



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Joint Fiscal Committee Members  
From: Nathan Lavery, Senior Fiscal Analyst  
Date: August 29, 2014  
Subject: Grant Request #2693, #2694, #2695

Enclosed please find three (3) items that the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the administration. Four limited service positions are associated with these requests.

**JFO #2693 – Two (2) limited service positions** in the Vermont Military Department. These instructor positions will enable the Starbase program (a youth education program) to meet Department of Defense staffing requirements. These positions are 100% federally funded.  
[JFO received 08/14/14]

**JFO #2694 – One (1) limited service position** in the Vermont Military Department. This Information Technology Analyst position will enable the Department to manage the current IT workload more efficiently, reduce the use of overtime and provide adequate IT backup and redundancy. This position is 100% federally funded.  
[JFO received 08/14/14]

**JFO #2695 – One (1) limited service position** in the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM). This position will develop a state-level produce safety program under the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act and manage VAAFAM's Specialty Crop block grant. This position is 100% federally funded.  
[JFO received 08/14/14]

Please review the enclosed materials and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Nathan Lavery at (802) 828-1488; [nlavery@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:nlavery@leg.state.vt.us)) if you have questions or would like an item held for legislative review. Unless we hear from you to the contrary by September 10 we will assume that you agree to consider as final the Governor's acceptance of these requests.

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

JFO 2695

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 and Markets Date: 7/3/14

Name and Phone (of the person completing this request): Abbey Willard; 802-272-2885

Request is for:

- Positions funded and attached to a new grant.
- Positions funded and attached to an existing grant approved by JFO # 2305

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

USDA-Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS)  
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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>
Senior Agriculture Development Coordinator	1	Ag Development	10/1/14-9/30/15

\*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:

This position is in response to producers and consumers mounting awareness and concern regarding produce safety and the Food Safety Modernization Act. It will establish VAAFMS staff capacity to create the framework for a state-level produce safety program in collaboration with FDA, UVM Extension, VDH, and the fruit and vegetable industry that focuses on education, technical assistance and outreach for compliance prior to enforcement.

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)).

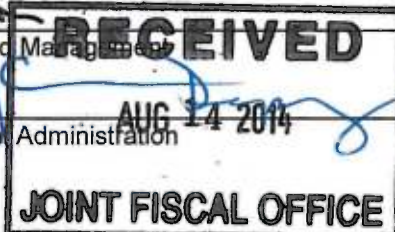
Charles R. [Signature] 7-18-14  
Signature of Agency or Department Head Date

Molly Paul [Signature] 7/29/14  
Approved/Denied by Department of Human Resources Date

[Signature] 8/12/14  
Approved/Denied by Finance and Management Date

[Signature] 8/13/14  
Approved/Denied by Secretary of Administration Date

Comments:



JUL 31 2014



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**Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets**

116 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620  
[www.VermontAgriculture.com](http://www.VermontAgriculture.com)

## Memorandum

To: Chuck Ross, Secretary VAAFM

Jane Modica, HR

Judy Hurley, HR

From: Abbey Willard, Local Foods Administrator

Date: July 14, 2014

Subject: Application to establish one (1) limited service position

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This memo is to accompany the request to establish one (1) limited service position, Produce Safety Program Development Coordinator, in the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets (VAAFM). This position will work to develop a state-level produce safety program in partnership with the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) requirements and Vermont's produce industry expectations as well as manage VAAFM's Specialty Crop Block grant program. This Senior Agriculture Development Coordinator will: survey Vermont's produce industry to determine FSMA impact; host listening sessions to gather feedback on the state's appropriate regulatory program structure and content; formulate statutory language recommendations for the VT Legislature authorizing VAAFM to regulate produce; function as Vermont's FSMA policy liaison with state, regional, and national partners; and manage the Vermont VAAFM's Specialty Crop Block granting program.

