



Wisconsin Local Food Purchase Assistance Community Partner Grant Program Request for Proposals

Proposals must be received by 5:00p.m on Wednesday, November 22, 2023

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FUNDING BACKGROUND

The Wisconsin LFPA (WI-LFPA) Community Partner Grant is made possible by the USDA Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Cooperative Agreement with Wisconsin. A total of \$1,500,000 is available and will be awarded through a competitive grant process. Grant awards can range from \$30,000 up to \$300,000. This is a one-time funding opportunity designed for partnerships to implement projects that purchase Wisconsin grown, raised or minimally processed food, prioritizing sourcing from socially disadvantaged and historically underserved producers and processors, and distribute that local food at no cost to underserved communities in Wisconsin.

This competitive grant program compliments the direct-to-farmer grants managed by Marbleseed. Farmers can have an existing WI-LFPA contract with Marbleseed and still participate in a WI-LFPA Community Partner Grant Project. To learn more about other ways to get involved with Wisconsin's LFPA program visit: <https://www.wilocalfood.org/>

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The purpose of the WI-LFPA program is to strengthen food and agricultural supply chain resiliency, support Wisconsin farmers, and distribute fresh nutritious foods to underserved communities. The WI-LFPA program achieves this purpose in the overarching goals below:

1. Support local producers and processors by building and expanding economic opportunities.
2. Broaden and strengthen partnerships with local producers and processors with food distribution partners and local food networks, including non-profits, to ensure distribution of fresh and nutritious foods in rural, remote, or underserved communities.

Awarded grant projects are expected to spend at least 70% of awarded funds on food procurement, with 80% of food procurement sourced from socially disadvantaged and other historically underserved producers and processors. All food purchased must be locally grown, raised or processed in Wisconsin. Food purchases can include both fresh and minimally processed foods. Minimally processed foods with a maximum of up to 10% non-Wisconsin ingredients (ex. salt and other seasonings) are allowable. See the FAQ for more details on allowable processed foods.

Match: Grants are funded at 100%; with no match required.

Timeline:

- Request for Proposals released October 12, 2023
- Applications due by 5:00pm Wednesday, November 22, 2023
- Awarded grant recipients contacted late December 2023
- Contracts signed and awards announced January 2024
- Projects must be completed and funds expended within one year after the contract is signed by DATCP.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

This grant will fund projects that purchase food sourced from multiple Wisconsin producers and then aggregate and distribute that food to area hunger relief access points (ex. food pantries) at no cost to the receiving organization or community members. Food purchased with WI LFPA funds and provided by the program may not be used for sales of any kind. These funds are for implementation of food procurement and distribution projects with defined partnerships. Partnerships may be new for this grant, but they must be established before submitting the proposal and clearly defined in the application. Projects must have joint decision-making processes in place, where all supply chain partners work together collaboratively. Roles for all supply chain project partners must be outlined in the work plan and letters of commitment. This grant will not fund projects that do not have partnerships in place. These funds are not intended for partnership development or planning.

In addition to defined partnerships, projects also need both systems and infrastructure in place to successfully implement project work plans. Relevant infrastructure may include but is not limited to items such as trucks, storage facilities, aggregation centers, and food distribution sites that will be used to successfully implement the project. Relevant systems may include but are not limited to generating price lists, invoicing, inventory, tracking, labeling, maintaining cold chain, and food safety. Producers, processors, aggregators, and distributors need to be ready to supply into wholesale markets. If any gaps in readiness exist, then projects must have a plan to provide additional support so that all supply chain partners can successfully distribute food to underserved communities in Wisconsin. This may include education and technical assistance, but this support must be directly connected to and necessary to achieve program goals and project deliverables.

