



Cranberry Renovation & Enhancement Program (CRAN)

Fiscal Year 2027

July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

Request for Responses (RFR)

RFR File: AGR-CRAN-FY27

Funding for cranberry bog renovations and enhancement projects that improve productivity, sustainability, and environmental stewardship.

Application Deadline

Responses must be received no later than
4:00 PM, Thursday, August 20th, 2026

Submission Instructions

All proposals must be submitted as listed in Section 4

Contact Information

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Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
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GRANT OPPORTUNITY – CRANBERRY RENOVATION & ENHANCEMENT

Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
 Rebecca L. Tepper, Secretary
 RFR ID: AGR-CRAN-FY27

Proposals Sought For	The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (“Department”) Cranberry Renovation & Enhancement Program (“Program”) provides funding to support improvements on cranberry operations in Massachusetts. The Program includes two funding tracks: renovation projects, which support the full renovation of existing cranberry bogs, and enhancement projects, which support targeted improvements that increase productivity, operational efficiency, and environmental stewardship. Additional details on eligible project types are provided in Section 2B.
Overview & Goals	The Program is designed to support investments that strengthen the long-term viability of cranberry operations by improving production efficiency, enhancing environmental performance, and modernizing core farm infrastructure. By combining renovation and enhancement funding into a single application, the Program streamlines access to funding and supports growers in implementing projects that address both immediate operational needs and long-term sustainability goals.
Eligible Applicants	Eligible applicants are cranberry operations engaged in commercial production agriculture, as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A. Projects must be located on property in active agricultural use and under the applicant’s ownership or control for at least three (3) consecutive years. Additional eligibility requirements are detailed in Section 2.
Eligible Projects	Eligible projects include cranberry bog renovations that result in a fully completed and functional bog, as well as enhancement projects that support improvements directly related to cranberry production. Projects should improve production and operational performance while incorporating practices that protect water quality, improve resource use, and support long-term environmental and economic sustainability. Additional details are described in Section 2B.
Application Deadline	Applications must be received by the deadline of 4:00 pm on Thursday, August 20 th , 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
Funding Availability	Funding is available for renovation projects at a maximum of \$25,000 per acre, up to \$125,000, and for enhancement projects at up to 80% of total project costs, not to exceed \$50,000. Applicants may apply for both project types for a combined maximum request of \$175,000. Additional details on funding limits are provided in Section 3A.
Match Requirement	Applicants are required to provide a minimum 20% match toward total project costs. Additional details on match requirements are provided in Section 3D.
Duration of Contract	All projects must be completed and invoiced by June 30, 2027. No extensions will be granted. Additional details are provided in Section 5B.
Contact Information	Laura Maul Email: Laura.Maul@mass.gov Phone: (857) 507-5972

DEFINITIONS

Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR): A permanent deed restriction held and funded by the Department that preserves land for agricultural use by prohibiting non-agricultural development and requiring continued agricultural use.

Agricultural Use: For the purpose of the Program, the use of land for farming activities as set forth in 310 CMR 10.04, specifically including the cultivation of crops like cranberries.

Applicant: An individual, business, municipality, Tribal government or entity, nonprofit, or organization submitting a proposal to the Department. Where the Applicant does not own the property associated with a proposed project, the term includes any co-applicant landowner(s), as applicable.

Capital Improvement / Capital Project / Capital Expenditure: A non-recurring investment in land, buildings, infrastructure, systems, or durable equipment that improves, creates, or extends the capacity, safety, or efficiency of agricultural or food system operations and has an expected useful life of at least five (5) years, where applicable. Capital improvements do not include routine operating costs, maintenance, consumables, repairs, or supplies. Land acquisition is not eligible unless expressly permitted by the Program.

Commercial Agricultural Business: A for-profit agricultural business engaged in the growing, raising, cultivating, harvesting, marketing, storing, processing, and distribution of agricultural, aquacultural, horticultural, or livestock products within the Commonwealth that is operated for revenue, deriving verifiable gross income from the sale of agricultural products produced by the business. Agricultural activities are interpreted consistent with M.G.L. c. 128, § 1A

Department: The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR).

Durable Equipment: Equipment with an expected useful life of at least five (5) years that contributes directly to production, processing, storage, distribution, or food access functions.

Eligible Expenditures: Project costs associated with the purchase, installation, or implementation of equipment, systems, or infrastructure that directly support cranberry production and that are tied to the Department-approved Scope of Services and Budget and are incurred and paid within the active contract period.

Farmer / Farm Operator: An individual who owns or exercises legal authority to make operational decisions for an agricultural business or commercial agricultural business engaged in activities defined in M.G.L. c. 128, § 1A.

Grantee: An individual or organization that has been awarded financial assistance under the Program that will enter into a contract with the Department in order to receive funding.

Match: The portion of eligible project costs paid by the Applicant in cash, not funded by the Department and not sourced from other state or federal grants. In-kind contributions, owner labor, donated materials, or other non-cash resources do not qualify as match unless expressly permitted by the Program.

Production Agriculture: Farming as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A that focuses on agricultural production that will ultimately be sold in the retail market and not for subsistence purposes.

Project / Project Scope: The improvements and associated activities approved by the Department under the Program.

Scope of Services (Scope & Budget): The contract document that defines allowable activities, deliverables, expenditures, infrastructure and equipment, budget, and timeline under the Program.

USDA/FSA Farm and Tract Number: The unique identification number assigned to a farm operation by the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") and the Farm Service Agency ("FSA"), which is used for tracking purposes.

1. INTRODUCTION

The “Department is pleased to announce the opening of the application period for the Cranberry Renovation & Enhancement Program (“Program”).

The Program combines two funding tracks, cranberry bog renovation and enhancement, into a single, streamlined application. Renovation projects focus on upgrading existing bogs, while enhancement projects support improvements that increase productivity, sustainability, and environmental stewardship.

By consolidating these funding tracks, the Department aims to simplify the application process and support cranberry operations in making targeted investments that strengthen long-term operational efficiency, productivity, and environmental performance.

