2376
 [fax] 802-828-2428

**STATE OF VERMONT
 FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM**

Grant Summary: To provide over \$3.2M in subawards to Vermont businesses and organizations to strengthen the middle of the food supply chain. An additional \$900,000 will be invested in strengthening supply chain coordination through market research, technical assistance, and contracts with partner organizations to enhance food system resilience.

Date: 1/2/2024

Department: AAFM

Legal Title of Grant: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Cooperative Agreement

Federal Catalog #: 10.190

Grant/Donor Name and Address: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250

Grant Period: From: 5/25/2023 To: 5/24/2027

Grant/Donation: \$4,525,801

	SFY 1	SFY 2	SFY 3	Total	Comments
Grant Amount:	\$331,090	\$1,901,337	\$32,280	\$2,293,374	

2,293,374 \$4,525,801.51

Position Information:	# Positions	Explanation/Comments
	2	1 Ag. Dev. Specialist II through 6/30/26 ? 1 Contracts & Grants Specialist I through 12/31/25

Additional Comments: Ag. Dec. Specialist II full term cost (\$265,949) fully funded through this grant. C&G Specialist I full term cost (\$186,753) funded 50% from this grant, 50% from federal funds available per Dair Business Innovation grant (JFO #2982). Neither this grant nor any position source funding requires State match.

Department of Finance & Management	Adam Digitally signed by Adam Greenin GreshDocuSign ID: 84AD032CB55C434...	(Initial)
Secretary of Administration	Sarah Clark 84AD032CB55C434...	(Initial)
Sent To Joint Fiscal Office		Date



STATE OF VERMONT FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM		



STATE OF VERMONT Joint Fiscal Committee Review Limited Service - Grant Funded Position Request Form

This form is to be used by agencies and departments when additional grant funded positions are being requested. Review and approval by the Department of Human Resources must be obtained prior to review by the Department of Finance and Management. The Department of Finance will forward requests to the Joint Fiscal Office for JFC review. A Request for Classification Review Form (RFR) and an updated organizational chart showing to whom the new position(s) would report must be attached to this form. Please attach additional pages as necessary to provide enough detail.

Agency/Department: Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets Date: 11/27/2023

Name and Phone (of the person completing this request): Kristina Sweet, 802-522-7811

Request is for:

- Positions funded and attached to a new grant.
- Positions funded and attached to an existing grant approved by JFO # 2982

1. Name of Granting Agency, Title of Grant, Grant Funding Detail (attach grant documents):

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Cooperative Agreement, \$4,525,802 to develop and administer coordinated initiatives to build resilience across the middle of Vermont's food supply chain for food crops (See attachments.)
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center, JFO #2982

2. List below titles, number of positions in each title, program area, and limited service end date (information should be based on grant award and should match information provided on the RFR) position(s) will be established only after JFC final approval:

<u>Title* of Position(s) Requested</u>	<u># of Positions</u>	<u>Division/Program</u>	<u>Grant Funding Period/Anticipated End Date</u>
Agriculture Development Specialist II	1	Agricultural Development Division/RFSI	5/25/2023-5/24/2027 / 6/30/2026
Contract and Grants Specialist I	1	Agricultural Development Division/RFSI and NE-DBIC	5/25/2023-5/24/2027 / 12/31/2025

*Final determination of title and pay grade to be made by the Department of Human Resources Classification Division upon submission and review of Request for Classification Review.

3. Justification for this request as an essential grant program need:

Agriculture Development Specialist II: This position is essential to complete supply chain coordination work as outlined in the RFSI state plan and approved by USDA. Anticipated position end date 6/20/2026. Contract and Grants Specialist I: The majority of the USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) cooperative agreement (over \$3.2 million) will be expended in subawards and contracts. This position is essential to complete RFSI granting and contracting work and approved by USDA. Anticipated position end date 12/31/2025.

I certify that this information is correct and that necessary funding, space and equipment for the above position(s) are available (required by 32 VSA Sec. 5(b)).

Mlyson Eastman 11/29/2023
Signature of Agency or Department Head Date

Harold Schwartz 12 28 23
Approved/Denied by Department of Human Resources Date

Adam Greshin Digitally signed by Adam Greshin
Date: 2024.01.16 21:11:35 -05'00' Date

Sarah Clark 1/20/2024 | 8:55:32 EST
Approved/Denied by Secretary of Finance and Management Date

[Signature] 2/8/24
Approved/Denied by Secretary of Administration Date

[Signature] Date
Approved/Denied by Governor (required as amended by 2019 Leg. Session)

Comments:

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT (*) ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

BASIC GRANT INFORMATION				
1. Agency:	Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, Agricultural Development Division			
2. Department:				
3. Program:				
4. Legal Title of Grant:	Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Cooperative Agreement			
5. Federal Catalog #:	10.190			
6. Grant/Donor Name and Address:				
U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250				
7. Grant Period:	From:	5/25/2023	To:	5/24/2027
8. Purpose of Grant:				
This cooperative agreement will provide over \$3.2M in subawards to Vermont businesses and organizations strengthen the middle of the food supply chain. An additional \$900,000 will be invested in strengthening supply chain coordination through market research, technical assistance, and contracts with partner organizations to enhance food system resilience.				
9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted:				
If this grant is not accepted, VAAFM will not be able to fund any competitive awards, nor would we be able to put forth research, technical assistance, and partnership development for supply chain coordination efforts in the State.				
10. BUDGET INFORMATION				
	SFY 1	SFY 2	SFY 3	Comments
	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26-27	
Expenditures:				
Personal Services	\$164,745	\$313,907	\$321,293	
Operating Expenses	\$166,345	\$306,173	\$50,195	
Grants	\$	\$1,281,257	\$1,921,886	Subawards
Total	\$331,090	\$1,901,337	\$2,293,374	
Revenues:				
State Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
Cash	\$	\$	\$	
In-Kind	\$	\$	\$	
Federal Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
(Direct Costs)	\$279,076	\$1,802,229	\$2,191,934	
(Statewide Indirect)	\$	\$	\$	
(Departmental Indirect)	\$52,014	\$99,108	\$101,440	
Other Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
Grant (source)	\$	\$	\$	
Total	\$331,090	\$1,901,337	\$2,293,374	(\$ 4,525,801.81)
Appropriation No:	2200030000	Amount:	\$331,090	(yr. 1)
			\$	
			\$	
			\$	
			\$	

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT (*) ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

	\$
	\$
Total	\$331,090

PERSONAL SERVICE INFORMATION

11. Will monies from this grant be used to fund one or more Personal Service Contracts? Yes No
 If "Yes", appointing authority must initial here to indicate intent to follow current competitive bidding process/policy.

Appointing Authority Name: _____ Agreed by: _____ (initial)

12. Limited Service Position Information:	# Positions	Title
	1	Contract and Grants Specialist I
	1	Agriculture Development Specialist II
Total Positions	2	

12a. Equipment and space for these positions: Is presently available. Can be obtained with available funds.

13. AUTHORIZATION AGENCY/DEPARTMENT

I/we certify that no funds beyond basic application preparation and filing costs have been expended or committed in anticipation of Joint Fiscal Committee approval of this grant, unless previous notification was made on Form AA-1PN (if applicable):

Signature: <i>Allyson Eastman</i>	Date: 2/29/2023
Title: Deputy Secretary	
Signature:	Date:
Title:	

14. SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION

Approved: (Secretary or designee signature) *Sarah Clark* Date: 1/20/2024 | 8

15. ACTION BY GOVERNOR

Accepted (Governor's signature) *[Signature]* Date: 2/8/24

Rejected

16. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

- Required GRANT Documentation**
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request Memo
<input type="checkbox"/> Dept. project approval (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Award
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant Agreement
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Donation (if any)
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant (Project) Timeline (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/> Request for Extension (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/> Form AA-1PN attached (if applicable) |
|---|--|

End Form AA-1

(*) The term "grant" refers to any grant, gift, loan, or any sum of money or thing of value to be accepted by any agency, department, commission, board, or other part of state government (see 32 V.S.A. §5).