Enclosed you will find the following documents:

- memo from VAAFM to Agency of Administration and Joint Fiscal Committee (JFC);
- JFC limited service position request form- Requires VAAFM Secretary and Human Resources signatures;
- Request for classification action form C- Requires Appointing Authority (Secretary) and Personnel Administrators (HR) signatures; and
- All required supporting documentation

This position is 100% federally funded with Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) funding. The total position value is \$76,356.00: \$60,000 is a grant from VAAFM's SCBG allocation and \$16,356 from our administrative resources to manage the SCBG program. We anticipate creating a 2-3 year limited service position with annual appropriations of SCBG funding from USDA-Agriculture Marketing Service. VAAFM will request to continue the position on an annual basis with the submission of our SCBG state plan to USDA-AMS.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

JUL 31 2014



VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

SECRETARY  
Agriculture, Food and Markets  
*Charles R. Ross, Jr*

Deputy Secretary  
*Diane Bothfeld*

Deputy Secretary  
*Jolinda LaClair*

Sr. Agricultural  
Develop. Coord  
*Louise Waterman*  
*Alex DePillis*

Ag Policy  
Administrator  
*Abbey Willard*

Sr. Agricultural Develop.  
Coord.  
(Produce Program Dev.)

Sr. Agricultural  
Develop. Coord.  
(FTS Coordinator)

Ag Policy  
Administrator  
*Allison*  
*Kosakowski*  
*Chelsea Lewis*

Administrative  
Assistant A  
*Faith*  
*Raymond*

Ag Policy  
Administrator  
*Colleen Leonard*

Ag Develop  
Coord  
*Noelle Sevoian*

Grants Program  
Specialist II  
*Melissa Moon*

#1. Year 1 Work Plan: Job duties and expectations

Project Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline
Survey Vermont's specialty crop producers and processors to determine FSMA impact	<p>Survey developed, disseminated and result evaluation by hired Produce Program Development staff.</p> <p>Survey reviewed and distributed with assistance from: UVM Extension, VT Food Safety Task Force, VT Department of Health (VDH) and VT Vegetable and Berry Growers Association (VVBGA).</p>	November 2014-February 2015
Host specialty crop industry listening sessions to gather feedback on regulatory program structure and content	<p>VAAFM will host listening sessions in partnership with produce stakeholder partners (e.g. UVM Extension, VDH, VVBGA).</p> <p>Host 3 sessions across the state throughout the winter months. Locations TBD.</p> <p>Present draft program framework to industry and partners at various regional meetings &amp; conferences.</p>	<p>December 2014-March 2015</p> <p>April-August 2015</p>
Formulate statutory language with VT Legislature to authorize VAAFM to regulate produce	<p>VAAFM will present draft authority language during 2015 Legislative session.</p> <p>Collaborate with VDH on development of a universal 'Food Code' and Agency cross-training</p>	<p>January-May 2015</p> <p>January-May 2015</p>
Function as Vermont's FSMA policy liaison within northeast region and NASDA	<p>Attend produce program development and FSMA-compliance discussions with regional Extension staff. Host some conversations in VT.</p> <p>Attend FDA &amp; NASDA policy meetings in Washington D.C. to share VT's produce program and align with FSMA rules.</p>	<p>November 2014-March 2015</p> <p>January-September 2015</p>
Professional Development and Training opportunities	Attend national produce safety conferences to learn about regional programs, share Vermont's program development process, and align states with FSMA requirements.	January-September 2015
Management of Vermont's Specialty Crop Block Grant program	Responsible for RFP development, management of application process, grantee interaction, USDA reporting, and website communication	October 2014-September 2015

## #2. Request justification/explanation

Produce safety is of growing concern to fruit and vegetable operations, the regulatory community, and consumers as a result of the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), passed into law in 2011. Specialty crop producers want to provide safe and healthy food that consumers demand and that protects the quality reputation and brand associated with Vermont's agriculture. More and more, wholesale customers are demanding some food safety accreditation and overall consumers are more aware of where their food comes from and the practices employed to bring it to their dinner table.

