



Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program Request for Proposal (RFP) for Cities, Counties & Nonprofits

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is pleased to announce a competitive grant application process for the Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program. CDFA will fund energy efficient refrigeration units in corner stores and small businesses in food deserts throughout the state to stock California-grown fresh produce, nuts and minimally processed foods. The purpose of the program is to improve access to healthy food choices in the small retail environment for underserved communities, while promoting CA-grown agriculture.

This program is established in California Food and Agricultural Code [section 49015](#) and funding was made available in the Budget Act of 2018.

Funding: The Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program will disburse up to \$4,500,000. The expectation is that California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA) will release another RFP if all funds are not awarded in this first round.

Eligibility: Eligible applicants are corner stores (or their equivalents, such as neighborhood stores, bodegas, convenience stores, or mom and pop stores – all called “corner stores” for purposes of this grant); small businesses; cities; counties; and nonprofits working with healthy retail.

Definitions for this grant program: (per Food and Agricultural Code [section 49015](#))

Corner store: a small-scale store or grocery store, either independent or chain, that sells a limited selection of foods and other products and that is located in a food desert in a rural, urban or suburban area. Corner stores do not need to be located on street corners.

Food desert: a low-income census tract with low access to a full-service grocery store.

Small businesses: independently owned, with 100 or fewer employees, average annual gross receipts of \$15M or less and must be authorized to accept EBT/SNAP/CalFresh benefits.

Minimally processed foods: food not physically/chemically processed in a way that fundamentally alters the raw product; and food processed only to separate whole, intact food into component parts (such as fruit cups or bagged salads).

Refrigeration unit selection: Applicants may choose the units that work best for their needs within these parameters:

- Stand-alone (also known as self-contained, plug in, or plug and play) units suitable for retail sales in stores or small businesses.
 - Freezers and mini-refrigerators are not allowed for this program.
- Other types of units, such as mobile carts or refrigerated trucks, are also allowable. Applicants should describe why they are needed and select the most energy efficient models available for all equipment. Add-ons for energy efficiency are allowable expenses.
- Applicants are also strongly encouraged to select the most climate friendly models available. See the scoring criteria and Appendices A and B for guidance.

Applications are due by 5 pm PDT on Thursday, April 25, 2019. Late applications will not be accepted.

Grant proposals must be submitted electronically to cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov. Submitted proposals will only be considered if the required proposal form is complete and attached along with any additional attachments in **one email submission**. Please use “Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program Proposal” in the subject line. Attachments may be submitted in Microsoft Word (doc/docx), Adobe (pdf) or Microsoft Excel (xls/xlsx) format. Mailed and faxed applications will not be accepted. Applicants will receive a confirmation email within two business days of submission.

Grant Timeline:

Release Request for Grant Proposal: February 28, 2019

Grant proposals due: April 25, 2019, 5:00 pm PDT

Review period (anticipated): April – May 2019

Announce funding (anticipated): May 2019

Grant agreements executed (anticipated): August 2019

Invoices for refrigeration units must be submitted to CDFA within 60 days of purchase.

Compliance and Reporting:

Once awarded a grant, recipients may be asked to provide additional information for program evaluation purposes, such as helping provide baseline data about produce sales in the corner stores. A CDFA representative or designee will work with recipients to address questions and obtain data; and business customers may be interviewed. Site visits may be conducted. Grantees must also submit a written report after one year answering questions including produce sale information and any challenges to implementation.

Recipients must comply with all state and local regulations. Documentation that businesses hold required permits may be requested.

Proposal Review and Evaluation:

CDFA will conduct an initial administrative review of proposals to determine whether all application requirements have been met. Proposals that have met all application requirements will receive a technical review to evaluate the merits of the grant request based on the published scoring criteria.

APPEAL RIGHTS: Any discretionary action taken by the Office of Farm to Fork may be appealed to CDFA’s Office of Hearings and Appeals within ten (10) days of receiving notification. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the grant application or his/her authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the Office decision being challenged. The submission must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Suite 315, Sacramento CA 95814 or emailed to CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov. Appeals not received in this timeframe will be denied.

CDFA reserves the right to ask applicants clarifying questions about their applications and to work with selected applicants to modify their proposals.

There are two concurrent RFPs. This is the RFP for Cities, Counties and Nonprofits.

Grant funds are available for refrigeration equipment. Cities, counties and nonprofits may also apply for up to 10% of a grant award to provide technical assistance to the corner stores and small businesses. Technical assistance may be provided by the applicant or sub-contracted to another entity, such as business consultants. Applicants may apply for one year or multi-year funding through March 2022.

Technical assistance: Technical assistance services may include but are not limited to: assisting stores and small businesses to select, purchase and install refrigeration units; market research determining which qualifying items customers desire; help procuring, stocking, merchandising, or marketing the qualifying items; consulting on profitability of produce sales; or assistance obtaining permitting, licensing, or authorization to accept nutrition benefits. Technical assistance can consist of staff time and costs of creating printed materials promoting the CA-grown produce, nuts, or minimally processed foods for sale, such as signage or pricing information.