2. ELIGIBILITY

A. Applicants

A1. Eligible Applicants

The applicant must be a cranberry operation, as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A, engaged in the business of production agriculture.

The proposed project must be located on property that is in active agricultural use and has been under the applicant’s ownership or control and management for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years prior to the date of application.

A2. Ineligible Applicants

The following applicants are not eligible for funding under this Program:

- Applicants that are not engaged in commercial cranberry production, as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A.
- Applicants that cannot demonstrate that the proposed project is located on property in active agricultural use and under the applicant’s ownership or control and management for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to the date of application.
- Applicants that do not have sufficient site control to implement and maintain the proposed project, including those without a valid lease or agreement authorizing the proposed improvements, where applicable.
- Applicants that are not in compliance with applicable federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or program requirements at the time of application or which are engaged in any active legal challenge which is directly related to operation or the ability to lawfully operate on the property included in the proposal.
- Applicants that submit proposals for activities that do not meet the definition of eligible projects or expenditures under the Program.
- Renovation proposals for less than one (1) acre.

A3. Size of Operation

Bogs must be greater than one (1) acre in size and in Agricultural Use within the meaning set forth in 310 CMR 10.04. Grower and acreage must be defined based on individual USDA/FSA farm and track number.

A4. Property Ownership or Lease

If the proposed project is on a property not owned by the Applicant, a lease agreement must demonstrate a long-term, legal right to use the property by the applicant. This typically means a lease agreement for not less than five (5) years from the date a response is submitted. The proposed project must also be allowed under the terms of the lease agreement. The Department may request a copy of the lease agreement as part of its review.

A5. Previous Applicants

Proposals from individuals or organizations that have previously received funding under Department funding programs are eligible to apply for funding.

A6. Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Properties

Before applying to the program, APR landowners should consult with the APR Program to determine if there are any requirements applicable to the proposed project under the terms of their APR. APR applicants must obtain, or be in the advanced stages of receiving, all required approvals under their APR and must be in compliance with the terms of the APR or resolve any outstanding compliance or legal issues with the Department prior to submitting their proposal.

A7. Produce Farm Registration

All responses and information submitted in response to this RFR from produce operations are subject to registration under Produce Safety & Market Access 330 CMR 34.03, regardless of whether the farm is a Covered Farm or a Non-Covered Farm, as defined in the regulation. Registration will be a condition of funding in any contract. For more information on the Department's Produce Safety Program, please visit:

www.mass.gov/produce-safety-program.

A8. Environmental Justice

For the purposes of this RFR, "Environmental Justice" includes the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities in the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy, climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies, as well as the equitable distribution of environmental and energy benefits and burdens. The Department is committed to Environmental Justice and, in doing so, we are working to ensure communities across the state have the capacity to advance environmental, energy, and food justice, engage in meaningful ways, and help shape policies and programs with equity at the center. Through our programs and services, we aim to support applicants working directly with communities most impacted by environmental, energy, and food injustice, and the disproportionate impacts of climate change.

For more information, please refer to [EEA's Environmental Justice Program Webpage](#).

A9. Legal Compliance

Eligible Applicants must be able to demonstrate compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements, including but not limited to statutes, regulations, bylaws, and ordinances in effect at the time of application and throughout the duration of the project and may not be engaged in any active legal challenge which is directly related to operation or the ability to lawfully operate on the property included in the proposal. Eligible Applicants will be responsible for obtaining and complying with any applicable license, permit, or other approval required by law for any project. The Department may request proof of licensure, permitting, or other permission required by law as part of the RFR process.

All records provided to the Department under this RFR shall be subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L. c. 66, Section 10 and may be subject to disclosure unless otherwise exempt in accordance with M.G.L. c. 4, Section 7(26).

B. Projects

B1. Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must be investments that strengthen and modernize cranberry production infrastructure. Projects must support the purchase, replacement, or upgrade of durable systems, infrastructure, or equipment that improve production, operational efficiency, economic viability, and environmental performance on active cranberry operations.

Funded projects must result in a completed and functional improvement that directly supports cranberry production and provides a durable, long-term benefit to the agricultural operation. Projects must address identified operational needs and be feasible to complete within the contract period.

RENOVATION:

Renovation projects must result in a fully completed and functional renovation of an existing cranberry bog that improves production, operational efficiency, and long-term viability. Renovation projects should improve bog design, productivity, and water management while incorporating conservation practices that protect water quality and support long-term environmental stewardship.

Projects may include full bog renovations or defined renovation components; however, all proposed work must directly contribute to the completion of a functional cranberry bog renovation. Projects that do not result in a completed and operational bog are not eligible.

Eligible Renovation Costs may include:

- Cranberry vines and planting materials
- Sanding, grading, and leveling
- Drainage and irrigation system installation or replacement
- Water management structures (e.g. flumes, ditches, control structures)
- Excavation services and site preparation directly related to the renovation
- Equipment rental required to complete the renovation

ENHANCEMENT:

Enhancement projects support targeted improvements that increase on-farm productivity, operational efficiency, reduce operating costs, and enhance environmental stewardship.

Projects must represent durable improvements that directly support active commercial cranberry production and result in measurable improvements to production, functionality, efficiency, or environmental performance.

Equipment funded under this Program must primarily and directly support active commercial cranberry production. Applicants must clearly demonstrate how the proposed equipment or infrastructure will be routinely used in cranberry production, why it is necessary for the operation, and how it will improve current practices. Requests for replacement equipment must demonstrate a measurable improvement over existing equipment, such as increased efficiency, capacity, precision, reliability, environmental performance, or reduced operating costs, rather than simply replacing equipment due to age or normal wear. Applicants must also identify the disposition of any equipment being replaced.

Eligible Project Types may include:

- Irrigation system upgrades and water management improvements, including automation and efficiency technologies
- Bog efficiency improvements (e.g., ditch alterations, pipe routing, access improvements)
- Equipment to support crop management (e.g., sanding, pruning, spraying, nutrient application)
- Harvest and fruit handling equipment (e.g., containment booms, screening and sorting systems)
- Monitoring and precision agriculture systems (e.g., soil moisture sensors, weather stations, automated controls)
- Environmental improvements that enhance resource efficiency or reduce impacts (e.g., water reuse, runoff reduction, input efficiency)
- Other equipment or infrastructure that improves production efficiency or environmental outcomes.