Due to lack of statutory authority and program funding, Vermont fruit and vegetable production is largely unregulated and uninspected. In response to increasing produce safety awareness, numerous growers have voluntarily engaged in developing food safety plans and/or seeking Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification. Vermont's produce industry is encouraging to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) to develop a food safety program that encompasses education, training, and technical assistance to achieve compliance prior to regulatory enforcement. Development of an industry accepted program requires a VAAFAM FSMA liaison position to provide outreach to the produce industry, partner with established service providers, engage in the legislative rule-making process, and collaborate with regional and federal partners. The FSMA liaison position will be responsible for building in-state relationships, forming regional partnerships, and engaging at the national level with FDA and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) with the goal of developing a program that captures the needs of the producers and consumers within our state while aligning with FSMA requirements and other state regulatory and market access programs.

VAAFAM supports the premise of a state-level FSMA-compliant produce safety program that offers market opportunity for Vermont growers, and preserves consumer confidence in Vermont food products. VAAFAM has been working with FDA officials and leadership within NASDA to develop a set of federal rules that will work for specialty crop producers in the northeast. This position will establish VAAFAM staff capacity to create the framework for a state-level produce safety program in collaboration with FDA, UVM Extension, Vermont Health Department, and the fruit and vegetable industry that focuses on education, technical assistance and outreach for compliance prior to enforcement. This position will also resume responsibility for management of the Vermont's Specialty Crop Block granting program, with annual appropriations of approximately \$250,000 from USDA-AMS to VAAFAM, to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

VAAFAM currently lacks the statutory authority to implement a produce safety regulatory program. Numerous states across the country do currently have state-level produce programs, likely with components VAAFAM could benefit learning from and consider adopting. As FDA approaches the final rule deadline of June 2015, the need to have a FSMA policy liaison becomes imperative. This project will allow for increased state and federal partnerships and improved communication within Vermont and amongst states regarding FSMA. Although VAAFAM is aware that a segment of Vermont's fruit and vegetable industry will likely be responsive to a state-level produce safety regulatory program, we lack

industry perspective on legislative and regulatory recommendation and program structure to best prepare for FSMA compliance requirements.

This heightened focus on the produce industry will complement the need for connection with the specialty crop community and consequently support proper management of the Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program administered by USDA-AMS. Active engagement with the produce industry and management of the SCBG program will augment the capabilities of developing a produce program within VAAFM.

Consequently, a limited service position at VAAFM will be critical to:

- Assess and consider alignment of state produce programs across the country;
- Survey and prepare the state’s specialty crop industry for pending FSMA regulations and adoption of a state-level regulatory program;
- Develop both a functional and regulatory framework within VAAFM to create a produce program that accommodates FSMA and meets the produce industry’s needs; and
- Effectively manage Vermont’s Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

SCBG Produce Program Development Coordinator budget

	SCBG grant	SCBG admin	Total
Income			
SCBG grant allocation	\$60,000.00	\$22,262.00	<b>\$82,262.00</b>
Expenses			
<i>Personnel</i>	\$37,550.00	\$11,600.00	<b>\$49,150.00</b>
<i>Fringe</i>	\$15,395.50	\$4,756.00	<b>\$20,151.50</b>
<i>Travel</i>	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	<b>\$5,000.00</b>
<i>Other</i>	\$2,054.50	\$0.00	<b>\$2,054.50</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$60,000.00</b>	<b>\$16,356.00</b>	<b>\$76,356.00</b>
VAAFM Admin Management support		\$5,906.00	
FTE of the Produce Coordinator	76%	24%	

The total position value is \$76,356.00: \$60,000 is a grant from VAAFM’s SCBG allocation to support the development of a produce safety regulatory program and \$16,356 is available from VAAFM’s administrative resources for the Coordinator to administer the SCBG granting program. An additional \$5,906 of administrative funding remains for VAAFM leadership staff to oversee the SCBG program. We anticipate creating a 2-3 year limited service position with annual appropriations of SCBG funding from USDA-Agriculture Marketing Service. VAAFM will request to continue the position on an annual basis with the submission of our SCBG state plan to USDA-AMS.