Cities, counties and nonprofits are encouraged to use their own eligibility guidelines, selection criteria and project terms with partnering corner stores and small businesses that do not conflict with Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program parameters established in this RFP.

Proposal questions:

1. Applicant type (city; county; city and county; nonprofit; or partnership between city and/or county and/or nonprofit):

2. List contact information for each entity listed in Question 1, including name of organization, address, website, email and phone number:

3. Main contact for this grant:

Name:

Organization:

Professional title:

Email:

Phone:

4. Describe the population you will serve through this program: include estimated number of people reached (i.e. customers of the corner stores or small businesses); location(s) including neighborhood income information; demographics; grocery store availability; and any other relevant details, such as traffic or foot traffic patterns or other.

5. Please describe your experience with healthy small retail work; OR, if a new project is envisioned, describe your project plan. If this is a new program without established relationships in the field, please identify an organization or a person with expertise to provide peer support.
6. Describe the partnerships in place to accomplish this project and each entity's role. If you will be developing new partnerships, describe the relevant relationships that facilitate this effort, such as with other community-based organizations and/or with corner stores or small businesses.
7. Please list all stores and/or small businesses you intend to work with for this project, including names, addresses and contact information. Describe your current relationships with each store/small business. If you intend to conduct new outreach, please explain how you will conduct outreach.
8. If applying to provide technical assistance, describe the services you will offer.
9. Where will stores or small businesses procure the CA-grown produce? Please describe any existing procurement/distribution methods and/or the plan for this project.
10. If this project fits into a broader scope of related work for your organization, please describe the overall scope and goals, other sources of funding, and any plans for evaluation.
11. Applicants are encouraged to work with corner stores and small businesses to determine the exact types of units desired. If possible, please list the types including makes and models of refrigeration units desired. If unknown, please explain how and when this will be determined. Note that applicants must specify the exact equipment to receive full points.
 - If you plan to use a utility rebate program for energy efficient units, specify which utility program.
 - Specify if you are selecting Energy Star certified units or equipment that meets the same efficiency standards.
 - If requesting stand-alone units that do not meet Energy Star efficiency standards, explain why this type of unit is needed and explain any energy efficiency measures you will take, such as add-ons.
 - If requesting any units other than stand-alone, such as carts, trucks, or other, describe why this equipment is needed and any energy efficiency measures you will take.
 - Specify if you plan to use low global warming potential (GWP) units.
 - See Scoring section and Appendices A and B for energy efficiency and GWP guidelines.

12. List the grand total up-to amount you are requesting, including refrigeration units, any equipment add-ons for energy efficiency purposes, and any technical assistance expenses proposed (for up to 10% of the grant total only):

Equipment	Number of units	Cost
Stand-alone, stationary refrigeration unit(s)		
Other allowable refrigeration unit(s) (such as mobile cart or refrigerated truck) Type(s):		
Energy efficient add-on(s) Type(s):		
Technical Assistance	n/a	
Grand Total Requested		

13. Please break down the Technical Assistance costs listed above as line items (applicants may also submit an excel spreadsheet to accompany their narrative). As a reminder, technical assistance for this grant can total up to 10% of the total amount requested.

Personnel (includes fringe) – list title and % FTE for each	
Travel – specify	
Publication/Printing Costs – specify types of publications	
Total Technical Assistance Cost (should match TA line in Q12)	

14. Where did you learn about this opportunity? *Answers to this question will not affect award decisions.

15. Would you like to be connected to one or more healthy retail programs in other locations that can share promising practices related to introducing refrigeration units to small stores to sell produce? CDFA cannot guarantee a match but may be able to facilitate networking. *Answers to this question will not affect award decisions.

Scoring: 100 Points

Neighborhood/population served: low income, with low access to full service grocery stores. **20 points.**

- Highest need locations and populations based on income, proximity to grocery stores, and other demographic information will be prioritized.

Track record of success OR strong project plan including peer support or mentorship: **20 points**

Partnerships/relationships: **15 points**

Technical assistance provision: **15 points**

Distribution plan: **15 points**

Energy efficient selection: **10 points**

- To earn full points, applicants must either:
 1. utilize a utility rebate program, OR
 2. select either:
 - ENERGY STAR certified equipment, or
 - equipment aligned with ENERGY STAR certification levels
- See Appendix A for further details and links to information
- Partial points may be awarded if some but not all equipment requested will meet these criteria

Climate-friendly/low GWP equipment selection: **5 points**

- See Appendix B for information and links
- Partial points may be awarded if some but not all equipment requested will meet these criteria
- **Applicants may wish to select ENERGY STAR certified products that use alternative refrigerants (linked in Appendix B) OR equipment that meets equivalent criteria to earn full points for both efficiency and low GWP.**

Questions? Email cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov with questions about this application.