

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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**REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
FEDERAL-STATE MARKET IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**
Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture
In Cooperation with
The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR 2015

FSMIP is funded by annual appropriations to the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), USDA. AMS anticipates that approximately \$1 million will be available for support for this program in fiscal year (FY) 2015. The average grant award is \$60,000.

ELIGIBILITY

In accordance with authorizing legislation, FSMIP funds can be allotted to State Departments of Agriculture, State Agricultural Experiment Stations, and other appropriate Agencies. State agencies under the authorizing legislation should assume the lead role in FSMIP projects, and use cooperative or contractual linkages with other agencies, universities, institutions, and producer, industry or community-based organizations, as appropriate. Multi-State projects are encouraged, as long as one State assumes the coordinating role, using appropriate cooperative arrangements with the other States involved.

Program Scope

FSMIP funds a wide range of applied research projects that address barriers, challenges, and opportunities in marketing, transportation, and distribution of U.S. food and agricultural products domestically and internationally.

Eligible agricultural categories include poultry, livestock, livestock products, dairy, food, feed and fiber crops, fish and shellfish, horticulture, viticulture, apiary, and forest products and processed or manufactured products derived from such commodities. Reflecting the growing diversity of U.S. agriculture, in recent years, FSMIP has funded projects dealing with nutraceuticals, bioenergy, compost, and products made from agricultural residues.

Proposals may deal with barriers, challenges or opportunities manifesting at any stage of the marketing chain including direct, wholesale, and retail. Proposals that involve training or education programs must include a research component that tests the effects of the program on the marketing goals.

Proposals may involve small, medium or large-scale agricultural entities but must benefit multiple producers or agribusinesses, whereas proposals that benefit one business or individual will not be considered. Proposals that address issues of importance at the State, regional or national level are appropriate for FSMIP. FSMIP will consider unique proposals on a smaller scale that may serve as pilot projects or case studies useful as models for others. Such proposals

must include an objective to analyze opportunities and formulate recommendations with regard to how the project could be scaled up or expanded to other regions.

FSMIP's enabling legislation authorizes projects to

- Determine the best methods for processing, preparing for market, packing, handling, transporting, storing, distributing, and marketing agricultural products.
- Determine the costs of marketing agricultural products in their various forms and through various channels.
- Assist in the development of more efficient marketing methods, practices and facilities to bring about more efficient and orderly marketing, and reduce the price spread between the producer and the consumer.
- Develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade and packaging in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices.
- Eliminate artificial barriers to the free movement of agricultural products in commercial channels.
- Foster new/expanded domestic/foreign markets and new/expanded uses of agricultural products.
- Collect and disseminate marketing information to anticipate and meet consumer requirements, maintain farm income, and balance production and utilization.

Priority Areas

All proposals that fit within the FSMIP scope are encouraged and will receive equal consideration during the review process. FSMIP will award five percent of total FSMIP funds to proposals that score among the higher ranked proposals and meet one of the following criteria:

- Reflect a collaborative approach between the States, academia, the farm sector and other appropriate entities and stakeholders, in recognition of the synergies and improved outcomes that are attributable to such collaborations and partnerships.
- Assess challenges and develop methods or practices that could assist producers in marketing agricultural products that meet the mandates of the Food and Drug Administration's Food Safety Modernization Act.
- Have the potential to create wealth and economic opportunity in rural communities through research and studies on issues relating to marketing in local and regional food systems, and value-added agriculture.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Project Benefit

FSMIP will not award grant funds for projects that solely benefit one individual farm or agribusiness. FSMIP projects must benefit multiple producers or agribusinesses, or have agricultural sector-wide impact.

Matching Funds

FSMIP awards must be matched \$1-for-\$1 with cash and/or with properly-valued, in-kind non-Federal resources. Examples of matching resources commonly used in FSMIP projects include cash, State-appropriated funds, student tuition, partners' time, meeting facilities that would otherwise have to be rented, and travel expenses associated with the project. Program income cannot be contributed as a match.