State of Vermont
Department of Human Resources
120 State Street, 5th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-2505
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Agency of Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nicolas Kramer, Budget Analyst, Department of Finance and Management
FROM: Harold Schwartz, Operations Director, Department of Human Resources
DATE: 12/28 2023
SUBJECT: AAFM limited service positions request

Note that for Agriculture Development Specialist II – End date 6/30/2026. For Contract and Grants Specialist I – End date 12/31/2025. Beginning dates are indicated as 1/1/2024 per budgeting. (See positions justification).

We reached out for better clarification of funding, and received the following information from the requesting entity:

“Regarding the connection between the Cooperative Agreement and the 2 positions, we should further explain the two funding sources.

- 1) DBIC (JFO #2982) is an established source of federal funding at AAFM, approved by JFC, and a currently operational program. At the time of original approval, multiple Limited Service Positions were requested to support the development and implementation of the DBIC program. This program has sense determined the need for additional grant and contract coordination support as their various rounds of funding and related awards take shape. Therefore 50% of one of these two new positions required in this JFO process will be supported with these DBIC funds. [DBIC NOA attached]
- 2) RFSI is a new source of funding that has been made available to AAFM via the attached Cooperative Agreement. Receipt of these funds are part of this JFC submission and outlined in the JFO memo. This CA provides AAFM with funding and the responsibility to “...operate the program,...conduct outreach and engagement,...plan, propose, and make subawards in the form of Infrastructure Grants...”. We also were required to submit a state plan to USDA-NIFA that outlined the details of our work that they then must approve [approval email attached]. Our approved plan outlines that to accomplish required responsibilities, we need ~2.0 FTEs to support RFSI program activities. The work will be accomplished by 2 new LSPs and supported by capacities of two established AAFM positions. Hence, the combined funding sources establish the need and resources for requesting two new Limited Service Positions and this is outlined in the ‘Position Justifications RFSI’ document.”



State of Vermont
Agricultural Development Division
116 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2901
agriculture.vermont.gov

Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

[phone] 802-828-2430
[email] AGR.Helpdesk@vermont.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nick Kramer, Budget Analyst
Department of Finance and Management

Sorsha Anderson, Senior Staff Associate
Joint Fiscal Office

FROM: Anson Tebbetts, Secretary
Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

DATE: November 13, 2023

SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF USDA RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

This memo is to inform the Agency of Administration that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has awarded the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) \$4,525,801.81 through a [Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program](#) (RFSI) cooperative agreement.

Attached please find the signed cooperative agreement and the email message from USDA noting approval of VAAFAM's RFSI State Plan. The grant project period ends May 24, 2027 and is covered by the most recent AMS Grants Division [General Terms and Conditions](#).

Through this cooperative agreement, VAAFAM will award over \$3.2 million in subawards to agricultural businesses and organizations in order to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain, support market development for small farms and food businesses, and promote development of value-added products. The Agency will also invest in supply chain coordination (901,460) to enhance business and market development, benefit local and regional food systems, and contribute to the success and impact of RFSI grant awards. VAAFAM will reserve \$421,199 in cooperative agreement funds for grant administration.

- Subawards: \$3,203,143
- Supply Chain Coordination: \$901,460 (\$778,751 direct; \$122,709 indirect)
- Grant Administration: \$421,199 (\$291,345 direct; \$129,854 indirect)





VAAFM has budgeted \$265,949 to fund salary and benefits for a limited service Agriculture Development Specialist II (100% FTE; position requested with an end date of June 30, 2026) to conduct supply chain coordination activities and collaborate with partner organizations.

VAAFM has budgeted \$281,434 to fund salary and benefits for staff to conduct grant administration:

- Julia Scheier, Agriculture Development Section Chief, position #280063 (25% Year 1; 35% Year 2; 35% Year 3; 15% Year 4) to oversee subaward grant management for all rounds of infrastructure and equipment grants according to the approved state plan.
- Kiera Ebeling, Agriculture Development Specialist I, position #280152 (15% Year 1; 25% Year 2; 25% Year 3) to coordinate grant communications and stakeholder feedback sessions according to the approved state plan.
- Limited-service Contracts and Grants Specialist (50% FTE; position requested with an end date of December 31, 2025) to develop applications in the WebGrants grant management system; track applications, reviews, and grants; collect grantee documentation; and process grant agreements and amendments.

Supporting these staff will allow VAAFM to claim a total of \$252,563 in indirect costs.

Thank you for your review and consideration of this important opportunity to support businesses and organizations operating in the middle of the food supply chain. Please reach out to Agriculture Development Division Assistant Director Kristina Sweet at kristina.sweet@vermont.gov or (802) 522-7811 with any questions.

###



VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL
Request for Classification Review
Position Description Form A

- **This form is to be used by managers and supervisors to request classification of a position (filled or vacant) when the duties have changed, and by managers and supervisors to request the creation of a new job class/title (for a filled, vacant, or new position), and by employees to request classification of their position.**
- This form was designed in Microsoft Word to download and complete on your computer. This is a form-protected document, so information can only be entered in the shaded areas of the form.
- If you prefer to fill out a hard copy of the form, contact your Personnel Officer.
- To move from field to field use your mouse, the arrow keys or press Tab. Each form field has a limited number of characters. Use your mouse or the spacebar to mark and unmark a checkbox.
- Where additional space is needed to respond to a question, you might need to attach a separate page, and number the responses to correspond with the numbers of the questions on the form. Please contact your Personnel Officer if you have difficulty completing the form.
- The form must be complete, including required attachments and signatures or it will be returned to the department's personnel office. All sections of this form are required to be completed unless otherwise stated.

INSTRUCTIONS: Tell us about the job. The information you provide will be used to evaluate the position. It will not be used in any way to evaluate an employee's performance or qualifications.

Answer the questions carefully. The information you give will help ensure that the position is fairly evaluated. Here are some suggestions to consider in completing this questionnaire:

- Tell the **facts** about what an employee in this position is actually expected to do.
- Give **specific examples** to make it clear.
- Write in a way so a person unfamiliar with the job will be able to understand it.
- Describe the job **as it is now**; not the way it was or will become.
- Before answering each question, read it carefully.

To Submit this Request for Classification Review: If this is a filled position, the employee must sign the original* and forward to the supervisor for the supervisor's review and signature. The Personnel Officer and the Appointing Authority must also review and sign this request before it is considered complete. The effective date of review is the beginning of the first pay period following the date the complete Request for Classification Review is date stamped by the Classification Division of the Department of Personnel.

*An employee may choose to sign the form, make a copy, submit original to supervisor as noted above, while concurrently sending the copy to the Classification Division, 144 State Street, Montpelier, with a cover note indicating that the employee has submitted the original to the supervisor and is submitting the copy as a **Concurrent** filing.

If this is a request (initiated by employees, VSEA, or management) for review of all positions in a class/title please contact the appropriate Classification Analyst or the Classification Manager to discuss the request prior to submitting.

Request for Classification Review Position Description Form A

For Department of Personnel Use Only

Notice of Action # _____ Action Taken: _____ New Job Title _____ Current Class Code _____ New Class Code _____ Current Pay Grade _____ New Pay Grade _____ Current Mgt Level ____ B/U ____ OT Cat. ____ EEO Cat. ____ FLSA ____ New Mgt Level ____ B/U ____ OT Cat. ____ EEO Cat. ____ FLSA ____ Classification Analyst _____ Date _____ Effective Date: _____ Comments: _____ Date Processed: _____ Willis Rating/Components: Knowledge & Skills: _____ Mental Demands: _____ Accountability: _____ Working Conditions: _____ Total: _____	Date Received (Stamp)
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Incumbent Information:

Employee Name: Employee Number:
 Position Number: Current Job/Class Title:
 Agency/Department/Unit:
 Work Station: Zip Code:
 Supervisor's Name, Title, and Phone Number:
 How should the notification to the employee be sent: employee's work location or other address, please provide mailing address:

New Position/Vacant Position Information:

New Position Authorization: Request Job/Class Title:
 Position Type: Permanent or Limited / Funding Source: Core, Partnership, or Sponsored
 Vacant Position Number: Current Job/Class Title:
 Agency/Department/Unit: Work Station: Zip Code:
 Supervisor's Name, Title and Phone Number:

Type of Request:

- Management:** A management request to review the classification of an existing position, class, or create a new job class.
- Employee:** An employee's request to review the classification of his/her current position.