This grant program prioritizes projects that:

- Procure local food from socially disadvantaged producers and processors.
- Distribute local food in the same community where it was grown, raised or processed to support local food supply chain networks.
- Distribute local food to underserved communities not normally served through traditional food distribution networks.
- Distribute food to underserved communities in the most food insecure counties listed at <https://foodsecurity.wisc.edu>

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Non-profit organizations
- Food access/hunger relief distribution organizations
- Food aggregators or distributors (non-profit and for profit)
- Local, Regional, or Tribal Governments

Individual producers or processors are not eligible to apply for funding but instead are encouraged to partner with an eligible applicant.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- Proposals should consist of:
 - Completed application. *(no page limit, although a max of 10 pages should be sufficient)*
 - Projected price list.
 - Letters of commitment from supply chain partners on the project team.
 - *Optional: up to 3 additional letters of support.*
- All documents must be combined and saved as one .pdf or .doc file.
 - Submitting multiple files is not allowed.
 - Submitting a zip file is not allowed
- Files should be saved using the following naming structure:
 - "Lead Applicant Organization Name-LFPA-CPG"
- Proposals must be submitted to DATCPdadgrants@wisconsin.gov
- Proposals must be received by **5:00p.m on Wednesday, November 22, 2023.**

ELIGIBLE & INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

| Eligible Expenses Including but not limited to: | Ineligible Expenses Including but not limited to: |
|--|--|
| Salaries/wages and fringe benefits | Indirect, administrative or overhead costs that are not direct costs of the grant project |
| Rental or leasing of equipment. | Acquisition costs for equipment, including rent-to-own or lease-to-own. Equipment means tangible personal property, including information technology systems, with a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost of more than \$5,000. |
| Procurement of fresh or minimally processed food for human consumption grown, raised and minimally processed in Wisconsin by Wisconsin producers or processors. <i>See FAQ for more info.</i> | Procurement of food sourced from non-Wisconsin producers. Procurement of agricultural products not for human consumption. Procurement of minimally processed food product with more than 10% ingredients originating from outside Wisconsin. |
| Supplies, meaning tangible personal property other than that meeting the definition of equipment above. A computing device is considered a supply if its per-unit acquisition cost is \$5,000 or less regardless of the length of its useful life. (e.g. coolers, totes, labels, software, etc.) | Capital expenditures, meaning expenditures to acquire capital assets or expenditures to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life. |
| Food distribution and storage costs, including subcontracts with food aggregators/distributors. | Consultant or contractor fees for capital expenditures, construction, renovation or marketing. |
| Travel: vehicle rental or mileage reimbursement for project related activities, including food distribution. | Plane travel, hotel stays, and per diems |
| Expenses for relevant educational events that support the success of the grant project. | General producer, processor or other local food development education. |

REVIEW PROCESS

Projects must comply with the Request for Proposals to be reviewed. Late proposals and proposals missing items will not be reviewed. All complete proposals submitted on time will be reviewed by a panel of external independent grant reviewers.

Reviewers will score proposals using the following scoring matrix:

| Points | Evaluation Criteria |
|--------|---|
| 5 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Project Justification</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes the need and/or opportunity summarizing how Wisconsin producers and/or processors will be supported and underserved communities will benefit. • If proposing to fund an existing effort or program, the proposal must describe how this project will increase or expand current food procurement and distribution activities. |
| 15 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Defined Partnerships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists involved producers and/or processors, identifying which are socially disadvantaged or historically underserved. • Identifies all necessary supply chain partners to efficiently source, aggregate, distribute and receive local food at hunger relief/food access sites. • Outlines any past experience working together. • Clearly defines the roles of each partner. • Emphasizes joint decision-making process and how it will be implemented. • Letters of commitment clearly indicate all partners' roles in the project. • Letters represent all steps along the food supply chain. |
| 20 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Expertise, Capacity & Existing Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead applicant has enough experience, skills, and financial capacity to carry out the project. • Has a clear description or list of existing infrastructure. • Outlines systems that will be used to successfully implement the project. • Qualifications of project team match needs of project. • Shows external project support from participants, partners, industry stakeholders and other relevant individuals or organizations. • A description of past work, including experience in local food procurement and distribution, food access programming, and community development should be included in the response to this question. |
| 10 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Producer/Processor Support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes current knowledge and experience levels of supply chain partners and identifies specific gaps that will be addressed during the project. • Outlines a plan describing how gaps will be addressed providing a summary of trainings and/or technical assistance that will be offered and who will be responsible for this. |