All matching contributions must be committed or in place when the proposal is submitted to FSMIP. Non-Federal funds that are expected or anticipated to be awarded by the time the project commences cannot be counted toward the matching requirement. The time donated by unspecified individuals or groups is not an acceptable match. Time and travel expenses of producers who will attend training or conferences held in connection with the FSMIP project are not an acceptable match.

Bringing more than the required \$1-for-\$1 match does not convey any advantage to the application in terms of evaluation and scoring during the review process.

Project Length

FSMIP projects must be completed within 24 months (2 years). It is acceptable to complete a project before the scheduled ending date. The grant period must begin on September 30, 2015, and end no later than September 29, 2017. A proposal that builds on previous FSMIP project may also be submitted. In such cases, the narrative should indicate clearly how the new proposal complements previous work. It is generally FSMIP's policy not to fund successive projects beyond a period of three years.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

Submission Deadline

FSMIP funds will be allocated on the basis of one round of competition. Grant proposals must be received by the Department no later than 5:00 PM on May 1, 2015 in order to comply with the Federal deadline of May 14, 2015.

Send proposals via email to: **rebecca.davidson@state.ma.us**

Alternatively, send proposals via traditional mail to the address below. Note that proposals sent via mail must also be received by 5:00 PM on May 1, 2015.

Rebecca Davidson
Division of Agricultural Markets
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114-2151

Contents of Proposal

A narrative description of the proposal is required. The format, style of presentation and length may vary, depending on the nature of the project. Narratives must not exceed 10 pages, exclusive of supporting documents. The required format is single-spaced, 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Number the pages in the right hand bottom corner. The application should include the following sections:

- 1) **Cover Page** – Include proposal title (no more than 10 words), name and contact information of the project leader.
- 2) **Table of Contents** – All pages must be numbered.
- 3) **Abstract** – Include a concise (no more than 250 words) stand-alone description and justification for the project.
- 4) **Narrative** – Must include the following sections, and must be in a paragraph form:
 - a. **Background and Justification**
 - i. Clearly identify the marketing issue, problem, barrier, challenge or opportunity to be addressed and explain why the project is important and timely. Articulate the research question to be answered by the project or provide a concise problem statement. Provide a literature review sufficient to demonstrate the current state of knowledge about the topic and how the proposed work builds on it or addresses any gaps. See (g) References for instructions on how to handle literature citations.
 - ii. Quantify and discuss the potential economic impact of the project on agricultural producers and agribusinesses. Impacts include, but are not limited to number of jobs, volume and value of sales or shipments, market share, and the value of new markets and new products.

- iii. Include data and/or estimates that describe the extent of the problem, and the number of agricultural producers or agribusinesses affected. Explain who will benefit and how they will benefit from the project.
- iv. If the proposal:
 1. Builds on a project funded by the AMS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, the AMS Farmers Market Promotion Program, the AMS Local Food Promotion Program, or another USDA award program, briefly describe what has been accomplished already, how the proposal is distinct from the previous work, and how the proposal furthers the ultimate overall goals of the project.
 2. Is part of a larger non-FSMIP project, briefly describe how the proposal fits into the larger project and how it is distinct from other aspects of the larger project.
 3. Is a follow-up to a previously completed FSMIP project, briefly describe what has been accomplished already, how the FSMIP proposal is distinct from the previous project, and how the proposal advances the overall project goals.
 4. Is similar to or replicates previous FSMIP-funded work done in another State or under another project, describe how the proposal is distinct from such work, and indicate briefly how it will add to the general body of knowledge on this topic. A search function for FSMIP final reports is available at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FSMIP>.
 5. Involves foreign market development, briefly describe efforts taken to ensure this proposal does not duplicate publically available reports or data, and describe how it will fill any data gaps.
- b. **Other Federal Award Programs** – Indicate if the proposal has been or will be submitted to another federal award program, and if so, identify the federal award program. If the proposal is selected for funding by another federal award program after the proposal is submitted to FSMIP, the applicant must inform FSMIP immediately and withdraw the FSMIP proposal.
- c. **Goal(s) and Objectives** – Describe the overall goal(s) in one or two sentences. List and describe the essential objectives of the project. Explain how each objective will be accomplished and by whom. Also include the expected completion date for each objective and indicate the major milestones of the project.
- d. **Project Evaluation, Outputs and Expected Outcomes** – Describe what the project is expected to accomplish, the expected benefits, and how the project will be evaluated while in progress and upon conclusion. Describe outputs that explain who the target audience is and what activities are to be completed. Describe expected measureable outcomes that explain what knowledge may be gained or what actions may be implemented as a result of the project. Include at least one quantitative metric that will be reported at the beginning and the end of the project to demonstrate impact.
- e. **Project Deliverables** – List any expected deliverables that will result from the project in addition to the required final report. Examples of project deliverables include professional journal or farm press articles, Extension bulletins, and manuals.
- f. **Outreach Plan** – Describe how the project results will be shared with and disseminated to the target audience(s), stakeholders and other interested parties beyond those directly served by the project. Examples of such activities include presentations at professional conferences or producer meetings, publication of articles in professional journals or the agricultural press, educational brochures, slides, survey instruments, and websites. Web pages devoted to the project must also include this information in a prominent location. All materials must be made available electronically and disseminated via appropriate websites.