1. Job Duties

This is the **most critical** part of the form. Describe the activities and duties required in your job, **noting changes (new duties, duties no longer required, etc.) since the last review**. Place them in order of importance, beginning with the single most important activity or responsibility required in your job. The importance of the duties and expected end results should be clear, including the tolerance that may be permitted for error. Describe each job duty or activity as follows:

- **What** it is: The nature of the activity.
- **How** you do it: The steps you go through to perform the activity. Be specific so the reader can understand the steps.
- **Why** it is done: What you are attempting to accomplish and the end result of the activity.

For example a Tax Examiner might respond as follows: **(What)** *Audits tax returns and/or taxpayer records.* **(How)** *By developing investigation strategy; reviewing materials submitted; when appropriate interviewing people, other than the taxpayer, who have information about the taxpayer's business or residency.* **(Why)** *To determine actual tax liabilities.*

WHAT: Provides contract and grant support for USDA Resilient Food Systemes Infrastructure (RFSI) program and Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC). HOW: Drafts and processes contracts, grant agreements, and related documents. Obtains necessary certificates and other documents from contractors and grantees. WHY: To successfully implement federal grant programs and subawards.

WHAT: Develops and implements grant applications and awards in WebGrants, the Agency of Agriculture's grants management system. HOW: Creates funding opportunity, review, and grant management forms in WebGrants. Runs WebGrants reports on applications and awards for grant program managers. Provides applicant data for the grant review process and takes notes during review meetings. WHY: To implement and maintain grant tracking systems for grant applications and agreements and ensure data is available for program managers, reviewers, and federal reporting.

WHAT: Provides training and process guidance to program management staff on granting procedures, bidding requirements, and contracting requirements. This includes ensuring invoices and claims are compliant with the statement of work outlined in agreements. HOW: Offers one-on-one training or assists in offering larger group process improvement discussions around grant and contract development and management. WHY: To ensure consistent contract and grant administration and adherence with relevant up-to-date State of Vermont Bulletins.

WHAT: Supports program management staff in the execution and management of grant agreements and contracts. HOW: Reviews and offers comments on scopes of work, participates in resolution of language disputes related to agreements, participates in consultant and contractor selection process, supports during grant review meetings. WHY: To ensure professional consistency in processes and documents and high-quality customer service across funding opportunities.

2. Key Contacts

This question deals with the personal contacts and interactions that occur in this job. Provide brief typical examples indicating your primary contacts (**not** an exhaustive or all-inclusive list of contacts) other than those persons to whom you report or who report to you. If you work as part of a team, or if your primary contacts are with other agencies or groups outside State government describe those interactions, and what your role is. For example: you may *collaborate, monitor, guide, or facilitate change*.

The individual will have frequent in-state and out-of-state partner engagement around grants, contracts, and fund management. They will likely interact with federal agencies (such as USDA), Vermont agencies and departments, state and national non-profit and for-profit partner organizations, potential funders, policy makers, and the public.

During day-to-day operations, this individual will have routine communication and develop relationships with internal stakeholders such as program managers, business office, agency leadership, and other division staff as well as external stakeholders such as applicants, grantees, vendors, and contractors. This often involves emailing and phone conversations at various times during the funding opportunity cycle.

3. Are there licensing, registration, or certification requirements; or special or unusual skills necessary to perform this job?

Include any special licenses, registrations, certifications, skills; (such as counseling, engineering, computer programming, graphic design, strategic planning, keyboarding) including skills with specific equipment, tools, technology, etc. (such as mainframe computers, power tools, trucks, road equipment, specific software packages). Be specific, if you must be able to drive a commercial vehicle, or must know Visual Basic, indicate so.

Must have working knowledge of Microsoft Excel; experience with web-based grant management systems is preferred

4. Do you supervise?

In this question "supervise" means if you direct the work of others where you are held **directly** responsible for assigning work; performance ratings; training; reward and discipline or effectively recommend such action; and other personnel matters. List the names, titles, and position numbers of the classified employees reporting to you:

No

5. In what way does your supervisor provide you with work assignments and review your work?

This question deals with how you are supervised. Explain how you receive work assignments, how priorities are determined, and how your work is reviewed. There are a wide variety of ways a job can be supervised, so there may not be just one answer to this question. For example, some aspects of your work may be reviewed on a regular basis and in others you may operate within general guidelines with much independence in determining how you accomplish tasks.

This individual will have regular check-in meetings with direct supervisor to determine priorities, scope of work, and progress on current projects. This individual will perform work with direct supervisor in determining daily/weekly activities and tasks and managing partner relationships. Work is also reviewed on an as-needed basis in response to new funding opportunities or shifting program manager timelines. When timelines shift, discussion with direct supervisor is critical to reestablish priorities.

6. Mental Effort

This section addresses the mental demands associated with this job. Describe the most mentally challenging part of your job or the most difficult typical problems you are expected to solve. Be sure to give a specific response and describe the situation(s) by example.

- For example, a purchasing clerk might respond: *In pricing purchase orders, I frequently must find the cost of materials not listed in the pricing guides. This involves locating vendors or other sources of pricing information for a great variety of materials.*
- Or, a systems developer might say: *Understanding the ways in which a database or program will be used, and what the users must accomplish and then developing a system to meet their needs, often with limited time and resources.*

Managing a diverse array of funding opportunities, technical assistance needs and program manager timelines requires stress management techniques, patience, and customer service assistance. Sometimes there is required engagement with unsatisfied grant applicants, grantees, or partners who are frustrated or unhappy having not been awarded a grant or contract.

Utilization of the web-based grants management system which frequently presents technological challenges, requires problem-solving and strong communication skills to assess the problem, connect with various partners, and await an agreed upon solution. Having the ability to navigate this process can also add stress and confusion, resulting in timeline delays and workload shifts.

7. Accountability

This section evaluates the job's expected results. In weighing the importance of results, consideration should be given to responsibility for the safety and well-being of people, protection of confidential information and protection of resources.

What is needed here is information not already presented about the job's scope of responsibility. What is the job's most significant influence upon the organization, or in what way does the job contribute to the organization's mission?

Provide annualized dollar figures if it makes sense to do so, explaining what the amount(s) represent.

For example:

- A social worker might respond: *To promote permanence for children through coordination and delivery of services;*
- A financial officer might state: *Overseeing preparation and ongoing management of division budget: \$2M Operating/Personal Services, \$1.5M Federal Grants.*

This position is part of a team supporting programs and providing administrative, technical, and financial assistance efforts applicable to a wider variety of agricultural stakeholders, contractors, consultants, and grantees engaged with the Agency.

This position is expected to develop knowledge of fund management and grantee stewardship. They are responsible for assisting in the consistent allocation of state and federal funds for the division. Funds must be dispersed through consistent and clear agreements and through high-quality customer service.

Individuals in this position will assist with the development and execution of grant agreements and contracts that exceed \$1M annually.

8. Working Conditions

The intent of this question is to describe any adverse conditions that are routine and expected in your job. It is not to identify special situations such as overcrowded conditions or understaffing.

- a) What significant mental stress are you exposed to? All jobs contain some amount of stress. If your job stands out as having a significant degree of mental or emotional pressure or tension associated with it, this should be described.