| | |
|----|--|
| 10 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Work Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is viable. • Clearly and adequately describes the work to be accomplished. • Identifies which partner is responsible for each work plan item. • The work plan is reasonable in relation to timeline and project team. • Adequate time is allocated for each project step. |
| 5 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Measurable Outcomes & Impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes the undeserved community(ies) that this project will benefit. • Clearly describes how much and what types of food will be procured and distributed. • Clearly describes how this project strengthens or expands partnerships. |
| 5 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Project Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes the systems, policies and plans in place to ensure financial oversight and prevent fraud or mismanagement of project funds. • Clearly describes tracking systems to ensure producers and processors are fairly paid and that safe high-quality food is timely delivered to the project's food access distribution sites. |
| 10 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Project Evaluation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links project activities to WI-LFPA program goals and desired project outcomes. • Has plan for measuring project impact, documenting successes, challenges, and next steps. • Will collect both quantitative data and qualitative success stories. • Will gather stories in multiple formats, written and visual. |
| 10 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Budget & Budget Narrative</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget items are adequately identified, clear, efficient and reasonable. • Justification exists for each budget item. • Budget items and work plan tasks are clearly linked. • Consultants are identified when proposal is sent to DATCP • Budget identifies at least 70% food procurement |
| 10 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Bonus: Distribution to most Food Insecure Counties</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributes food to the top 50% most food insecure counties in Wisconsin as determined by the Wisconsin Food Security Project. Food insecurity is calculated using the estimate of food insecurity rate for all persons from the Map the Meal Gap_2020 data set. Data can be downloaded as well as mapped at: https://foodsecurity.wisc.edu/. Information table below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If in top 25% most insecure = gain full 10 point bonus. ○ If in next 25% range from 50% to 26% = gain 5 point bonus. • Letter of support from a food access distribution partner in an eligible county outlining their role and involvement required to qualify for bonus points. |

| 10 point bonus Counties | Food Insecurity Rate (all persons) | 5 point bonus Counties | Food Insecurity Rate (all persons) |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Menominee | 20 | Rusk | 9.9 |
| Forest | 13.8 | Vilas | 9.9 |
| Iron | 13.2 | Marquette | 9.7 |
| Ashland | 12.7 | Rock | 9.7 |
| Milwaukee | 11.8 | Richland | 9.4 |
| Adams | 11.7 | Vernon | 9.4 |
| Sawyer | 11.6 | Wood | 9.4 |
| Burnett | 11.4 | Green Lake | 9.3 |
| Juneau | 11.4 | Racine | 9.2 |
| Douglas | 11.3 | Barron | 9.2 |
| Bayfield | 11.1 | Kenosha | 9.1 |
| Jackson | 10.8 | Sauk | 9 |
| Marinette | 10.7 | Shawano | 8.9 |
| Crawford | 10.4 | Buffalo | 8.8 |
| Langlade | 10.4 | Eau Claire | 8.8 |
| Washburn | 10.2 | Polk | 8.8 |
| Price | 10.2 | Grant | 8.8 |
| Florence | 10 | Waushara | 8.6 |

Food insecurity is calculated using the estimate of food insecurity rate for all persons from the Map the Meal Gap_2020 data set. Data can be downloaded and mapped at: <https://foodsecurity.wisc.edu/>

AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

Awardees will be expected to complete basic grant administration, including invoicing, reporting, and project evaluation.

All awarded projects must send at least one person as a project representative to attend an in-person project kick-off and orientation meeting. This meeting will take place after award contracts are signed. This event will provide training on how to properly manage the grant, prepare and submit reports, track spending, and how to capture success stories for the statewide LFPA project.

All awarded projects also must attend 2 virtual check-in meetings, one pre-season meeting targeted around April and one mid-season meeting targeted around July. During these check-in meetings, awarded projects will share insights, lessons-learned, challenges and upcoming activities with DATCP staff and other projects from around the state. The goal is to create a forum where projects can learn from each other and develop new network connections.

Awarded projects must:

- Maintain the cold chain and have proper documentation that this has occurred.
- Maintain product tracking.
- Develop agreements with producers and/or processors to plan out what will be procured.