B2. Eligible Expenditures

Eligible expenditures are limited to costs associated with the purchase, replacement, or upgrade of durable equipment, systems, and related installation services that directly support cranberry production.

All funded costs must result in a long-term, tangible improvement to the agricultural operation and be necessary for the completion of the proposed project. Expenditures must be incurred during the contract period and be fully installed, operational, and owned by the applicant prior to reimbursement.

B3. Ineligible Expenditures

Project Scope Limitations

- **Value-Added / Post-Harvest Processing Equipment:** Equipment or infrastructure used for processing, manufacturing, or value-added production (e.g., juice, cider, or other processed products). This includes post-harvest processing activities beyond basic handling and screening.
- **General-Purpose or Heavy Equipment:** Tractors, excavators, loaders, and other heavy machinery or general-purpose equipment that is not specifically designed for or limited to cranberry production.
- **Projects Not Resulting in a Completed Renovation:** For renovation proposals, projects that do not result in a fully completed and functional cranberry bog renovation.

Operational Costs

- Routine operating expenses, including fuel, seed, feed, chemicals, and utilities
- Salaries, wages, or administrative costs associated with ongoing farm operations
- Labor performed by the applicant in completing the proposed project

Maintenance and Equipment

- Routine maintenance, repairs, or replacement of existing equipment that only maintains current operations and does not represent an improvement consistent with the Program
- Short-term, non-durable, or consumable items
- Used equipment or materials
- Drones/UAVs and related equipment

Non-Agricultural and Indirect Costs

- Infrastructure or improvements not directly related to cranberry production
- Marketing, advertising, or promotional materials
- Planning, feasibility studies, or other pre-development costs
- Subscription-based software or recurring service fees
- Extended warranties
- Office equipment, furniture, or other non-agricultural equipment

Financial and Legal Costs

- Interest payments, financing fees, or loan-related costs
- Land acquisition or lease payments
- Permit fees
- Legal fees

Timing and Eligibility

- Costs for work completed or initiated prior to execution of a contract with the Department
- Proposals from applicants not in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, or program requirements at the time of application or during the contract period
- Proposals for bogs less than one (1) acre
- Proposals from applicants not engaged in commercial cranberry production as defined by M.G.L. c. 128, Section 1A.

3. FUNDING & BUDGET GUIDELINES

3A. Funding Availability / Maximum Funding

Applicants may submit one (1) application per fiscal year. A single application may include one or both project types (Renovation and/or Enhancement), provided all funding limits are met. Applicants applying for both Renovation and Enhancement projects may request a combined total of up to \$175,000.

Renovation Projects:

Funding is available at a maximum of \$25,000 per acre, up to \$125,000 per application.

Enhancement Projects:

Funding is available for up to 80% of total project costs, not to exceed \$50,000 per application.

Each agricultural operation, as identified by a unique tax identification number, is limited to one (1) award per fiscal year. Applicants may not submit multiple applications under different business names, entities, or tax identification numbers for the same agricultural operation for the purpose of exceeding the maximum funding limits. The Department reserves the right to determine what constitutes a single agricultural operation.

The Department reserves the right to award an amount different from that requested, including partial funding.

3B. Budget Guidelines & Grant Levels

Applicants must submit a complete and itemized project budget using the required budget template(s) provided for each project type.

Applicants applying for both Renovation and Enhancement projects must complete and submit a separate budget for each project type and clearly distinguish all associated costs.

The Department reserves the right to review and adjust proposed budgets to remove ineligible, excessive, or unsupported costs prior to award.

3C. Appropriation

All contracts shall be subject to available funding, whether through the appropriation and authorization of sufficient funds or the receipt of sufficient revenues. If available funding ceases for any reason, a contract shall be deemed under suspension and contract performance must halt. A contractor will not be entitled to compensation for any performance provided during the period of contract suspension. The Department may lift the suspension if available funding is received. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, the Department may terminate the contract.

3D. Match Requirement

Renovation Projects:

Applicants may satisfy all or a portion of the required 20% applicant contribution through approved in-kind contributions. Allowable in-kind contributions may include owner or employee labor, the use of farm-owned equipment during renovation activities, sand or vines sourced from the applicant's operation, and other Department-approved materials or services directly associated with the approved renovation.

In-kind contributions are **not reimbursable** and may only be applied toward the applicant's required 20% contribution. Applicants must identify all proposed in-kind contributions in the project budget and provide documentation acceptable to the Department to support both the eligibility and reasonable value of the contribution. The Department reserves the right to determine the eligibility and valuation of all proposed in-kind contributions.

Enhancement Projects:

Applicants are required to contribute a minimum of a 20% cash match. In-kind services, donations, or other services, or other state or federal grant funds are not eligible as matching funds.

3E. Multiple Program Applications

Applicants may submit proposals to more than one Department grant program within the same fiscal year; however, the Department will not issue funding from multiple programs for the same or substantially similar project activities. If an applicant applies to multiple department programs for the same project, the Department reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine under which program, if any, the project will be funded. The Department's determination shall be final and binding. Applicants are encouraged to review all program eligibility requirements and apply under the program that most closely aligns with their proposed project scope and objectives.

4. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & EVALUATION

4A. Application Submission Instructions

Applicants must complete and submit all required materials as outlined below. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Applications must be **received by 4:00 PM, Thursday, August 20th 2026**. Late submissions, including those delayed technical issues, will not be accepted.

Applicants may submit their completed applications through the online submission as specified below. Applicants are responsible for ensuring timely receipt of their submission. This RFR does not allow for the submission of hard copy or emails of the application.

An application form **must** be completed in its entirety. Applications must be submitted through the online application available at: www.mass.gov/how-to/cranberry-renovation-enhancement-program

Important Notes

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to retain a copy of their entire submission.
- All Applicants are advised to allow adequate time for submission of their proposal by considering delays online impediments like Internet traffic, internet connection speed, file size, and file volume.
- The Department is not responsible for delays encountered by Applicants or their agents, or for an Applicant's local hardware failures, such as computers or related networks, associated with bid compilation or submission.