- g. **References** – Do not use footnotes. Cite the literature referenced in the text and attach a separate page called “References” with the detailed literature citations. Reference pages do not count toward the 10-page Narrative maximum.
 - h. **Draft Survey** – If the proposal involves a survey, briefly discuss the nature of the questions that will be asked, the methodology to be used for data collection and analysis, and the population to be surveyed. It is not required, but if a draft survey is available, include it at the end of the Narrative. A draft survey does not count toward the 10-page Narrative maximum.
- 5) **Budget Spreadsheet and Budget Narrative** – The Budget Spreadsheet must show the relevant expenditure categories in the far left column and, proceeding across the page, there must be a column showing the dollar amount of FSMIP funds requested and separate columns showing the dollar amount for each of the non-federal entities that will provide matching resources. For 2-year projects, provide separate Year 1, Year 2, and cumulative budgets. The Budget Narrative must explain how the dollar amounts for each category shown on the Budget Spreadsheet were derived and what they cover. Following is information on some of the more common expenditures associated with FSMIP projects. For a full listing of allowable and unallowable costs, see “Restrictions and Limitations on Program Activities and Expenditures,” on page 7 of this RFR.
- a. **Personnel** – Show hourly rates and estimated number of hours, FTEs or percent of time to be spent on the project, and describe the role and responsibilities of each party. If a third party will be hired after FSMIP funds are awarded but has not yet been identified, provide a brief description of the qualifications to be sought and the type of wages to be paid hourly, salaried, or graduate assistantship. Rates must be reasonable and consistent with locality pay for similar jobs.
 - b. **Travel** – Indicate what the travel includes (mode of travel, how many people, how many days, destination, lodging, meals, etc. as applicable) and how it relates to the project goals.
 - c. **Contracts** – Indicate if the expense represents a flat fee for services or an hourly rate. Indicate the actual or estimated hourly rate to be applied. List general categories of items the contract covers such as professional services, travel, lodging, administrative expenses, etc. Rates must be reasonable and consistent with locality pay for similar jobs. Hourly rates that exceed the salary of a GS-14 step 10 federal employee in your area must be justified.
 - d. **Indirect Costs** – For more information on indirect and allowable costs, refer to the FY15 USDA FSMIP Request for Applications, Section 4.7.1 of USDA’s 2015 FSMIP Request for Applications, available at www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FSMIP.
- 6) **Personnel Qualifications** – Provide a one- to two-page resume of relevant experience and/or qualifications of the principal investigator(s) and for each of the other major project participants. Longer resumes will be disregarded.
- 7) **Approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Proposal** – If an applicant has a negotiated indirect cost rate greater than 10 percent of total direct costs, they must submit a copy of their approved *indirect cost rate proposal* to substantiate their request, as described in Appendix III to Part 200—Indirect (F&A) Costs Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) through Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals of this part, and Appendix IX to Part 200—Hospital Cost Principles.
- 8) **Letters from Third Parties who will Contribute Matching Resources** – Written verification of commitment from each third party who will contribute cash and/or in-kind matching non-Federal resources to the project is required. Acceptable written verification is in the form of a letter on organization letterhead, and may be addressed either to the State Agency or to FSMIP. Letters must accompany the proposal at the time of application. Do not send original letters. Unsigned letters and email messages in lieu of a letter will not be accepted. Clearly indicate at the top of the letter that it is a MATCH letter. Letters of verification must include:

- a. Organization name, name and title of letter writer, address, telephone number and email address.
 - b. Project title and a reference to FY 2015 FSMIP.
 - c. Total dollar amount of cash contribution and/or a description of the in-kind contribution. For example, if the in-kind contribution is personnel time, include name, title, total dollar amount and an indication of number of hours, percent of salary or FTEs the dollar amount represents.
- 9) **Letter(s) of Support from Stakeholders or Beneficiaries** – At least one, but no more than three, letters of support from stakeholders or beneficiaries detailing the expected benefits of the project to the group is required. A third party that contributes resources to the project may write a letter of support, but that letter must be separate from the MATCH letter discussed in item (3). Letters of support must be on letterhead and may be addressed either to the State Agency or to the FSMIP Staff Officer. Letters of support must accompany the proposal at the time of application. Do not send original letters. Unsigned letters and email messages in lieu of letters will not be accepted. Form letters are discouraged. Clearly indicate at the top of the letter that it is a SUPPORT letter. Congressional letters of support do not meet this requirement.
- 10) **Areas Affected by Project** – List the cities, counties, states, etc., that your project will affect.

Selection Criteria

Proposals are reviewed and evaluated by subject matter specialists from AMS and elsewhere in USDA, and/or another Federal agency as appropriate to the subject matter and scope of the proposal.

As a basis for allocating FSMIP funds among competing proposals, AMS is guided by the following criteria:

- **OBJECTIVES (25 points)** – the proposal is well-justified, addresses an important marketing barrier, challenge or opportunity, and contains a problem statement or clearly frames the issue to be studied; the literature review supports the need for research; and aligns well with FSMIP’s legislative and program goals.
- **APPROACH (25 points)** –the goals, objectives, and work plan are clear, appropriate, and logical; personnel demonstrate appropriate qualifications, knowledge and experience necessary to conduct the research; research methodology is described and appropriate to answer research questions; and all budget items, both federal award funds and matching resources, are allowable, reasonable and clearly described.
- **IMPACT (30 points)** – the proposal describes the potential impact it will have on target producers and agribusinesses, and the potential for the proposal to provide new knowledge and lessons learned that could be applied in other States or regions of the country; estimated economic impact is described and supported by relevant data. For small-scale or pilot proposals, the proposal includes recommendations as to how the project could be scaled up or expanded to other States or regions. The proposal includes at least one quantitative metric to demonstrate impact.
- **DELIVERABLES AND OUTREACH (20 points)** – the proposal describes deliverables attributable to the project in addition to the final report; and outlines a plan to disseminate project results electronically and in person to the target audience, stakeholders, and interested parties beyond those directly served by the project.

RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND EXPENDITURES

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs, also known as “facilities and administrative costs,” represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant, contract, project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs. Direct charging of these costs may be appropriate where the following conditions are met:

1. Administrative or clerical services are integral to a project or activity;
2. Individuals involved can be specifically identified with the project or activity;
3. Such costs are explicitly included in the budget or have the prior written approval of the Federal awarding agency; and
4. The costs are not also recovered as indirect costs.

Indirect costs are no longer restricted to only the match. Indirect cost may be charged to the grant and/or brought as a match.

Applicant Indirect Cost - If an applicant has a negotiated indirect cost rate greater than 10 percent of total direct costs, the applicant must submit a copy of their approved *Indirect Cost Rate Proposal* to substantiate its request for the establishment of an indirect cost rate above 10 percent as described in Appendix III to Part 200—Indirect (F&A) Costs Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) through Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals of this part, and Appendix IX to Part 200—Hospital Cost Principles.