- Use and maintain records of vendor invoices that detail who the vendor is, what products were supplied, in what quantities, and at what price. Invoices must be provided by the vendor at the time of delivery.
- Use and maintain records of receipts of receiving, signed by the receiving organization, verifying that product was received as stated, in good condition and was accepted.
- Follow proper food safety practices.
- Have proper food handling licenses as required.

CONTRACTS

A contract will be developed by DATCP for each funded project. Upon agreement to the contract terms by the applicant, the DATCP Secretary will consider the contract for final approval. No funding commitment is final until the contract is signed and executed. Project work may not begin until DATCP signs and returns the contract.

Grant contracts must be signed and returned to DATCP within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed contract within 30 days of receipt may result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay is approved by DATCP.

UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER

Grant recipients must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) to receive their award. Applicants who do not have a UEI can request one at sam.gov. There is no cost for obtaining a UEI. It is recommended that applicants who do not have a UEI request one at the same time they submit their grant applications.

MONITORING

DATCP WI-LFPA program staff will support, monitor and evaluate each funded project. DATCP reserves the right to audit the applicant relating to the performance of the project during and up to four years after completion of the contract. DATCP is also excited to help share the success stories of each project via DATCP and WI-LFPA websites and social media channels.

PAYMENTS

This is a reimbursement grant, meaning that recipients will have to pay for project costs themselves and then seek reimbursement for them from DATCP. Requests for reimbursements will be accepted on a quarterly basis. There must be at least two requests for reimbursement throughout the year. One large reimbursement at the end of your project will not be allowed. Payment requests must be submitted on the Reimbursement Request Form provided by DATCP. To receive reimbursement, grantees must clearly outline expenditures and provide documentation that the work has been completed, for example, by submitting receipts and invoices. Twenty-five percent of the total grant funds will be retained until receipt of the completed final report, presentation of project, receipts for all expenditures, and, if required, the verified statement.

PRE-AWARD COSTS

DATCP will not reimburse recipients for any costs incurred for work performed in the preparation of and production of an application or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

OPEN RECORDS

Applications submitted for funding and all related contracts and reports are subject to disclosure under Wisconsin's Public Records Law. If the grant applicant requests any information submitted to DATCP be deemed a trade secret, the document should be labeled using "trade secret" and the requested status should be noted when the document is submitted. DATCP will notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be trade secret by the grant recipient. Such information may be kept confidential by DATCP only as authorized by law. See Wis. Stat. § 19.36(5).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

To ensure attainment of program goals and monitor progress, award recipients will be required to complete quarterly progress reports in addition to one final report. Grant recipients will use report templates provided by DATCP. Applicants who do not submit reports on time and/or submit incomplete reports may be required to return all previously disbursed funds to DATCP. Reports will provide both quantitative and qualitative data to validate the effectiveness of the LFPA program. Information to be collected will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Name and locations in the state of vendors, if the vendor is socially disadvantaged or historically underserved, dollar value of food purchased, and type of food purchased (fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein) purchased by the program
- Name of organization that received food, location in the state, if this is an underserved county, and the dollar amount of the food received by the organization
- Summary of project activities performed that period
- Deviations from the proposed plan
- Difficulties encountered
- Solutions developed to overcome difficulties
- Successes or goals achieved
- Planned activities for the next quarter
- Photo documentation of project activities

The goal of these reports is to help grant recipients tell the story of the LFPA project in their own community, explaining how it has benefited your community (both farmers and end-user underserved community members). We encourage and hope each awarded project will collect stories in multiple formats, written, visual, audio and video.

RECORD REQUIREMENTS

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with DATCP, receipts, invoices, and copies of all reports and documents associated with

the project. The grantee shall retain all data and other records relating to the acquisition and performance of the Grant Award Agreement for a period of four years after the completion of the contract. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records.

VERIFIED STATEMENT AND AUDIT

As required by Wis. Admin. Code § ATCP 163.04(4), Grantees who receive awards of \$100,000 or more will be required to submit to DATCP a verified statement accounting for the use of all grant funds received. The statement must include the following:

- The amount of funds received.
- A clear itemized description showing, by expenditure category, how all funds were spent.
- Documentation of the deliverables provided by the recipient under the contract, and the dates on which the recipient provided those deliverables.
- Signatures of an independent certified public accountant licensed or certified under Wis. Stat. ch. [442](#) and the director or principal officer of the recipient attesting to the accuracy of the verified statement.