4B. Supporting Documentation

Document / Requirement	Description or Instructions
Budget	Required. Applicants must use the applicable budget template(s) provided for each project type. Budgets must include all project costs, any match, and the total amount requested. Failure to submit a complete budget will result in the application being deemed ineligible.
Quotes	Required. One quote must be provided for each budgeted expenditure. Quotes must be from qualified vendors and reflect current, itemized pricing for equipment and/or services. Quotes must align with the submitted budget.
Lease Agreement	Optional. For projects on leased property, applicants must demonstrate sufficient site control for a minimum of five (5) years from the date of application and that the lease authorizes the proposed project and associated improvements.
Balance of Funding	Optional. Documentation demonstrating the ability to pay project costs upfront, such as recent bank letter, line of credit letter, financing approval, or other non-state funding commitment.
Maps	Optional. Image showing property boundaries and the specific location where the renovation or project will be installed.
NRCS Plan	Optional. A current Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation plan, if available, that supports the proposed project or overall farm management.
Design Plan	Optional. Design drawings, layouts, or installation plans that provide additional detail on the proposed renovation or enhancement project.

4C. Additional Contract Documentation

If selected, the applicant will be required to fill out and submit the following forms to complete the contract:

- Commonwealth Standard Contract Form with Commonwealth Terms & Conditions
- Commonwealth W-9 tax information form
- Completed Contractor Authorized Signature Verification Form
- Completed Electronic Funds Transfer Form

These forms do not need to be completed as part of the response. Assistance to complete these forms will be provided to Respondents selected to participate in the Program. These forms are available for review at www.mass.gov/osd or by request.

4D. Review Process / Evaluation Timeline

The Department cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications. In order to maintain integrity of the competitive grant process, the Department is unable to advise and/or provide individuals with any information regarding specific applications during the solicitation process.

There will be two steps of review following the grant application period.

Step I: An initial review to evaluate eligibility and completeness to determine if all required information is provided. The application will then be reviewed, and a point score will be given based on the criteria listed in Evaluation Criteria, Section 4E.

Step II: All projects which are favorably reviewed in Step I may require a field visit prior to final award determinations being made. A favorable initial evaluation and field visit DOES NOT guarantee funding for a proposed project. The purposes of the field visit are as follows:

- To verify the information presented in the proposal;
- To view the agricultural operation and assess the project request;
- To verify the operation is engaged in commercial agriculture;
- To determine the appropriateness of the practice proposed for the farm;
- To confirm the ability to implement and maintain the practice;
- To explore other items deemed necessary; and
- To develop a basis for future 'before and after' comparisons.

Department staff may modify the scope of the proposed project to more effectively achieve program goals. The Department may request additional project information.

Final recommendations will be conveyed to the Commissioner of Agricultural Resources and the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for final decisions. All acceptances shall be conditional upon the availability of funding. Once the review period has ended and award decisions are finalized, applicants will be notified via the primary email address listed on the application if they were selected for funding or not.

4E. Evaluation Criteria

Each eligible response will be reviewed and receive a point score based on the assigned values to Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, and No Evidence as defined.

Very Good - The application is specified and comprehensive. There is complete, detailed, and clearly articulated information as to how the criteria are met. The ideas presented are innovative, well-conceived, and thoroughly developed.

Good - The application is reasonably comprehensive and includes sufficient detail. It contains many of the characteristics of a response that is very good even though it may require additional specificity, support, or elaboration in places.

Fair - The application is non-specific, and lacks focus and detail. The response addresses some of the selection criteria, but not all. Some ideas presented are sound, but others are not responsive to the purpose of the grant. Additional information is needed in order to be reasonably comprehensive and meet the criteria of a response that is good.

Poor - The application does not meet many criteria; provides inaccurate information or provides information that requires substantial clarification as to how the criteria are met; lacks meaningful detail; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issue in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.

No Evidence - The application does not address the criteria or simply re-states the criteria.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

1. Applicant & Operation Capacity– 15%

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a clear and viable agricultural operation and the ability to successfully complete the proposed project.

This includes the overall clarity of the operation description, scale of production, and confirmation of active commercial cranberry production. Consideration will also be given to the applicant's experience completing similar projects, managing grants or improvements, and the qualifications of any team members or contractors identified. The applicant's ability to finance the project upfront and meet the required cash match will also be evaluated.

2. Project Need & Justification – 25%

The extent to which the applicant clearly demonstrates the need for the proposed project and defines the problem being addressed.

This includes a clear description of current conditions, existing equipment or infrastructure (if applicable), and the operational challenges or limitations being addressed. Strong responses will clearly explain why the project is needed at this time and what would occur if the project were not implemented.

For renovation projects, this includes justification for the selected bog or acreage and current site conditions.

For enhancement projects, this includes justification for the proposed equipment or system and its role within the operation.

3. Feasibility & Project Implementation – 15%

The extent to which the proposed project is clearly planned, realistic, and feasible to complete within the contract period.

This includes the clarity and feasibility of the project timeline, readiness to proceed, and whether any required permits, approvals, or external factors may impact implementation. Consideration will be given to the applicant's approach to implementing, operating, and maintaining the proposed project upon completion.

Budgets will be evaluated for completeness, accuracy, and alignment with the proposed scope of work.

Completeness of supporting documentation, including quotes and financial documentation, will also be considered.

4. Project Impacts & Outcomes – 25%

The extent to which the project will result in meaningful and measurable improvements to the agricultural operation.

This includes anticipated impacts related to production, efficiency, environmental performance, or operational improvements. Strong applications will provide clear, realistic, and measurable outcomes and demonstrate how success will be evaluated.

Consideration will also be given to the strength and relevance of the stated project goals and how clearly they are connected to the expected outcomes, as well as the durability of the proposed improvements and the extent to which project benefits are expected to be sustained over time.

5. Overall Project Value & Funding Priority – 20%

The extent to which the reviewer determines that the project represents a strong and appropriate investment of program funds.