Type	How Much of the Time?
Manage multiple priorities	20 hours/week
Technical support to internal and external stakeholders	20 hours/week

- b) What hazards, special conditions or discomfort are you exposed to? (Clarification of terms: **hazards** include such things as potential accidents, illness, chronic health conditions or other harm. Typical examples might involve exposure to dangerous persons, including potentially violent customers and clients, fumes, toxic waste, contaminated materials, vehicle accident, disease, cuts, falls, etc.; and **discomfort** includes exposure to such things as cold, dirt, dust, rain or snow, heat, etc.)

Type	How Much of the Time?

- c) What weights do you lift; how much do they weigh and how much time per day/week do you spend lifting?

Type	How Heavy?	How Much of the Time?

- d) What working positions (sitting, standing, bending, reaching) or types of effort (hiking, walking, driving) are required?

Type	How Much of the Time?
sitting/standing	40 hours/week

Additional Information:

Carefully review your job description responses so far. If there is anything that you feel is important in understanding your job that you haven't clearly described, use this space for that purpose. Perhaps your job has some unique aspects or characteristics that weren't brought out by your answers to the previous questions. In this space, add any additional comments that you feel will add to a clear understanding of the requirements of your job.

--

Employee's Signature (required): _____ Date: _____

Supervisor's Section:

Carefully review this completed job description, but **do not** alter or eliminate any portion of the original response. Please answer the questions listed below.

1. What do you consider the most important duties of this job and why?

Maintained collaboration with the Division's program managers, Agency's business office staff, and all grant constituents to ensure funding opportunities are running smoothly, applicants and grantees are satisfied, and that program managers are able to focus on relationships and messaging around the importance of these investments.

Providing ongoing internal program support, including offering informational sessions, and trainings, remaining proficient in understanding granting and contracting requirements and proceses outlined in State of Vermont Bulletins.

2. What do you consider the most important knowledge, skills, and abilities of an employee in this job (not necessarily the qualifications of the present employee) and why?

Ability to work as part of a team, able to adapt and flex as funding opportunities, programs, or timelines change. It is critical for this position to provide attention to detail, an ability to problem solve, and bring a working knowledge of grant administration.

3. Comment on the accuracy and completeness of the responses by the employee. List below any missing items and/or differences where appropriate.

n/a

4. Suggested Title and/or Pay Grade:

Contract and Grants Specialist I / Pay Grade 23

DocuSigned by:

Rebecca Brockett

12/20/2023 | 2:41:55 EST

Supervisor's Signature (required):

3DB92484BEE143D...

Date:

Personnel Administrator's Section:

Please complete any missing information on the front page of this form before submitting it for review.

Are there other changes to this position, for example: Change of supervisor, GUC, work station?

Yes No If yes, please provide detailed information.

Attachments:

- Organizational charts are **required** and must indicate where the position reports.
- Draft job specification is **required** for proposed new job classes.

Will this change affect other positions within the organization? If so, describe how, (for example, have duties been shifted within the unit requiring review of other positions; or are there other issues relevant to the classification review process).

Suggested Title and/or Pay Grade:

Contract and Grants Specialist I / Pay Grade 23

Personnel Administrator's Signature (required): DocuSigned by:
Jane Modica
BD6232DFE2A94B8... Date: 12/20/2023 | 3:01:31 EST

Appointing Authority's Section:

Please review this completed job description but **do not alter** or eliminate any of the entries. Add any clarifying information and/or additional comments (if necessary) in the space below.

Suggested Title and/or Pay Grade:

Contract and Grants Specialist I / Pay Grade 23

DocuSigned by:
Nicole Dubuque
202CF7AE657F7445... 12/21/2023 | 1:15:34 EST
Appointing Authority or Authorized Representative Signature (required) Date

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL
Request for Classification Review
Position Description Form A

- **This form is to be used by managers and supervisors to request classification of a position (filled or vacant) when the duties have changed, and by managers and supervisors to request the creation of a new job class/title (for a filled, vacant, or new position), and by employees to request classification of their position.**
- This form was designed in Microsoft Word to download and complete on your computer. This is a form-protected document, so information can only be entered in the shaded areas of the form.
- If you prefer to fill out a hard copy of the form, contact your Personnel Officer.
- To move from field to field use your mouse, the arrow keys or press Tab. Each form field has a limited number of characters. Use your mouse or the spacebar to mark and unmark a checkbox.
- Where additional space is needed to respond to a question, you might need to attach a separate page, and number the responses to correspond with the numbers of the questions on the form. Please contact your Personnel Officer if you have difficulty completing the form.
- The form must be complete, including required attachments and signatures or it will be returned to the department's personnel office. All sections of this form are required to be completed unless otherwise stated.

INSTRUCTIONS: Tell us about the job. The information you provide will be used to evaluate the position. It will not be used in any way to evaluate an employee's performance or qualifications.

Answer the questions carefully. The information you give will help ensure that the position is fairly evaluated. Here are some suggestions to consider in completing this questionnaire:

- Tell the **facts** about what an employee in this position is actually expected to do.
- Give **specific examples** to make it clear.
- Write in a way so a person unfamiliar with the job will be able to understand it.
- Describe the job **as it is now**; not the way it was or will become.
- Before answering each question, read it carefully.

To Submit this Request for Classification Review: If this is a filled position, the employee must sign the original* and forward to the supervisor for the supervisor's review and signature. The Personnel Officer and the Appointing Authority must also review and sign this request before it is considered complete. The effective date of review is the beginning of the first pay period following the date the complete Request for Classification Review is date stamped by the Classification Division of the Department of Personnel.

*An employee may choose to sign the form, make a copy, submit original to supervisor as noted above, while concurrently sending the copy to the Classification Division, 144 State Street, Montpelier, with a cover note indicating that the employee has submitted the original to the supervisor and is submitting the copy as a **Concurrent** filing.

If this is a request (initiated by employees, VSEA, or management) for review of all positions in a class/title please contact the appropriate Classification Analyst or the Classification Manager to discuss the request prior to submitting.

Request for Classification Review Position Description Form A

For Department of Personnel Use Only

Notice of Action # _____	Date Received (Stamp)
Action Taken: _____	
New Job Title _____	
Current Class Code _____	New Class Code _____
Current Pay Grade _____	New Pay Grade _____
Current Mgt Level ____ B/U ____ OT Cat. ____ EEO Cat. ____ FLSA ____	
New Mgt Level ____ B/U ____ OT Cat. ____ EEO Cat. ____ FLSA ____	
Classification Analyst _____	Date _____
Effective Date: _____	
Comments: _____	
Date Processed: _____	
Willis Rating/Components: Knowledge & Skills: _____ Mental Demands: _____ Accountability: _____ Working Conditions: _____ Total: _____	

Incumbent Information:

Employee Name: Employee Number: Position Number: Current Job/Class Title: Agency/Department/Unit: Work Station: Zip Code: Supervisor's Name, Title, and Phone Number: How should the notification to the employee be sent: employee's work location or other address, please provide mailing address:

New Position/Vacant Position Information:

New Position Authorization: Request Job/Class Title: Position Type: Permanent or Limited / Funding Source: Core, Partnership, or SponsoredVacant Position Number: Current Job/Class Title: Agency/Department/Unit: Work Station: Zip Code: Supervisor's Name, Title and Phone Number:

Type of Request:

 Management: A management request to review the classification of an existing position, class, or create a new job class. **Employee:** An employee's request to review the classification of his/her current position.

1. Job Duties

This is the **most critical** part of the form. Describe the activities and duties required in your job, **noting changes (new duties, duties no longer required, etc.) since the last review**. Place them in order of importance, beginning with the single most important activity or responsibility required in your job. The importance of the duties and expected end results should be clear, including the tolerance that may be permitted for error. Describe each job duty or activity as follows:

- **What** it is: The nature of the activity.
- **How** you do it: The steps you go through to perform the activity. Be specific so the reader can understand the steps.
- **Why** it is done: What you are attempting to accomplish and the end result of the activity.