Currently no other federal or state grants are funding VAAFM to engage in this comprehensive scope of work. UVM Extension is engaged in submitting proposals to develop a scale-appropriate, produce safety accreditation program, which will serve as a valuable compliment to the VAAFM’s program research and development objectives.

## Attachments

1. Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets organizational chart of Agricultural Development Division.
2. Email from USDA-AMS confirming the \$273,001.82 Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets will receive for 10/1/14-9/30/15 fiscal year. Within this annual federal allocation of Specialty Crop Block grant funding, \$60,000 has been identified as a VAAFM grant for the produce safety program development and \$16,356 from our administrative resources for management of the SCBG program. The total limited service position value is \$76,356.00.
3. Specialty Crop Block grant State Plan submission to USDA-AMS for the "Development of a Vermont Produce Safety and Market Access Program" enclosed

## **Development of a Vermont Produce Safety and Market Access Program**

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Market

6/20/14

Abbey Willard, Local Food Administrator

116 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05602

802-272-2885

[abbey.willard@state.vt.us](mailto:abbey.willard@state.vt.us)

Specialty Crop Industries promoted: fruits, vegetables, culinary herbs and spices

State priorities: food safety and traceability; market access, branding and consumer education; supply chain development

Project Title: Development of a Vermont Produce Safety and Market Access Program

### Abstract:

Produce safety is of growing concern to fruit and vegetable operations, the regulatory community, and consumers as a result of the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), passed into law in 2011. Specialty crop producers want to provide safe and healthy food that consumers demand and that protects the quality reputation and brand associated with Vermont's agriculture. More and more, wholesale customers are demanding some food safety accreditation and overall consumers are more aware of where their food comes from and the practices employed to bring it to their dinner table.

Due to lack of statutory authority and program funding, Vermont fruit and vegetable production is largely unregulated and uninspected. In response to increasing produce safety awareness, numerous growers have voluntarily engaged in developing food safety plans and/or seeking Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification. Vermont's produce industry is encouraging to the Vermont Agency of



Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAF) to develop a food safety program that encompasses education, training, and technical assistance to achieve compliance prior to regulatory enforcement. Development of an industry accepted program requires a VAAF FSMA liaison position to provide outreach to the produce industry, partner with established service providers, engage in the legislative rule-making process, and collaborate with regional and federal partners. The FSMA liaison position will be responsible for building in-state relationships, forming regional partnerships, and engaging at the national level with FDA and NASDA with the goal of developing a program that captures the needs of the producers and consumers within our state while aligning with FSMA requirements and other state regulatory and market access programs.

Project Partner Organization:

UVM Extension and Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association (VVBGA) are collaborative partners. No contractual agreements are intended for development.

Project Purpose:

Food safety is a paramount issue facing Vermont fruit and vegetable operations. Producers want to produce safe and healthy food that consumers demand and that protects the quality reputation and brand associated with Vermont agriculture. Most wholesale and retail customers seek assurance that food safety practices are being followed by all farms they purchase from. Many customers are more than ever aware of where their food comes from and demand connection to the local growers that represent Vermont's community-based agriculture system.

Vermont's produce industry, as represented through the VVBGA membership, is receptive to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets (VAAF) providing food safety planning support and pro-active compliance with food safety regulations. Since 1998, USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) have provided voluntary guidelines and a certification process for produce farmers to reduce the risk of microbial contamination related to food borne illnesses on their farms. Less than 30 Vermont producers seek GAP certification annually. Now, many producers are pro-actively preparing to adapt to new pending regulatory requirements associated with the U.S. FDA's implementation of FSMA (Food Safety Modernization Act) which will release final rules by the end of June 2015.