This includes an overall assessment of the project's value, impact relative to cost, and alignment with program goals.

Reviewers may consider the degree to which the project addresses a meaningful need, provides long-term benefit to the operation, and represents a reasonable and effective use of public funding.

5. PROJECT TERMS & COMPLIANCE

5A. Contract Terms

If awarded, all projects will be required to execute and abide by the standard Commonwealth of Massachusetts Terms and Conditions. In addition, all final contracts are subject to successful negotiation of a Final Scope of Services. No project may commence until a contract has been executed by all parties. The Department does not guarantee that any contract may result or that any particular funding level will be awarded from this RFR. It is anticipated that projects can commence immediately upon contract execution. A contract is considered fully executed once signed by both parties.

The Department reserves the right to interpret, clarify, modify, or supplement the terms and conditions of this RFR and any resulting contract at any time, at its sole discretion, to ensure proper administration of the Program and compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements. The absence of a specific provision within this RFR shall not limit the Department's authority to impose additional terms, conditions, or requirements determined necessary for the effective implementation of the Program.

All determinations made by the Department, including eligibility decisions, allowable expenditures, reporting requirements, compliance actions, and award amounts, shall be final and binding. By entering into a contract with the Department, contractors agree to comply with any such directives issued during the contract period.

Requirements will be defined in the grant contract and Scope of Services.

5B. Duration of Contracts

All awarded projects must be fully completed and invoiced by June 30, 2027. No extensions will be granted.

5C. Installation Standards & Permits

Funded projects must be installed in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local codes and regulations. Any required permits or inspections must be secured and finalized prior to reimbursement. Failure to obtain or remain in compliance with required approvals may result in termination of the contract.

All equipment and materials must be new, commercially available, and installed according to manufacturer specifications. Equipment must carry a manufacturer's warranty of at least one (1) year.

Replacement of existing equipment with new equipment must result in the removal of the older unit from active service. Removed equipment may not be resold.

All equipment must be purchased in full and owned by the applicant prior to reimbursement. Leased or financed equipment is not eligible.

6. DELIVERABLES, REPORTING & INVOICING

6A. Project Deliverables

Award recipients must complete all approved project activities in accordance with the executed Scope of Services and Budget.

For Renovation Projects:

Deliverables include the completion of a fully renovated and functional cranberry bog, including all associated site work, planting, and infrastructure necessary for production.

For Enhancement Projects:

Deliverables include the purchase, installation, and full operational readiness of all approved equipment, infrastructure, or systems.

All project components must be fully implemented and functional prior to reimbursement. Completion of the project will be verified by the Department through site inspection and/or documentation review, as determined by the Department.

6B. Reporting Requirements

Reporting requirements will be outlined in the Scope of Services for awarded proposals.

6C. Invoicing & Payment

- Disbursement of funds under this RFR will be done on a reimbursement basis and will require that acceptable documentation be submitted to the Department prior to any payment. **Only expenses incurred during the period of the contract are eligible for reimbursement. Any costs incurred prior to an executed contract, regardless of whether they were included in a proposal and associated with the project, are NOT eligible for reimbursement from the Department.**
- Invoices must be submitted no later than June 30, 2027.
- The funded contractual activity will be evaluated prior to full reimbursement. Work will be evaluated for satisfactory completion and compliance to standards. Spot inspections may be conducted at the Department's discretion on all work for the life of the project. Only work that satisfies the terms and conditions for this RFR, contract, and any other instructions by the Department shall be eligible for reimbursement.
- Satisfactory documentation in the form of cancelled checks, receipts, invoices, etc. for costs associated with approved projects must be submitted to the Department and approved prior to reimbursement.
- In-kind contributions must be documented and approved by the Department prior to reimbursement.
- The Department will determine the reasonable value of all in-kind contributions for renovation projects based on comparable market rates and may reduce proposed values that cannot be adequately supported.
- Reimbursement requests will be outlined in the Scope of Services.
- Funds awarded through this program may be considered taxable income, and recipients are solely responsible for determining and satisfying any resulting tax obligations. Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 7A, § 3 and 815 CMR 9.00, the Office of the Comptroller may intercept or withhold payments to satisfy outstanding debts owed to the Commonwealth, including unpaid taxes, child support, or other legally enforceable obligations, which may reduce the amount disbursed to the recipient. The Department does not provide tax advice and applicants are strongly encouraged to consult a qualified tax professional to understand the potential tax implications of accepting an award.

7. DEADLINES & PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

Release of RFR	Monday, July 6, 2026
Information Session	None planned.
Question Deadline	Applicants may submit questions regarding this RFR and application process. Questions must be submitted by email to mdargrants@mass.gov . The deadline for written questions is Thursday, July 30 th , 2026. All questions and answers will be posted at www.mass.gov/how-to/cranberry-renovation-enhancement-program so that all applicants can review.
Application Due Date	Must be received by 4:00 PM, Thursday, August 20 th , 2026.
Estimated Award Date	October 2026
Estimated Contract Start Date	October 2026. Notwithstanding any verbal representations by the parties, or an earlier start date listed in the Standard Contract Form, and only after an award is issued and a final scope of services has been negotiated, the effective start date of a contract shall be the latest of the following dates: the date the Standard Contract Form has been executed by an authorized signatory of the contractor and the procuring department; the date of secretariat or other approval(s) required by law or regulation; or a later date specified in the Standard Contract Form.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

Type of Procurement	Grant
Use of This Procurement by Single or Multiple Departments	This RFR is a single department procurement. All contracts awarded under this RFR will be utilized only by MDAR.
Request for Single or Multiple Contractors	Multiple Contractors
RFR Distribution Method	<p>This RFR has been distributed by MDAR's Farm and Market Newsletter, posted to the program's website at www.mass.gov/agr, and by a distribution list of requested applicants.</p> <p>This RFR has been distributed electronically via COMMBUYS. It is the responsibility of every applicant to check COMMBUYS for any addenda or modifications to an RFR to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to applicants who fail to check for amended RFRs and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Potential Respondents are advised to check the "last change" field on the summary page of RFRs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure they have the most recent RFR files.</p> <p>Respondents may not alter RFR language or any RFR component files. Those submitting a proposal must respond in accordance to the RFR directions and complete only those sections that prompt a Respondent for a response. Modifications to the body of this RFR, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this RFR are prohibited. Any unauthorized alterations will disqualify response.</p>
List of Attachments	<p>A. Application Form</p> <p>B. RFR Required Specifications</p>