For example a Tax Examiner might respond as follows: **(What)** *Audits tax returns and/or taxpayer records.* **(How)** *By developing investigation strategy; reviewing materials submitted; when appropriate interviewing people, other than the taxpayer, who have information about the taxpayer's business or residency.* **(Why)** *To determine actual tax liabilities.*

The individual in this position will be responsible for the supply chain coordination component of the work plan outlined in the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) program State Plan.

WHAT: Assist program managers to accomplish goals of Agency funding opportunities and provide strategic input on program development.

HOW: Communicate and meet with RFSI equipment and infrastructure applicants and grantees to connect them to resources, including capital and business support as well as technical service providers. This includes developing and delivering website content, informational webinars, conferences, and training material.

WHY: To support growth in the middle-of-the-food supply chain and agricultural businesses in Vermont and meet the objectives of the RFSI program.

WHAT: Collaborate with Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund partner and other state supply chain coordinators through routinely scheduled programmatic engagements to ensure outreach, education, and technical assistance is provided to producers and other stakeholders.

HOW: Collaborate with supply chain coordination partners to develop and disseminate resources and conduct outreach and education activities. This includes planning and conducting a series of plant tours, field days, and learning journeys, where businesses and organizations will be invited to experience and learn from examples of successful middle of the supply chain projects and partnerships at locations throughout the northeast region. Includes meeting with regional partners engaged in similar scope of work to share strategies and align resource materials and tactics.

WHY: To connect businesses to critical resources that are consistent, clear, and can lead to business growth and development.

WHAT: Become a middle-of-the-food supply chain subject matter expert and resource for agricultural businesses.

HOW: Meet with supply chain coordinators to assess supply chain needs and opportunities to benefit producers and processors across the state. Co-develop business plans, strategic planning support, and innovation opportunities along the supply chain that can assist businesses in aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storage, transportation, wholesaling, or distribution of food.

WHY: To ensure that middle-of-the-food supply chain operations have equitable access to resources and information that can help their businesses expand, reach new markets, and operate more efficiently.

2. Key Contacts

This question deals with the personal contacts and interactions that occur in this job. Provide brief typical examples indicating your primary contacts (**not** an exhaustive or all-inclusive list of contacts) other than those persons to whom you report or who report to you. If you work as part of a team, or if your primary contacts are with other agencies or groups outside State government describe those interactions, and what your role is. For example: you may *collaborate, monitor, guide, or facilitate change*.

The individual will frequently collaborate with other staff within the Agency of Agriculture and will interact with community and state partners (nonprofit, for profit, and federal), other Vermont agencies and departments, policy groups, potential funders, and the public. They will attend off-site visits to producer and market sites, public events, farms, and schools to collaborate, develop ideas, and initiate projects to further the goals of the Agency. The individual will interact with the media to discuss program work and outcomes.

The individual will attend events, table, and participate in partner efforts in order to represent the Agency's priorities and projects to state and regional audiences. They may sit on advisory committees at the regional or state level.

3. Are there licensing, registration, or certification requirements; or special or unusual skills necessary to perform this job?

Include any special licenses, registrations, certifications, skills; (such as counseling, engineering, computer programming, graphic design, strategic planning, keyboarding) including skills with specific equipment, tools, technology, etc. (such as mainframe computers, power tools, trucks, road equipment, specific software packages). Be specific, if you must be able to drive a commercial vehicle, or must know Visual Basic, indicate so.

4. Do you supervise?

In this question "supervise" means if you direct the work of others where you are held **directly** responsible for assigning work; performance ratings; training; reward and discipline or effectively recommend such action; and other personnel matters. List the names, titles, and position numbers of the classified employees reporting to you:

No

5. In what way does your supervisor provide you with work assignments and review your work?

This question deals with how you are supervised. Explain how you receive work assignments, how priorities are determined, and how your work is reviewed. There are a wide variety of ways a job can be supervised, so there may not be just one answer to this question. For example, some aspects of your work may be reviewed on a regular basis and in others you may operate within general guidelines with much independence in determining how you accomplish tasks.

This individual will have regular check in meetings with direct supervisor to determine priorities, scope of work, and progress on current projects. Supervisor will review

documents meant for public consumption, including items such as reports, press releases, and other written materials. Individual will perform work with significant independence in determining daily/weekly activities and tasks and managing partner relationships.

6. Mental Effort

This section addresses the mental demands associated with this job. Describe the most mentally challenging part of your job or the most difficult typical problems you are expected to solve. Be sure to give a specific response and describe the situation(s) by example.

- For example, a purchasing clerk might respond: *In pricing purchase orders, I frequently must find the cost of materials not listed in the pricing guides. This involves locating vendors or other sources of pricing information for a great variety of materials.*
- Or, a systems developer might say: *Understanding the ways in which a database or program will be used, and what the users must accomplish and then developing a system to meet their needs, often with limited time and resources.*

The individual must be detail oriented with ability to organize and prioritize activities to accomplish objectives in a timely, efficient, and cost effective manner. This position will write reports and analyze data and policies to assist in developing Division priorities. Requires work in occasionally contentious and challenging situations requiring effective communication skills to work towards an agreeable outcome. This position will be confident in navigating applicable federal and state funding rules, regulations, and procedures. They will have a working knowledge of economic factors associated with production and marketing and will be able to assist partners, grantees, and the public with inquiries. Expected to engage in public speaking opportunities.

7. Accountability

This section evaluates the job's expected results. In weighing the importance of results, consideration should be given to responsibility for the safety and well-being of people, protection of confidential information and protection of resources.

What is needed here is information not already presented about the job's scope of responsibility. What is the job's most significant influence upon the organization, or in what way does the job contribute to the organization's mission?

Provide annualized dollar figures if it makes sense to do so, explaining what the amount(s) represent.

For example:

- A social worker might respond: *To promote permanence for children through coordination and delivery of services;*
- A financial officer might state: *Overseeing preparation and ongoing management of division budget: \$2M Operating/Personal Services, \$1.5M Federal Grants.*

The individual is responsible for supporting and guiding the promotion, marketing, and development work of the Agency. This position will support the Agency by assisting with communication, events, program logistics, and funding, and may take the lead coordinating some local or regional events. They will be responsible for providing assistance to grow programs, offer technical and financial assistance to the variety of agricultural stakeholders, producers, and grantees engaged with the Agency.

Expanding markets for Vermont agricultural products is a requirement for our food suppliers to be successful. Assisting with program development and determining priorities is necessary to offer the market growth and producer sustainability required to protect Vermont's working landscape, agricultural heritage, and healthy communities.

Individuals in this position will assist with the management of annualized grant and program funding of \$250,000 - \$500,000. They will be expected to have a working knowledge of fund management.

8. Working Conditions

The intent of this question is to describe any adverse conditions that are routine and expected in your job. It is not to identify special situations such as overcrowded conditions or understaffing.

- a) What significant mental stress are you exposed to? All jobs contain some amount of stress. If your job stands out as having a significant degree of mental or emotional pressure or tension associated with it, this should be described.

Type	How Much of the Time?
Manage multiple priorities and expectations from within the Agency and external partners	30 hours/week
Engaging with external partners	15 hours/week
Event planning and coordination, public speaking	10 hours/month

- b) What hazards, special conditions or discomfort are you exposed to? (Clarification of terms: **hazards** include such things as potential accidents, illness, chronic health conditions or other harm. Typical examples might involve exposure to dangerous persons, including potentially violent customers and clients, fumes, toxic waste, contaminated materials, vehicle accident, disease, cuts, falls, etc.; and **discomfort** includes exposure to such things as cold, dirt, dust, rain or snow, heat, etc.)

Type	How Much of the Time?

- c) What weights do you lift; how much do they weigh and how much time per day/week do you spend lifting?