Subrecipient Indirect Cost - If subrecipient indirect cost will be charged to the grant and/or brought as a match, the subrecipient’s negotiated rate may be used, or if the subrecipient does not have a negotiated rate, the maximum rate allowed is 10%. Note that the total indirect cost for the project must not exceed the percentage of the applicant’s negotiated rate.

Sample Calculation

Total Direct Cost = \$80,000

Total Indirect Cost assuming a negotiated cognizant rate of 30% = \$24,000

Total Project Cost = \$104,000

FSMIP Share = \$52,000

Applicant Share = \$52,000

Some examples of possible allocations of Indirect Cost:

- A. FSMIP covers all indirect cost:

FSMIP = \$28,000 direct + \$24,000 indirect; Applicant = \$52,000 direct

- B. Applicant covers all indirect cost:

FSMIP = \$52,000 direct; Applicant = \$28,000 direct + \$24,000 indirect

- C. FSMIP and Applicant split indirect cost:

FSMIP = \$40,000 direct + \$12,000 indirect; Applicant = \$40,000 direct + \$12,000 indirect

Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities

The following table provides information on allowable and unallowable costs in common categories of FSMIP proposal budgets. Note that the allowable costs listed below may also be cost-shared or brought as part of the required match. Unallowable costs cannot be brought as a match.

Item	Description
Advisory Councils	<i>Unallowable</i> for costs incurred by advisory councils or committees.
Buildings and Land - Construction	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for the acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land or to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations or alterations of an existing building or facility (including site grading and improvement, and architecture fees). This also includes construction and construction-related materials, which may include, but are not limited to the purchase of building materials such as wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall, or plumbing.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for rental costs of land with prior approval.</p> <p>A <i>building</i> is any permanent structure designed or intended for support, enclosure, shelter or protection of people, animals or property having a permanent roof supported by columns or walls.</p>
Conferences	<p>A conference is defined as a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, workshop or event whose primary purpose is the dissemination of technical information beyond the non-Federal entity and is necessary and reasonable for successful performance under the Federal award.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> if the project solely consists of conference or workshop.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> if a conference or workshop is part of a larger project. The applicant must clearly indicate the purpose and target audience for the conference or workshop, and explain how the activity will be paid for. Also indicate if registration fees will be collected and if applicable, show the fees as program income on the Budget spreadsheet and provide an explanation in the Budget Narrative. If funds are requested to pay for food or refreshments, provide an estimate</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> to rent a building or room for training, however, where appropriate, FSMIP encourages the use of technologies such as webinars, teleconferencing, or videoconferencing as an alternative to renting a building or a room. If renting a building or a room is necessary, the most cost-effective facilities such as State government conference rooms should be utilized.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for meal costs (breakfast, lunch and dinner) unless the applicant justifies that to do so would otherwise impose arduous conditions on the continuity of a meeting and its participants. Breakfasts for conference attendees are usually considered unallowable as it is expected that individuals will have sufficient time to dine on their own before the conference begins.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for meals consumed while in official travel status. They are considered per diem expenses and should be reimbursed in accordance with the organization's established written travel policies.</p>

Item	Description
Contributions or Donations	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for contributions or donations, including cash, property, and services, made by the recipient, regardless of the recipient (also referred to as “re-granting of funds”).</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for products or samples purchased with FSMIP funds or brought as a match if they are used in a study that assesses acceptance by the target audience, or has a similar evaluative objective.</p>
Entertainment Costs	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for entertainment costs, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives.</p>
Equipment	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for acquisition costs of general purpose equipment. Allowable for rental costs of general purpose equipment. For equipment leases or rentals with an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$5,000, rates should be in light of such factors as rental costs of comparable vehicles and equipment, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of equipment leased.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for acquisition costs and rental costs of special purpose equipment provided the following criterion is met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Necessary for the research, scientific, or other technical activities of the grant award; 2) Not otherwise reasonably available and accessible; 3) The type of equipment is normally charged as a direct cost by the organization; 4) Acquired in accordance with organizational practices; 5) Must only be used to solely meet the legislative purpose of the grant program and objectives of the grant award; 6) More than one single commercial organization, commercial product, or individual must benefit from the use of the equipment; 7) Must not use special purpose equipment acquired with grant funds to provide services for a fee to compete unfairly with private companies that provide equivalent services; and 8) Equipment is subject to the full range of acquisition, use, management, and disposition requirements under 2 CFR part 200.313 as applicable. <p>Equipment is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000. Recipients and subrecipients purchasing equipment are encouraged to use funds to purchase only American-made equipment or products.</p> <p>Acquisition cost means the cost of the asset including the cost to ready the asset for its intended use. Acquisition cost for equipment, for example, means the net invoice price of the equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired.</p>