Upon adoption of final FSMA rules, operations will have 2-4 years, based on farm size, to come into compliance. Once FSMA is implemented, many fresh produce growers will be required to adopt and document rigorous production and handling practices that reduce food safety risks. The proposed rules as they are currently drafted exempt smaller farms with less than \$500,000 in annual food sales if at least 50% is sold to retail customers within a 275 mile radius. Consequently many Vermont growers may not be covered under FSMA regulations. According to the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association, producers – regardless of total sales or customer base – are indicating their willingness to participate in food safety planning and implementation of on-farm production and handling practices. The sentiment is that food safety is essential on all farms - of all sizes - as it influences market access, impacts economic development within the agricultural sector, and represents Vermont's prominence around value, quality, and brand.

VAAFM supports the premise of a state-level FSMA-compliant produce safety program that offers market opportunity for Vermont growers, and preserves consumer confidence in Vermont food products. VAAFM has been working with FDA officials and leadership within the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) to develop a set of federal rules that will work for specialty crop producers in the northeast. This SCBG project will establish VAAFM staff capacity to create the framework for a state-level produce safety program in collaboration with FDA, UVM Extension, and the fruit and vegetable industry program that focuses on education, technical assistance and outreach for compliance prior to enforcement.

VAAFM currently lacks the statutory authority to implement a produce safety regulatory program. Numerous states across the country do currently have state-level produce programs, likely with components VAAFM could benefit learning from and consider adopting. As FDA approaches the final rule deadline of June 2015, the need to have a FSMA policy liaison becomes imperative. This project will allow for increased state and federal partnerships and improved communication within Vermont and amongst states regarding FSMA. Although VAAFM is aware that a segment of Vermont's fruit and vegetable industry will likely be responsive to a state-level produce safety regulatory program, we lack industry perspective on legislative and regulatory recommendation and program structure to best prepare for FSMA compliance requirements. Consequently, VAAFM needs staff capacity to:

- Assess and consider alignment of state produce programs across the country;
- Survey and prepare the state's specialty crop industry for pending FSMA regulations and adoption of a state-level regulatory program; and
- Develop both a functional and regulatory framework within VAAFM to create a produce program that accommodates FSMA and meets the produce industry's needs.

Currently no other federal or state grants are funding VAAFM to engage in this scope of work. UVM Extension is engaged in submitting proposals to develop a scale-appropriate, produce safety accreditation program, which will serve as a valuable compliment to the VAAFM's program research and development objectives.

Potential Impact:

A comprehensive Vermont produce safety program offering food safety education, training, and regulatory assistance to meet FSMA requirements will increase market access and provide economic viability to the fruit and vegetable industry. Initial program development requires engagement with stakeholders and specialty crop producers to understand industry needs and the potential economic impacts of FSMA on produce businesses within the state. The FSMA liaison role will provide VAAFM staff capacity to further relationships with UVM Extension, VVBGA, Vermont Department of Health, other states, NASDA, and FDA. Improved collaboration across the state, the region, and the country will have positive impacts on the development of a feasible Produce Safety Program and compliance with FSMA requirements.

Some anticipated impacts of this project include:

**A. Job creation and/or retention**

This program will maintain and expand mid-scale markets for Vermont producers by promoting food safety, ensuring integrity of the Vermont brand, and increasing market access while continuing to grow and expand the state's produce industry. This program will retain jobs in the agricultural sector that currently fears business loss in response to FSMA regulations. Creation of a Produce Safety Program may in turn create jobs as demand for safe food production expands.

**B. Economic Resiliency**

A comprehensive Vermont Produce Safety Program that meets federal FSMA requirements and focuses on education, technical assistance and outreach for compliance prior to enforcement will create resiliency and strength in our fruit and vegetable industry. Investments in a safe and healthy food system will support the businesses along the supply chain that are producing, processing, brokering, distributing, and selling Vermont food products. Vermont residents will benefit from an agricultural community and food system recognized for value and quality.