Type	How Heavy?	How Much of the Time?
marketing supplies	30 lbs	4 x per year
trade show materials	50 lbs	2 x per year

- d) What working positions (sitting, standing, bending, reaching) or types of effort (hiking, walking, driving) are required?

Type	How Much of the Time?
sitting/standing	35 hours/week
driving	5 hours/week

Additional Information:

Carefully review your job description responses so far. If there is anything that you feel is important in understanding your job that you haven't clearly described, use this space for that purpose. Perhaps your job has some unique aspects or characteristics that weren't brought out by your answers to the previous questions. In this space, add any additional comments that you feel will add to a clear understanding of the requirements of your job.

Employee's Signature (**required**): _____ Date: _____

Supervisor's Section:

Carefully review this completed job description, but **do not** alter or eliminate any portion of the original response. Please answer the questions listed below.

1. What do you consider the most important duties of this job and why?

The most critical aspects of this job are assisting program managers in fund management and provide strategic input to accomplish goals of the Agency. This position is responsible for supporting and guiding the promotion, marketing, and development work of the Agency by assisting with communication, events, program logistics, and funding. This position may take the lead on coordinating some program activities or local/regional events and perform some grantee stewardship activities.

2. What do you consider the most important knowledge, skills, and abilities of an employee in this job (not necessarily the qualifications of the present employee) and why?

An employee in this job must be able to prioritize competing responsibilities while working independently on multiple projects, with general supervision. The ability to review and offer feedback on relevant policies and evaluate complex or controversial issues and propose recommendations to management. Collaboration with partners to create open lines of communication and strong working relationships. Considerable knowledge in production, marketing, policy, and program development ensure that the Division's goals remain relevant in an ever-changing agriculture landscape.

3. Comment on the accuracy and completeness of the responses by the employee. List below any missing items and/or differences where appropriate.

n/a

4. Suggested Title and/or Pay Grade:

Agriculture Development Specialist II / Pay Grade 24

DocuSigned by:
Trevor Lowell
037D4ECC18B7494...

Supervisor's Signature (required):

Date: 12/20/2023 | 2:38:42 EST

Personnel Administrator's Section:

Please complete any missing information on the front page of this form before submitting it for review.

Are there other changes to this position, for example: Change of supervisor, GUC, work station?

Yes No If yes, please provide detailed information.

Attachments:

Organizational charts are **required** and must indicate where the position reports.

Draft job specification is **required** for proposed new job classes.

Will this change affect other positions within the organization? If so, describe how, (for example, have duties been shifted within the unit requiring review of other positions; or are there other issues relevant to the classification review process).

Suggested Title and/or Pay Grade:

Agriculture Development Specialist II / Pay Grade 24

Personnel Administrator's Signature (**required**): DocuSigned by:
Jane Modica
BD6232DFE2A94B6... Date: 12/20/2023 | 3:01:31 EST

Appointing Authority's Section:

Please review this completed job description but **do not alter** or eliminate any of the entries. Add any clarifying information and/or additional comments (if necessary) in the space below.

Suggested Title and/or Pay Grade:

Agriculture Development Specialist II / Pay Grade 24

Appointing Authority or Authorized Representative Signature (**required**): DocuSigned by:
Mede Dubuque
202CEAE57E7445... Date: 12/21/2023 | 1:15:34 EST

Accounting Code: 21XXA0408DCFTMDC1100A23RFSI
Vendor I.D. (UEI): ZL9VH4Z7GAR2

Agreement: RFSI_VT
Assistance Listing Number: 10.190

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
between the
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250
(hereinafter called the Federal Agency)
and the
Vermont Department of Agriculture
Montpelier, Vermont, 05620
(herein after called the State Agency)

- Title of Agreement:** Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Cooperative Agreement
- Objective:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), is entering cooperative agreements with each U.S. State and Territory for Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program Cooperative Agreements (RFSI). The overall goal of RFSI is to create more and better processing options for local and regional producers across the food supply chain.

Following signatures on these agreements, States are to submit formal plans to develop and administer coordinated initiatives to build resilience across the middle of the State’s food supply chain for food crops. Funds will support expanded capacity for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, and EXCLUDING meat and poultry, fiber, wild-caught seafood, exclusively animal feed and forage products, fiber, landscaping products, tobacco, and dietary supplements. States will work in partnership with USDA to make competitive subaward investments in middle of the supply chain infrastructure (Infrastructure Grants) to domestic food and farm businesses and other eligible entities. States may use a limited portion of funds to develop and/or strengthen the State’s supply chain coordination and targeted market development services for local and regional produced product.
- Statement of Responsibilities:** This cooperative agreement shall be carried out by the organizational units or officials of the Federal Agency and the State Agency in the manner and subject to the conditions provided in the Statement of Responsibilities attached below, and agreed to in the final approved State Plan that will be completed in the first 90 days.
- Legal Authority:** Section 1001(b)(4) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 (Pub. L. 117—2).
- Revision:** N/A
- Effective Date:** May 25, 2023
- Approvals:** The signatories hereby certify that they have authority to enter into said cooperative agreement.

This agreement is hereby approved for the State Agency.

Done at Montpelier, Vermont on 5/24/2023
(City and State) (Date)



Signature
Secretary of Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Title

This agreement is hereby approved for the Federal Agency.

Done at Washington, DC on 5/17/2023
(City and State) (Date)

MELISSA BAILEY
Digitally signed by MELISSA BAILEY
Date: 2023.05.17 15:11:52 -04'00'

Signature
Associate Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service

CONTINUATION SHEET – COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NUMBER: RFSI_VT

This STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES is part of the Cooperative Agreement between the Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture and **Vermont Department of Agriculture**, effective May 25, 2023, having the title of **Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Cooperative Agreement**.

I. Introduction - Federal and State Agency employees conducting activities under terms of this agreement shall be as follows:

- A. For the Federal Agency–Robert Tarwater, Grants Director, USDA AMS Transportation and Marketing Program, is the principal lead on the program, overseeing staff in the Grants Division at AMS.
- B. For the State Agency– Abbey Willard, Agriculture Development Division Director is the principal lead on the program and overseeing staff and deliverables associated with this CA at AAFM

II. Responsibilities

A. The Federal Agency will:

1. Operate the program according to the attached Program Scope and Requirements.
2. Provide the State Agency with all necessary templates and information about the RFSI program during all phases of the program.
3. Arrange opportunities for the State Agency to engage with USDA-AMS staff to answer questions via meetings, informational webinars, or office hours.
4. Provide ongoing access to AMS staff who can answer questions and inform state activities for supply chain coordination and technical assistance.
5. Collaborate with the State Agency to oversee project timeline and alignment of activities with project goals.
6. Conduct a review of the State Plan within 60 days of State Agency submission of said State Plan. Collaborate with the State Agency, as needed, to review, edit, and revise the initial State Plan and any revisions needed throughout the Agreement.
7. Review and provide feedback on all materials developed through this agreement, and on State Infrastructure Grant Proposals.
8. Issue an amendment to this agreement after State Agency and Federal Agency finalize the State Plan, including a detailed budget.
9. Have ongoing substantial involvement as described in the Program Scope and Requirements throughout the term of the agreement.
10. Provide the State Agency with a sum of **\$4,525,801.81** to cover allowable costs.

B. The State Agency will:

1. Operate their program and use funds in accordance with the attached Program Scope and Requirements, AMS General Terms and Conditions, and Program Specific Terms and Conditions, and responsive to Federal Agency input throughout the program.
2. Conduct outreach and engagement in their State to inform the State Plan and to ensure awareness of all services and resources offered under this program.
3. Submit a State Plan to the Federal Agency within 90 days from the start of this Agreement. Funds may only be used for initial planning and outreach activities, not Infrastructure Grants or Supply Chain Coordination activities, until a final State Plan has been approved.
4. Plan, propose, and make subawards in the form of Infrastructure Grants to middle-of-the-supply businesses to create more diverse local and regional market options and create more economic opportunities for communities, allowing them to retain more of the value chain dollar. States will send a State Infrastructure Grant Proposal to USDA for review and approval before announcing or making awards.
5. Coordinate announcements and events with the Federal Agency.
6. Participate in regular program status meetings with the Federal Agency related to financial, programmatic, or other activities as requested by the Federal Agency.
7. Provide annual performance and financial reports to the Federal Agency documenting state and Infrastructure Grant progress for the life of the award period of performance.
8. Submit requests for advances or reimbursements to the Federal Agency at least quarterly on Form SF-270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement.