ATTACHMENT A

Applicant Information

Legal Name of Agricultural Operation

Legal Structure Sole Proprietor Corporation Partnership LLC Other _____

Primary Contact First Name Last Name

Role/Title

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip

County

Home Phone **Mobile Phone**

E-Mail **Website**

Site address same as above

Site Address

Site City, State, Zip

I am a farmer as identified in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 128. Sec. 1A

Operational Details

YEAR ESTABLISHED	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OWNER (if leased)	YEAR LEASE ENDS
<input type="checkbox"/> Owned <input type="checkbox"/> Leased			
ACREAGE OWNED	ACREAGE LEASED	ACREAGE IN PRODUCTION	
ESTIMATED ANNUAL GROSS SALES			
<input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$24,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 - \$249,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$250,000 - \$499,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$500,000 +			
APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S ANNUAL OPERATING REVENUE IS GENERATED FROM ON-FARM AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION?			
<input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 25% <input type="checkbox"/> 25% - 50% <input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 75 % <input type="checkbox"/> 75 - 100 %			

Other Programs

OPERATION HAS AN AG PRESERVATION RESTRICTION (APR):		PROJECT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED ON APR:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
APR HAS BEEN CONTACTED TO DETERMINE IF PROJECT NEEDS A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL (COA):		PROJECT NEEDS APPROVAL FROM APR:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
YEAR APR WAS RECORDED	NAME ON APR			
APR CONTACT PERSON				
OPERATION HAS A CONSERVATION PLAN FROM NRCS		YEAR CONSERVATION PLAN WAS CREATED		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
NRCS CONTACT PERSON				
PRODUCE REGISTRATION STATUS (if applicable)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Registered <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Will register				
I HAVE APPLIED TO OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT				
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
NAME(S) OF OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS				
PREVIOUS MDAR GRANT FUNDING – (List any MDAR grants received within in the past 5 years)				
Program	Year	Award Amount	Project Summary	Completion Status

Overview of Business

Provide a brief overview (1–2 paragraphs) of your cranberry operation, including the scale of production, how your crop is marketed or distributed, and any key operational characteristics that define your business.

Organizational Capacity & Team Members

Who will be responsible for purchasing and installing the project/equipment?
If contractors will be used, identify them.

	Name	Role	Relevant Experience	Responsibilities
A				
B				
C				

Briefly describe any prior experience completing equipment purchases, infrastructure upgrades, or grant-funded projects on your farm:

General Financing

Explain how you will cover upfront costs and any required cash contribution prior to reimbursement. Include any available bank letters, lines of credit, or other documentation.

Project

PROJECT CATEGORY:	EQUIPMENT/PROJECT:	AMOUNT REQUESTED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Renovation		
<input type="checkbox"/> Enhancement		

RENOVATION

Site Justification & Condition

Explain why this specific bog or acreage is being selected for renovation at this time.

Select all that apply:

- Low or declining yields
- Poor Drainage
- Inefficient Irrigation
- Disease or pest pressure
- Aging vines
- Outdated layout
- Other

Describe the current condition of the bog or acreage and how it is impacting production, efficiency, or environmental performance. Explain why this bog is being prioritized for renovation (if multiple bogs exist), and describe what would happen if the renovation were not completed.

Project Description:

Describe the proposed renovation project including the design and installation and how it will result in a completed bog renovation. Explain how the project follows relevant UMass Cranberry Station Best Management Practices (BMPs) for renovations. (Include any installation, layouts, or plans as attachments)

Project Goals:

List the primary goals of this renovation project.

Goal:

Example: Increase Yield

1

2

3

How it will be achieved:

Example: Replacing aging vines with higher producing variety

Renovation Details:

How many acres do you plan to renovate under this grant program?

What is the current variety of the vines on the acreage to be renovated?

What is the variety of the vines to be planted under this proposed renovation?

Are you renovating any additional acreage outside of the proposed acreage for this grant?

Yes No

If yes, how many acres?

Project Impacts:

Provide the expected impacts of the proposed renovation.

Current yield of acreage to be renovated (barrels/acre):

Projected yield of acreage to be renovated (barrels/acre):

Percent increase:

Estimated lifespan of renovation (years):

Estimated cost per acre of renovation:

Environmental and Operational Impacts (select all that apply):

Improved water use efficiency

Improved water quality

Reduced pest/disease pressure

Reduced input use
(Fertilizer/chemicals)

Improved harvest efficiency

Other: _____

Describe any measurable environmental improvements expected from this project:

Project Timeline

Provide project specific timeline from project start to completion.

Date	Milestone	Completion Date

Project-Specific Permits

Does this project require zoning, site plan approval, wetlands review, or any other discretionary local, state, or federal permit?

Yes No

If yes, list them and say when they will be obtained.

Project-Specific Operation & Maintenance (O&M)

Describe how the renovated bog will be managed and maintained following project completion. Include who will be responsible for ongoing maintenance, any anticipated changes to current management practices, and how the renovation will support long-term productivity, water management, and overall function of the bog.

RENOVATION BUDGET

Maximum per acre is \$25,000 up to \$125,000.

Materials				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1	Vines			
2	Irrigation			
3	Drainage			
4	Sand			
5	Other			
6	Other			
Contractual Costs/Labor (expenses for services performed by someone other than the applicant)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment Rental (Rented equipment required to complete the project)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
Other Costs				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Total Project Costs:				\$
MDAR Request (Maximum of \$25,000 per acre up to \$125,000):				\$
Applicant Cash Contribution:				\$
Applicant In-Kind Contribution:				\$
Total Applicant Contribution:				\$

Quotes must be provided for all budgeted items.