Item	Description
	<p>General Purpose Equipment means equipment that is not limited to technical activities. Examples include office equipment and furnishings, modular offices, telephone networks, information technology equipment and systems, air conditioning equipment, reproduction and printing equipment, and motor vehicles.</p> <p>Special Purpose Equipment is equipment used only for research or technical activities.</p>
Fines, Penalties, Damages and Other Settlements	<i>Unallowable</i> for costs resulting from violations of, alleged violations of, or failure to comply with, Federal, state, tribal, local or foreign laws and regulations.
Fixed Amount Subawards	<i>Unallowable.</i>
Fund Raising and Investment Management Costs	<i>Unallowable</i> for organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions, regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used. This includes salaries of personnel involved in activities to raise capital.
Goods or Services for Personal Use	<i>Unallowable</i> for costs of goods or services for personal use of employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees.
Insurance and Indemnification	<i>Allowable</i> as indirect costs for insurance and indemnification.
Indirect Costs - Unrecovered	<i>Unallowable</i> to use unrecovered indirect costs as part of cost sharing or matching. Unrecovered indirect cost means the difference between the amount charged to the Federal award and the amount which could have been charged to the Federal award under the potential recipient's approved negotiated indirect cost rate.
Memberships, Subscriptions, and Professional Activity Costs	<i>Unallowable</i> for costs of membership in any civic or community organization.
Organization Costs	<i>Allowable</i> with prior approval for organization costs per 2 CFR 200.455. <i>Unallowable</i> for costs of investment counsel and staff and similar expenses incurred to enhance income from investments.
Participant Support Costs	<p>Incentives for Study Participants and Survey Respondents:</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> to provide cash, coupons, vouchers or other appropriate incentives to recruit target entities to participate in a research project such as to complete a survey or participate in a focus group. All other uses of coupons and vouchers are not allowed. The amount and type of the incentive must be reasonable and appropriate, and is subject to approval by FSMIP.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> with prior approval, for participant support costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.</p>
Pre-Award Costs	<p><i>Allowable</i>, if such costs are necessary to conduct the project or program, and would be allowable under the grant, if awarded.</p> <p>A recipient may incur pre-award costs 90 calendar days before FSMIP makes the award without prior approval from FSMIP. Expenses more than 90 calendar days pre-award require FSMIP prior approval. All costs incurred before FSMIP makes</p>

Item	Description
	the award are at the recipient's risk. The incurrence of pre-award costs in anticipation of an award imposes no obligation on FSMIP to award funds for such costs.
Printing and Publications	<i>Allowable</i> to pay the cost of preparing informational leaflets, reports, manuals, and publications relating to the project, however the printing of hard copies is discouraged.
Program Income	Program income is gross income earned by a recipient resulting from activities supported by a federal award. It includes income in the form of fees for services performed during the award performance period, real property, usage or rental fees, or patent or copyright royalties. Program income cannot be used to meet the matching requirement.
Real Property	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for the acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land or to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations or alterations of an existing building or facility (including site grading and improvement, and architecture fees). This also includes construction and construction-related materials, which may include, but is not limited to the purchase of materials wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, concrete, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall, or plumbing.</p> <p>Building is defined as any permanent structure that is designed or intended for support, enclosure, shelter or protection of person, animals or property having a permanent roof that is supported by columns or walls.</p>
Rearrangement and Reconversion Costs	<i>Allowable only as indirect costs incurred for ordinary and normal rearrangement and alteration of facilities.</i>
Selling and Marketing Costs	<p><i>Unallowable</i> selling and marketing costs include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising media costs to promote a producer-to-consumer direct marketing effort. Advertising media includes newspaper; radio; television; direct mail; bus, signs, or other advertisement wraps; and other electronic and computer transmittals. • Promotional items such as point-of-sale materials, promotional kits, billboard space, signs or streamers, automobile stickers, table tents, and place mats, swag, souvenirs, memorabilia, or promotional items of a personal nature. • Public relations activities utilizing advertising media to promote a direct producer-to-consumer marketing to the public or a specific and FSMIP approved audience. • Product advertising through any media, either directly or indirectly, through an advertising agency or other firm. • General publicity or information programs designed to build the image of the State's agriculture, State Department of Agriculture, or other State Agency. • Costs associated with County and State fair exhibits, or promotion of commodity months or weeks. • Costs associated with sponsorships. A sponsorship is a form of advertising in which an organization uses grant funds to have its name and/or logo associated with certain events and where the organization does not necessarily know how the funds associated with the sponsorship costs will be used. These costs are considered a contribution or donation and only