CONTINUATION SHEET – COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NUMBER: RFSI_VT

9. Immediately refund to the Federal Agency, at the end of the agreement, any balance of unobligated funds advanced. This agreement is assessed an administrative charge as provided under the Debt Collection Act of 1996 (PUBLIC LAW 104-134—APR. 26, 1996). Late payments are assessed an interest charge of 18 percent per month after 60 days. A penalty charge of 7 percent is assessed per month, in addition to the interest charge, after 90 days.
10. Keep a separate account of expenditures and provide the Federal Agency a final Federal Financial Report, Form SF-425, submitted no later than 90 days after the end of the agreement.

C. It is mutually understood and agreed that:

1. Quarterly payments to the State Agency shall be limited to the minimum amounts needed to meet current disbursement needs and shall be scheduled so that the funds are available to the State Agency as close as is administratively feasible to the actual disbursements by the State Agency for program costs. Cash advances made by the State Agency to secondary recipient organizations or the State Agency's field organizations shall conform substantially to the same standards of timing and amount as apply to cash advances by the Federal Agency to the State Agency.
2. All aspects of this agreement shall be executed according to all applicable parts of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 25, 170, 200, and 400 or as they may be later revised, and successive published regulations as appropriate, hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of this agreement. The State Agency confirms that it understands and is bound by the above regulations.
3. As a condition of this award, the State Agency agrees to comply with and require subrecipients to comply with the requirements contained in:
 - a. USDA AMS General Terms and Conditions
 - b. RFSI Program Specific Terms and Conditions
 - c. Standard Form 424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs.
 - d. Form AD-1047, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions.
 - e. Form AD-1048, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions. Note: The recipient is responsible for obtaining the signatures and retaining the certificates, if warranted, from lower tier recipients or contractors as defined in 2 CFR 200.
 - f. Form AD-1049, Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (Grants) Alternative I - For Grantees Other Than Individuals.
 - g. Certification Regarding Lobbying. Note: The appropriate lobbying disclosure report form, SF-LLL, is available from the Federal Agency if applicable.
 - (a) Exception to the above: Certification Regarding Lobbying is not required from recipients of a Federal contract, grant, or cooperative agreement of \$100,000 or less.
 - h. 2 CFR Part 170, Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information.
 - i. 2 CFR Part 175, Award Term for Trafficking in Persons.
 - j. National policy requirements contained in 2 CFR 1 – 200 and 400 et seq.
 - k. In accepting the provisions of the award, the State Agency certifies that all employees and personnel responsible for providing the economic, marketing, or scientific data ensure the integrity and accuracy of the information. USDA has in place a Scientific Integrity Policy (DR 1074-001) that can be found at: <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/policy-directives-records-forms/directives-categories>.
 - l. Prohibition Against Using Funds under Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements:
 - (a) The recipient may not require its employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting them from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.
 - (b) The recipient must notify its employees, contractors, or subrecipients that the prohibitions and restrictions of any internal confidentiality agreements inconsistent with paragraph (a) of this award provision are no longer in effect.
 - (c) The prohibition in paragraph (a) of this award provision does not contravene requirements applicable to any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.
 - (d) If the Government determines that the recipient is not in compliance with this award provision, it:

CONTINUATION SHEET – COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NUMBER: RFSI_VT

- (1) Will prohibit the recipient's use of funds under this award, in accordance with sections 743, 744 of Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113) or any successor provision of law; and
- (2) May pursue other remedies available for the recipient's material failure to comply with award terms and conditions.
- (e) The State Agency further certifies that any service provider with concerns, questions, complaints, or information regarding possible violations of scientific integrity will report those concerns, either directly or through the State Agency's management, to the contracting officer who will forward those concerns to the AMS Scientific Integrity Officer (ASIO) or use the OIG Hotline at <https://usdaoig.oversight.gov/>.
4. No member of Congress or resident commissioner shall be admitted to any share or part of this agreement or to any benefit to arise therefrom, unless it be made with a corporation for its general benefit.
5. Subject to the necessary authority and funds, this agreement shall continue in force until **May 24, 2027**, unless amended or terminated by mutual consent of the parties in writing or terminated by either party upon 60-day notice in writing.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

From: [AMS.RFSI](#)
To: [Sweet, Kristina \(she/her\)](#)
Cc: [Willard, Abbey](#); [Scheier, Julia \(She/Her\)](#); [Lowell, Trevor](#)
Subject: VT - Approved ST Plan
Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2023 5:32:51 PM

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Kristina,

Thank you for sending over the VT State Plan revisions. I have no further questions and have filed your RFSI State Plan as approved.

You are now free to start your State RFA process. We look forward to receiving your competitively reviewed and selected subaward proposals by May 25, 2024.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

Thank you,

RFSI Team

Email: rfsi@usda.gov

Website: www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/rfsi

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.



State of Vermont
Agricultural Development Division
116 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2901
agriculture.vermont.gov

Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

[phone] 802-828-2430
[email] AGR.Helpdesk@vermont.gov

November 13, 2023

Limited Service Position Justifications

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFMM) Agriculture Development Division will establish the following two (2) Limited Service Positions to carry out the work of the USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program cooperative agreement (\$4,525,801.81 awarded in August 2023; State Plan approved November 2023) and the USDA Dairy Business Innovation Initiative grant (JFO #2982).

Agriculture Development Specialist II – End date 6/30/2026

Under the supervision of Marketing & Export Lead (Agriculture Development Supervisor) Trevor Lowell, this limited service position (PG 24) will be responsible for the supply chain coordination component of the work plan outlined in the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program State Plan. This work represents \$901,460 of the \$4.5 million total award. Specific duties include the following:

- This position will work directly with equipment and infrastructure grantees to help connect them to additional resources, including access to capital and support from business and technical service providers.
- They will also be responsible for creating and disseminating resources and information related to the middle of the supply chain. Through webinars, blog posts, presentations and other mediums, this position will educate businesses about market conditions, opportunities for growth and common market barriers.
- Finally, this position will plan and implement a series of learning journeys, where businesses and organizations will be invited to experience and learn from examples of successful middle of the supply chain projects and partnerships at locations throughout the region.

The position is budgeted at a total cost of \$265,949 (\$152,682 salary; \$113,267 benefits) from 1/1/2024 to 6/30/2026 and will be fully funded through the USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure cooperative agreement.

Contract and Grants Specialist I – End date 12/31/2025

Under the supervision of the Contracts & Grants Administrator Rebecca Brockett, this limited service position (PG 23) will be responsible for administering grants and contracts under the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program State Plan (representing over \$3.2 million of the \$4.5 million total award) and supporting the work plan outlined in the USDA Dairy Business Innovation Initiative grant (JFO #2982). Specific duties include the following:



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- Manage RFSI and Dairy Business Innovation applications and grants within the Agricultural Development Division's grants management system, WebGrants. Provide technical assistance for WebGrants users.
 - Develop online applications in WebGrants, set up reviewer accounts and assign applications to review, report on application requests and reviewer scores.
 - Collect grantee documentation; draft and process grant awards and amendments.

The position is budgeted at a total cost of \$186,753 (\$114,005 salary; \$72,748 benefits) from 1/1/2024 to 6/30/2026 and will be fully funded jointly (50% from each program) through the USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure cooperative agreement and the USDA Dairy Business Innovation Initiative grant (JFO #2982).