**C. Collaboration**

The Produce Safety Program will be built in collaboration with Vermont's fruit and vegetable industry, as well as Vermont Department of Health, UVM Extension, other non-profit organizations and food-related businesses along the supply chain. Information sharing will take place with New England state departments of agriculture and FDA. The program will represent a comprehensive approach within VAAF, as it will include expertise and input from each Division of the Agency – focusing on market access and development, technical and financial assistance, and regulatory compliance.

Expected Measureable Outcomes:

<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring Plan</b>
1. Assess the impact of FSMA regulations on Vermont's produce industry	Identify the agricultural and food businesses that will be affected by FSMA, as this is currently unknown	# of produce industry impact surveys completed	2012 NASS data on # and variety of fruit and vegetable operations	Accurate accounting of impacted VT operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with partners to draft, disseminate, and assess survey responses</li> </ul>
2. Collect feedback from produce industry on a state-level produce safety regulatory program	Develop a Vermont produce safety program that meets industry needs	# of listening sessions hosted	VT Vegetable and Berry Growers Association testimonial of support for a produce safety program	Development of a state-level program that industry can live with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with UVM Extension, VT Department of Health, Association groups to promote and host listening sessions</li> </ul>
3. Formulate Vermont statutory authority language to develop the framework of a produce safety program	Understand nationwide landscape of state produce programs and regulatory authorities	# of state programs assessed	Vermont 'Emergency Powers' authority and FSMA draft rule reference to # of states with produce programs	Promulgation and passage of rules for State of Vermont produce safety program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success during 2015 Legislative Session in developing regulatory framework for a produce safety program</li> </ul>
4. Create capacity within VAAFM for a FSMA policy liaison	Ensure Vermont's input and decisions in FDA and state partnership conversations regarding FSMA implementation	# of national meetings and conferences attended to discuss FSMA	VAAFM Secretary of Agriculture active engagement in NEASDA and as NASDA president	Open communication between FDA, NASDA, and VT beyond 10/1/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration within Vermont, Northeast region and across the nation to harmonize state programs in response to FSMA requirements</li> </ul>

## Work Plan

<p><b>Project Activity -</b> Describe the project activities that are necessary to accomplish the objectives. Make sure you include your performance monitoring/data collection activities.</p>	<p><b>Who will do the work?</b> Indicate the project participants who will do the work of each activity, including subrecipients, and/or contractors. If you request grant funds for personnel and contractors, you must include them in the work plan to demonstrate the requested funding is warranted. If you request funds for travel, these activities must also be included.</p>	<p><b>When will the activity be accomplished?</b> Include a timeline that indicates when each activity will occur (at least month and year) and beginning and end dates for the project. Make sure the work plan timeline shows that the project will be completed within the allowable grant period.</p>
<p>Survey Vermont's specialty crop producers and processors to determine FSMA impact</p>	<p>Survey developed, disseminated and result evaluation by hired Produce Program Development staff.</p> <p>Survey reviewed and distributed with assistance from: UVM Extension, VT Food Safety Task Force, VT Department of Health (VDH) and VT Vegetable and Berry Growers Association (VVBGA).</p>	<p>November 2014-February 2015</p>
<p>Host specialty crop industry listening sessions to gather feedback on regulatory program structure and content</p>	<p>VAAFM will host listening sessions in partnership with produce stakeholder partners (e.g. UVM Extension, VDH, VVBGA).</p> <p>Host 3 sessions across the state throughout the winter months. Locations TBD.</p> <p>Present draft program framework to industry and partners at various regional meetings &amp; conferences.</p>	<p>December 2014-March 2015</p> <p>April-August 2015</p>
<p>Formulate statutory language with VT Legislature to authorize VAAFM to regulate produce</p>	<p>VAAFM will present draft authority language during 2015 Legislative session.</p> <p>Collaborate with VDH on development of a universal 'Food Code' and Agency cross-training</p>	<p>January-May 2015</p> <p>January-May 2015</p>
<p>Function as Vermont's FSMA policy liaison within northeast region and NASDA</p>	<p>Attend produce program development and FSMA-compliance discussions with regional Extension staff. Host some conversations in VT.</p> <p>Attend FDA &amp; NASDA policy meetings in Washington D.C. to share VT's produce program and align with FSMA rules.</p>	<p>November 2014-March 2015</p> <p>January-September 2015</p>
<p>Professional Development and Training opportunities</p>	<p>Attend national produce safety conferences to learn about regional programs, share Vermont's program development process, and align states with FSMA requirements.</p>	<p>January-September 2015</p>