Item	Description
	<p>benefit the organization offering the funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of products or samples of products to give away to the public. However, products or samples may be purchased with FSMIP funds or brought as a match if they are used in a study that assesses acceptance by the target audience, or has a similar evaluative objective. • Expenses relating to domestic or foreign trade shows except educational programs or technical seminars conducted to educate potential buyers about the properties, characteristics or uses of an agricultural commodity or product. <p><i>Unallowable</i> for the purchase of food-relative incentives, including any types of bonuses, coupons, and vouchers. <i>Unallowable</i> for the purchase of food for displays, incentives or cooking demonstrations.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for products or samples may be purchased with FSMIP funds or brought as a match if they are used in a study that assesses acceptance by the target audience, or has a similar evaluative objective.</p>
Travel Costs	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for travel costs of government officials per 2 CFR 200.474.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for travel costs of producers or processors simply to gain marketing experience, to network and/or to sell their products.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for domestic and international travel of individuals for activities directly related to activities directly related to the project objectives. Examples of personnel whose travel may be covered: state agency personnel working directly on the project, technical experts, producer representatives who have unique knowledge about a commodity or market, and individuals whose presence on an international trip will make a direct contribution to the goals of the project.</p> <p>All travel expenses associated with FSMIP projects must follow Federal travel regulations (41 CFR Chapters 300 through 304) unless State travel requirements are in place. If alternative technologies such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing are available, appropriate for the project, and less costly, they must be utilized as an alternative to travel.</p>

REPORTING

Recipients are required to submit 6-month performance reports and a final performance report..

The 6-month performance report is due within 30 calendar days after each 6 month performance period.

- For 2015 Awards, the 2-year performance period begins September 30, 2015, and ends September 29, 2017. Recipients will submit three 6-month performance reports:
 - #1 Interim documents are due within 30 days of March 31, 2016 (no later than April 30, 2016);
 - #2 Interim documents are due within 30 days of September 30, 2016 (no later than October 31, 2016);
 - #3 Interim documents are due within 30 days of March 31, 2017 (no later than April 30, 2017).

To officially close out a FSMIP award, the final performance report is due within 90 days following the award performance period (by December 31, 2017).

The recipient should submit the reports to FSMIP electronically as required in the FSMIP Terms and Conditions of Award.

SELECTION OF GRANTEES

Proposals will be reviewed by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources - Agricultural Markets and Marketing staff under the aegis of Commissioner John Lebeaux and will be sent to the USDA Agricultural marketing Service 'FSMIP' program where final analysis and funding will be decided.

Upon announcement of the grant awards, FSMIP will prepare and send grant agreements and certification to State agencies for signature by the appropriate official. Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by State FSMIP coordinator as soon as possible after the awards are announced and upon request; will receive feedback on their proposal.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE TO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Deadline: May 1, 2015 – (only one round of FSMIP funding)

Send Proposals via email to: Rebecca Davidson, FSMIP Coordinator: rebecca.davidson@state.ma.us

or via mail to:

Rebecca Davidson
Division of Agricultural Markets
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114-2151