Support for these positions comes from monies accessible to VAAFMs' Agricultural Development Division through the RFSI cooperative agreement (awarded August May 2023; state plan approved November 2023) and USDA Dairy Business Innovation Initiative Award (JFO #2982). These positions will be fully funded through these federal awards.

Establishing these positions will also allow our Agency to claim \$165,793 in indirect costs from the RFSI cooperative agreement. Our current federally negotiated indirect rate is 46.14% of the cost of salary and benefits.



Recipient Information

1. Recipient Name

VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE
116 State St
-DUP
Montpelier, VT 05620-8800

2. Congressional District of Recipient

00

3. Payment System Identifier (ID)

036000264

4. Employer Identification Number (EIN)

036000264

5. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)

809376718

6. Recipient's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

ZL9VH4Z7GAR2

7. Project Director or Principal Investigator

Laura Ginsburg
laura.ginsburg@vermont.gov
802-522-2252

8. Authorized Official

Ms. Nicole Dubuque
Director of Administrative Services
nicole.dubuque@Vermont.gov
802-261-5061

Federal Agency Information

Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA-AMS)

9. Awarding Agency Contact Information

Mrs. Amanda LaSala
Grants Management Specialist
Amanda.LaSala@usda.gov
(202) 207-8888

10. Program Official Contact Information

Mrs. Amanda LaSala
Grants Management Specialist
Initiatives and Partnerships Program
Amanda.LaSala@usda.gov
(202) 207-8888

30. Remarks

Federal Award Information

11. Award Number

23DBIVT1018-00

12. Unique Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN)

23DBIVT1018

13. Statutory Authority

The Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiatives were authorized by section 12513 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) Public Law 115—334, (7 U.S.C. § 1632d)

14. Federal Award Project Title

Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

15. Assistance Listing Number

10.176

16. Assistance Listing Program Title

Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives

17. Award Action Type

New

18. Is the Award R&D?

No

Summary Federal Award Financial Information

19. Budget Period Start Date	09/30/2023	- End Date	09/29/2026
20. Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated by this Action	\$7,053,333.00		
20a. Direct Cost Amount	\$6,466,794.79		
20b. Indirect Cost Amount	\$586,538.21		
21. Authorized Carryover	\$0.00		
22. Offset	\$0.00		
23. Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated this budget period	\$0.00		
24. Total Approved Cost Sharing or Matching, where applicable	\$0.00		
25. Total Federal and Non-Federal Approved this Budget Period	\$7,053,333.00		
26. Period of Performance Start Date	09/30/2023	- End Date	09/29/2026
27. Total Amount of the Federal Award including Approved Cost Sharing or Matching this Period of Performance	\$7,053,333.00		

28. Authorized Treatment of Program Income

ADDITIONAL COSTS

29. Grants Management Officer - Signature

Patrick A. Kelley
Lead Grants Management Specialist



Notice of Award

Award# 23DBIVT1018-00

FAIN# 23DBIVT1018

Federal Award Date: 10/27/2023

Recipient Information	
Recipient Name	
VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE 116 State St -DUP Montpelier, VT 05620-8800	
Congressional District of Recipient	
00	
Payment Account Number and Type	
036000264	
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	
036000264	
Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)	
809376718	
Recipient's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)	
ZL9VH4Z7GAR2	
31. Assistance Type	
Project Grant	
32. Type of Award	
Other	

33. Approved Budget (Excludes Direct Assistance)	
I. Financial Assistance from the Federal Awarding Agency Only	
II. Total project costs including grant funds and all other financial participation	
a. Salaries and Wages	\$732,868.14
b. Fringe Benefits	\$538,346.01
c. Total Personnel Costs	\$1,271,214.15
d. Equipment	\$0.00
e. Supplies	\$4,000.00
f. Travel	\$15,100.00
g. Construction	\$0.00
h. Other	\$77,912.68
i. Contractual	\$5,098,567.96
j. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	\$6,466,794.79
k. INDIRECT COSTS	\$586,538.21
l. TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	\$7,053,333.00
m. Federal Share	\$7,053,333.00
n. Non-Federal Share	\$0.00

34. Accounting Classification Codes					
FY-ACCOUNT NO.	DOCUMENT NO.	ADMINISTRATIVE CODE	OBJECT CLASS	AMT ACTION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	APPROPRIATION
AM002500D323XXAMTMDC1100AM00490000000000AMGRM14VT411012X2500AM00	23DBIVT1018	TM	4110	\$7,053,333.00	12X2500

AWARD ATTACHMENTS

VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE

23DBIVT1018-00

1. Terms and Conditions
2. Project Abstract

NOA Terms and Condition - DBI

Copy and paste this information into the Terms and Conditions text box of the NOA in GMM

AWARD CONDITIONS

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) hereby awards a grant in support of the above referenced program.

This Award is pursuant to CFDA # 10.176, Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives Program and is subject to:

1. Your organization's application package, including the SF-424, Application/Project Narrative, Budget Summary/Narrative, other supporting letters and documents.
2. Agricultural Marketing Service Grants Division General Award Terms and Conditions available at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/dbi/howto-administer>.

Acceptance of this award requires an authorized [Grant recipient awarded] representative to sign and date the Notice of Award (NOA) and submit to AMS via the grants management electronic system. You may also submit a signed copy of the NOA via email to IPPGrants@usda.gov. If you have any questions about this NOA, please contact the Federal Agency Project Manager listed on the attached Grant Agreement.

Statement of Work:

This agreement shall be carried out by the organizational units or officials of the Federal Agency and the Recipient in the manner and subject to the conditions provided in the Agricultural Marketing Service Grants Division General Award Terms and Conditions attached hereto and made a part of this agreement.

PROVISIONS:

This Agreement incorporates the following - 1. Approved application and budget including any mutually agreed upon budget revisions and other changes and amendments thereto. 2. Agricultural Marketing Service Grants Division General Award Terms and Conditions available at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/dbi/howto-administer>. 3. 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 400. 4. 2 CFR §200.216 and 2 CFR §200.340.

Paperwork Burden Statement:

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0240. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project 0581-0240, Washington, DC 20503.

Civil Rights:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410. 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

NOA Terms and Condition - DBI

Public Announcement Embargo

AMS Grants Division requests that awardees refrain from doing any form of publicity on their award recommendation until the Secretary's office has had a chance do a press release first or until your office receives official notification of this award from our awards management system. Failure to adhere to this request may put your award recommendation at risk and may make it subject to withdrawal.

Project Abstract

Grantee Name: VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE
Grant Number: 23DBIVT1018-00
Project Title: Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center
Project Period: 09/30/2023 - 09/29/2026

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center's (NE-DBIC) round 5 application for funding continues to focus on the delivery of high-value, high-impact programming to benefit the dairy sector across the region. Opportunities are focused on farm and processor viability, with modernization, innovation, and climate-forward strategies at the forefront. The NE-DBIC's regional approach with intentional collaboration is developing trust, multi-state solutions, and benefits beyond the direct grantee. Grant funded activities are focused in three primary areas: farm investments, processing investments, and dairy supply chain research and development. The funding in this application builds on previous opportunities that resonated across the dairy community, including on-farm milk storage and handling, food safety improvements, farm modernization, and processor innovation. New areas of focus include a regional economic study to understand the impact of dairy across New England, research and development of a novel farm production strategy, and investment in critical regional supply chain resources. Over \$5.1 million will be awarded competitively through numerous subawards to dairy farms and processors, as they are the primary beneficiaries of this work. Subawards are used to fund the purchase of new equipment, for education and training, and to develop new systems or practices that support business success. Expected outcomes include job creation and maintenance, increased sales through existing or new market channels, new partnerships that result in higher profits, expanded infrastructure, and increased utilization of regional milk. The NE-DBIC also measures outcomes related to subrecipient education, satisfaction, and outlook.

AG DEVELOPMENT

Ag Development