ENHANCEMENT

Project Description

Describe the project you are proposing, including what is to be purchased and installed, how it will be used in your operation, and what part of your operation it will support. For equipment, describe specifically how it will be used during cranberry production, including typical annual uses, production activities supported, number of acres served, and why existing equipment cannot perform the same functions. Explain why the size/capacity of the proposed equipment is appropriate for your operation.

Project Need

Explain why this project is needed at this time. Describe the current system, equipment, or process being used (if applicable), the limitations or challenges you are experiencing, and what would happen if the project were not implemented.

Equipment Details

Existing Equipment		Proposed Equipment	
Manufacturer		Manufacturer	
Model		Model	
Year		Year	
Capacity		Capacity	
Condition		Expected Useful Life	
Annual Maintenance Cost		Estimated Annual Maintenance	
Annual Hours Used		Annual Hours Expected	

Describe the measurable improvements the proposed equipment provides over the existing equipment.

What will happen to the equipment being replaced:

Scrapped
 Traded-in
 Used for parts
 Used for backup
 Other _____

Project Goals

Describe the primary goals of this project.

Goal:

Example: Increase Irrigation Efficiency

- 1
- 2
- 3

How it will be achieved:

Example: Install automated irrigation

Impacts:

Describe the expected impacts of the project, including measurable improvements to production, efficiency, environmental performance, or operational outcomes. Explain how these impacts will be evaluated.

Project Timeline

Provide project specific timeline from project start to completion.

Date	Milestone	Completion Date

Project-Specific Permits

Does this project require zoning, site plan approval, wetlands review, or any other discretionary local, state, or federal permit?

Yes No

If yes, list them and say when they will be obtained.

Project Specific Operation & Maintenance (O&M)

Describe how the project will be maintained, who will maintain it, expected useful life, storage location (for equipment) and confirm any manufacturer warranties included with equipment.

ENHANCEMENT BUDGET:

Materials				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Contractual Costs/Labor (expenses for services performed by someone other than the applicant)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment (Equipment to be purchased under the grant)				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
Equipment Rental (Rented equipment required to complete the project)				
	Description	Rate	Hours	Total Costs
1				
2				
Other Costs				
	Description	Amount	Qty	Total Costs
1				
2				
3				
4				
Total Project Costs:				\$
Applicant Amount (20% minimum):				\$
Eligible Project Costs (80% of Total Project Costs up to \$50,000)				\$

Quotes must be provided for all budgeted items.

Amount Requested:

Enter the total amount of funding you are requesting from MDAR. Please note that MDAR may negotiate the final award amount before a contract is executed. Project costs incurred prior to a fully executed contract are not eligible for reimbursement.

Total Project Costs (from Budget): \$

Amount Requested (Max of 80% of Total Project Costs): \$

Match Requirement (Min of 20% of Total Project Costs): \$

Attestation:

By signing this application, you attest all statements herein are accurate and true. By signing this application, you give permission to have a site visit by MDAR staff, which may be necessary before a funding decision is made. All site visits will be arranged with you in advance.

Signature

Date

Print Name



RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

Revision Date: July 10, 2024

In general, most of the required contractual stipulations are referenced in the *Standard Contract Form and Instructions* and the *Commonwealth Terms and Conditions*. However, the following RFR provisions must appear in all Commonwealth departmental competitive procurements conducted under 801 CMR 21.00.

The terms of *801 CMR 21.00: Procurement of Commodities and Services* are incorporated by reference into this RFR. Words used in this RFR shall have the meanings defined in 801 CMR 21.00. Additional definitions also may be identified in this RFR. Other terms not defined elsewhere in this document may be defined in OSD's [Glossary of Terms](#). Unless otherwise specified in this RFR, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, all measurements must be provided in feet, inches, and pounds and all cost proposals or figures in U.S. currency. All responses must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this RFR.

1. COMMBUYS Market Center. COMMBUYS is the official source of information for this Bid and is publicly accessible at no charge at www.commbuys.com. Information contained in this document and in COMMBUYS, including file attachments, and information contained in the related Bid Questions and Answers (Q&A), are components of the Bid, as referenced in COMMBUYS, and are incorporated into the Bid and any resulting contract.

Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining all information distributed for this Bid via COMMBUYS. Bid Q&A supports Bidder submission of written questions associated with a Bid and publication of official answers.

It is each Bidder's responsibility to check COMMBUYS for:

- Any amendments, addenda, or modifications to this Bid, and
- Any Bid Q&A records related to this Bid.

The Commonwealth accepts no responsibility and will provide no accommodation to Bidders who submit a Quote based on an out-of-date Bid or on information received from a source other than COMMBUYS.

2. COMMBUYS Registration. Bidders may elect to register for a free COMMBUYS Seller account which provides value-added features, including automated email notification associated with postings and modifications to COMMBUYS records. However, to respond to a Bid, Bidders must register and maintain an active COMMBUYS Seller account.

All Bidders submitting a Quote (previously referred to as Response) in response to this Bid (previously referred to as Solicitation) agree that, if awarded a contract: 1) they will maintain an active seller account in COMMBUYS; 2) they will, when directed to do so by the procuring entity, activate and maintain a COMMBUYS-enabled catalog using Commonwealth Commodity Codes; 3) they will comply with all requests by the procuring entity to utilize COMMBUYS for the purposes of conducting all aspects of purchasing and invoicing with the Commonwealth, as added functionality for the COMMBUYS system is activated; and 4) in the event the Commonwealth adopts an alternate e-procurement platform, successful Bidders will be required to utilize such system, as directed by the procuring entity. Commonwealth Commodity Codes are based on the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC).

COMMBUYS uses terminology with which bidders must be familiar to conduct business with the Commonwealth. To view this terminology and to learn more about COMMBUYS, please visit the [Learn about COMMBUYS Resources](#) page on mass.gov.

3. Multiple Quotes. Bidders may not submit Multiple Quotes in response to a Bid unless the RFR authorizes them to do so. If a Bidder submits multiple quotes in response to an RFR that does not authorize multiple responses, only the latest dated quote submitted prior to the bid opening date will be evaluated.