Project Commitment

Describe the specialty crop stakeholders other than the applicant, individuals and organizations involved in the project who support this project and why

<b>Budget Summary</b>	
<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>Funds Requested</b>
Personnel	\$37,550.00
Fringe Benefits	\$15,396.00
Travel	\$5,000.00
Other	\$2,054.00
<b>Total Budget</b>	
<b>\$60,000.00</b>	

- **Personnel** - List the organization's employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to project activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Name/Title	Level of Effort (# of hours OR % FTE)	Funds Requested
New hire Produce Program staff	0.76 FTE	\$37,550.00
<b>Personnel Subtotal</b>		<b>\$37,550.00</b>

- **Fringe Benefits** - Provide the fringe benefit rates for each of the project's salaried employees described in the Personnel section that will be paid with SCBGP funds.

Name/Title	Fringe Benefit Rate	Funds Requested
New hire Produce Program staff	41% of personnel expense	\$15,396.00
<b>Fringe Subtotal</b>		<b>\$15,396.00</b>

- **Travel** - Explain the purpose for each Trip Request. Please note that travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; in the case of air travel, project participants must use the lowest reasonable commercial airfares. For recipient organizations that have no formal travel policy and for-profit recipients, allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by GSA, including the maximum per diem and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

Trip Destination	Purpose of the Trip	Type of Expense (airfare, car rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.)	Unit of Measure (days, nights, miles)	Number of Units	Cost per Unit	Number of Travelers Claiming the Expense	Funds Requested
Burlington, VT	NOFA-VT winter	Hotel, meals, & mileage	1 night, 2 days, 1			1	\$250

	conference		dinner				
Chicago, IL	United Fresh produce conference	Hotel, airfare, meals, & mileage	2 nights, 3 days, 3 dinners			1	\$1200
	Produce Safety Alliance Research Symposium	Hotel, airfare, meals, & mileage				1	\$1200
Northeast region	Partnerships meetings	Meals & mileage		2500 miles	\$0.55 / mile	1	\$1375
Washington D.C.	FDA/NASDA meetings	Hotel, airfare, meals, & mileage		2 trips		1	\$975
						<b>Travel Subtotal</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>

- **Other** - Include any expenses not covered in any of the previous budget categories. Be sure to break down costs into cost/unit. Expenses in this section include, but are not limited to, meetings and conferences, communications, rental expenses, advertisements, publication costs, and data collection.

If you budget meal costs for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, provide an adequate justification to support that these costs are not entertainment costs.

Item Description	Justification of the Expense	Per-Unit Cost	Number of Units	Funds Requested	
NOFA-VT winter conference	Workshop registration	\$250	1	\$250	
United Fresh produce conference	Workshop registration	\$950	1	\$950	
Family Farm meetings	Space rental			\$200	
VT Vegetable and Berry Growers Association annual meeting	Workshop registration	\$25	1	\$25	
Regional/national meetings	Space rental, registrations		3-5	\$479	
Publication of educational/outreach materials	Printing			\$150	
				<b>Other Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,054.00</b>