In addition, grantees who receive federal awards from all sources, including this grant, of \$750,000 or more during their fiscal year must comply with the audit requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

All applications submitted in response to this RFP become the property of DATCP. DATCP reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use, and to authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement. DATCP reserves the right to:

- Post funded applications to DATCP and WI-LFPA websites.
- Reject any or all applications received.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received after prior notification and agreement of applicant.
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.
- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice.
- Require a good-faith effort on the part of the grant recipient to work with DATCP subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results in Wisconsin.
- Withhold or recoup any payments when contract conditions are not met or if the recipient submits false or misleading information to the department.
- Modify reporting requirements during the course of the project.
- Share program report data and success stories with USDA and on DATCP and WI-LFPA websites and social media channels.
- Conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.

FAQ

Is match required for this grant program?

No

How is “Local Food” defined for this grant?

For this grant, local is defined as from Wisconsin. The food must be grown, raised or processed in Wisconsin. If the item is processed, 90% of the ingredients must be grown or raised in Wisconsin.

Can processed local food products be sold into this program?

Yes, minimally processed & shelf stable local food products can be purchased if they are locally produced and meet the USDA definition for “Minimally Processed Goods.”

What foods may be purchased with this grant?

Unprocessed and minimally processed local food products can be purchased with grant funds. Examples of allowable food products include fruits and vegetables (including 100% juices); grain products such as pastas and rice; meats (whole, pieces, or food items such as ground meats); meat alternates such as beans or legumes, and fluid milk and other dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt. Foods in a wide variety of minimal processing states (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) are also allowable

Are some foods unallowable?

Yes, foods that are generally understood to be significantly processed or prepared are unallowable. Examples of unallowable products are ready to eat foods, which would include baked goods such as breads, muffins, or crackers; prepackaged sandwiches or meals; other prepared and/or pre-cooked items that come ready-to-eat or that require no further preparation beyond heating (e.g. chicken nuggets, fish sticks, pre-made pizzas, etc).

How are food prices determined?

All project partners should work together to determine fair wholesale prices for product(s) in the contract. Pricing must be reasonable as compared to a similar product on the market, considering farm certifications, scale, region, and inflation. The intention of this grant program is to not underpay nor overpay producers/processors for their food products.

What is included in a price list, and can future actual prices deviate from the submitted price list?

Price list should include information on specific crops and minimally processed food products and projected price per quantity that producers/processors will be paid. If prices change, we expect each project to submit updated price lists to DATCP WI-LFPA program staff.

How much food can be purchased from a single producer or processor?

There is no minimum or maximum dollar amount for food purchased from producers or processors. However, each project should work with a minimum of 5-10 producers and/or processors with 80% of

all food procurement dollars being paid to socially disadvantaged or historically underserved producers or processors.

Can seconds be purchased and distributed through this program?

This program is designed to prepare producers to scale up production so that they can provide market quality products to hunger relief sites. Seconds can be perfectly safe, healthy, and nutritious produce that is “imperfect” or misshapen. For example, green peppers may have an extra lobe or cucumbers may have a bend in them that fall outside of Grade 1 standard. This program is not intended for farmers to get rid of their spoiled or damaged produce. Oftentimes, hunger relief sites receive seconds-quality donations and low-income patrons have become accustomed to receiving food that is of a lower quality standard. However, the intention of this program is that community members receive the same quality of food at a food pantry as they would if shopping at a local market.

Can food that was produced in 2023, for example, root vegetables, meat, honey, be purchased?

As long as the food meets food quality and shelf-life standards, including that the food is not expired, spoiled, and absent of blemishes or bruises, products that have been produced in 2023 are eligible for sale into this program.

Can food procured with project funding be distributed to schools and early care programs?

WI LFPA funds cannot supplement other USDA funded nutrition programs; however, schools and early care programs can partner on projects in multiple ways, including serving as a drop site for distribution to community members.

The RFP emphasizes funding partnerships. Does this mean that every supply chain partner (producer, processor, aggregator, distributor and food distribution site) involved in the grant must have already worked with the other supply chain partners on the grant beforehand?

No, producers and processors that have never before supplied food to partner aggregators, distributors or food access/hunger relief distribution sites may be involved in the project as a supply chain partner. Likewise, partnering aggregators or distributors do not need to have prior food procurement or food distribution with the other supply chain partners. However, project proposals must clearly identify all the involved supply chain partners. Each role and commitment from supply chain partners must be clearly described in the proposal. This grant is not intended to develop partnerships, but instead allow defined partnerships to procure and distribute local food to underserved communities at no cost of food to the organization receiving WI LFPA procured products.

Can projects work with supply chain partners not listed in the proposal?

Although the intent is that all the supply chain partners that will be implementing a project are listed in the proposal, we understand that changes occur. Limited changes to supply partners are allowable. Some producers/processors originally written into the proposal might not supply food for this project. And the project may procure food from new producers/processors not originally listed in the proposal. Likewise, limited changes to other supply chain partners are also allowed as long as the program goals and project deliverables are still met. Any proposed changes need to be documented and a letter outlining proposed changes must be submitted and approved before changes are implemented. Projects

will still be required to document that 80% of the food purchased will be from socially disadvantaged or historically underserved producers/processors.

Can non-profit organizations receive funding from Marbleseed for a support organization subaward and also receive funding from the WI-LFPA Community Partner grant program?

No

How is the term “Historically Underserved” defined?

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) includes provisions that address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially disadvantaged, beginning, limited resource, and veteran farmers and ranchers (“historically underserved producers”). Some groups of people are identified in Farm Bill legislation and in USDA policy as being Historically Underserved (HU). Members of these groups have been historically underserved by, or subject to discrimination in, Federal policies and programs. Four groups are defined by USDA as “Historically Underserved,” including farmers or ranchers who are: Beginning; Socially Disadvantaged; Veterans; and Limited Resource.

<https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/farmersgov-historically-underserved-factsheet-07-20-2022.pdf>

How is the term “Socially Disadvantaged” defined?

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher is a farmer or rancher who is a member of a Socially Disadvantaged Group. A Socially Disadvantaged Group is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and, where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12096>

How many letters of commitment are required?

There is no set number of expected letters of commitment; however, at least one letter from each step in the supply chain should be provided expressing their commitment to the project. The three main steps in the supply chain include the suppliers (producers/processors), the aggregator/distributors and the food access distribution sites. If the lead applicant is one of these supply chain partners (either the aggregator/distributor or the food access distribution site) then they do not need to provide a letter of commitment from themselves. However, if additional supply chain partners in that supply chain step are written into the proposal, a letter from them would be expected. This does not mean that all producers and processors need to each provide a letter, but based on the scope of your project, more than one letter from producers/processors might be beneficial in communicating adequate commitment required for the project. A single letter could be addressed from a group of farmers.

Are other letters of support allowed?

Additional letters of support from external community partners, stakeholders, or beneficiaries are not required; however, applicants may include up to 3 letters of support in their proposal (merged into the one single file). Letters of support come from individuals not directly involved in the implementation of the grant project, and as such, do not need to outline their role in the project. These letters of support can show community buy-in and also help support projected project impact as outlined in the proposal.

I'm a farmer and interested in this grant program, what should I do?

If you are a farmer interested in this grant program, you should identify and contact a local food aggregator/distributor, non-profit organization engaged in hunger relief or other eligible applicant to discuss how they could apply so that they can procure product from you. You can also visit <https://www.wilocalfood.org/> to learn about other WI-LFPA opportunities for farmers.

I'm a farmer, aggregator/distributor or food pantry already participating in the WI-LFPA program, can I also apply for or be involved with a WI-LFPA Community Partner grant project?

Yes. A farmer can have an individual WI-LFPA contract with Marbleseed and also participate in a WI-LFPA Community Partner grant project. A farmer cannot get paid twice for the same product. Likewise, other supply chain partners can be subcontracted or be involved in other WI-LFPA efforts and still be a partner on an awarded WI-LFPA Community Partner grant project.