4. Quote Content. Bid specifications for delivery, shipping, billing, and payment will prevail over any proposed Bidder terms entered as part of the Quote, unless otherwise specified in the Bid.

5. Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) Programs. Pursuant to [Executive Order 599](#), the Commonwealth supports the use of diverse and small businesses through the Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) and the Supplier Diversity

RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

Program (SDP). Based on the estimated value of the procurement, one of the above-mentioned programs shall be applicable to this RFR. For more information on the program that applies to this solicitation, see the body of this RFR.

6. Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP)

Program Background. The Massachusetts [Small Business Purchasing Program](#) (SBPP) was established pursuant to [Executive Order 599](#) to increase state contracting opportunities with small businesses having their principal place of business within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Pursuant to the SBPP, it is the intention of the issuing department to award this Small Procurement to one or more SBPP participating business(es) as described below.

SBPP Award Preference. While all businesses, no matter the size or principal place of business, may submit responses to this solicitation, should an SBPP participant respond and meet the best value criteria described in this solicitation, the SBPP participant shall be awarded the contract. The Strategic Sourcing Services Team (SST) will not evaluate submissions from non-SBPP participants unless no SBPP Bidder meets the SSST's best value evaluation criteria.

SBPP Participation Eligibility. To be eligible to participate in this procurement as an SBPP participant, an entity must meet the following criteria, and be marked as an SBPP-registered business in [COMMBUYS](#):

1. Have its principal place of business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;
2. Been in business for at least one year;
3. Employ a combined total of 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees in all locations, or employees work less than a combined total of 26,000 hours per quarter; and
4. Have gross revenues, as reported on appropriate tax forms, of \$15 million or less, based on a three-year average.

Non-profit firms also must be registered as a non-profit or charitable organization with the MA Attorney General's Office and be up to date with all filings required by that office and be tax exempt under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

SBPP Compliance Requirements. It is the responsibility of the Bidder to ensure that their SBPP status is current at the time of submitting a response and throughout the life of any resulting contract. Misrepresentation of SBPP status will result in disqualification from consideration, and may result in debarment, contract termination, and other actions. To learn more about the SBPP, including how to apply, visit the SBPP webpage, <http://www.mass.gov/sbpp>.

Program Resources and Assistance. Bidders and Contractors seeking assistance regarding SBPP may visit the [SBPP Webpage](#), or contact the SBPP Help Desk at sbpp@mass.gov.

7. Supplier Diversity Program (SDP)

Program Background. Pursuant to [Executive Order 599](#), the Commonwealth's [Supplier Diversity Program](#) (SDP) promotes business-to-business relationships between awarded Contractors and diverse businesses and non-profit organizations ("SDP Partners") certified or recognized (see below for more information) by the [Supplier Diversity Office \(SDO\)](#).

All Bidders and Contractors are strongly encouraged to create a profile on the SDO's Supplier Diversity Hub to access the Commonwealth's supplier diversity resources and tools.

Financial Commitment Requirements. All Bidders responding to this solicitation are required to make a significant financial commitment ("SDP Commitment") to partnering with one or more SDO-certified or recognized diverse business enterprise(s) or non-profit organization(s). This SDP Commitment must be expressed as a percentage of contract sales resulting from this solicitation that would be spent with the SDP Partner(s).

After contract award (if any), the Total SDP Commitment shall become a contractual requirement to be met annually on a Massachusetts fiscal year basis (July 1 – June 30) for the duration of the contract. The minimum acceptable Total SDP Commitment in response to this solicitation shall be 1%. Bidders shall be awarded additional evaluation points for higher SDP Commitments.

No contract shall be awarded to a Bidder without an SDP Commitment that meets the requirements stated herein. This requirement extends to all Bidders regardless of their own supplier diversity certification.

Eligible SDP Partner Certification Categories

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SDP Partners must be business enterprises and/or non-profit organizations certified or recognized by the SDO in one or more of the following certification categories:

- Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Minority Non-Profit Organization (M/NPO)
- Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Women Non-Profit Organization (W/NPO)
- Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VBE)
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (SDVOBE)
- Disability-Owned Business Enterprise (DOBE)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Business Enterprise (LBGTBE)

Eligible Types of Business-to-Business Relationships. Bidders and Contractors may engage SDP Partners as follows:

- **Subcontracting**, defined as a partnership in which the SDP partner is involved in the provision of products and/or services to the Commonwealth.
- **Ancillary Products and Services**, defined as a business relationship in which the SDP partner provides products or services that are not directly related to the Contractor's contract with the Commonwealth but may be related to the Contractor's own operational needs. These may include but are not limited to the following examples: professional services (e.g., IT, legal, advertising, HR, accounting etc.), maintenance services (e.g., cleaning, landscaping, tradespersons services, etc.), office expenses (e.g., office supplies, furniture, IT supplies, etc.). Anything declared as a business expense in which a certified vendor is used would qualify.

Other types of business-to-business relationships are not acceptable under this contract. If subcontracting is proposed, it must meet all the subcontracting provisions (if any) listed in this RFR.

Program Flexibility. The SDP encompasses the following provisions to support Bidders in establishing and maintaining sustainable business-to-business relationships meeting their needs:

- SDP Partners are **not** required to be subcontractors.
- SDP Partners are **not** required to be Massachusetts-based businesses.
- SDP Partners **may be changed or added** during the term of the contract, provided the Contractor continues to meet its SDP Commitment.

SDP Plan Form Requirements. All Bidders must complete the SDP Plan Form included in this solicitation and attach it to their bid response. In addition to proposing an SDP Commitment, each Bidder must propose one or more SDP Partner(s) to utilize to meet its SDP Commitment. Certified diverse Bidders may not list their own companies, their subsidiaries, or affiliates as SDP Partners and may not meet their SDP Commitment by spending funds internally or with their own subsidiaries or affiliates.

Bidders may propose SDP Partners that are:

- **Certified or recognized by the SDO:** Such partners appear in the [SDO Directory of Certified Businesses](#) or in the [SBA Veteran Small Business Certification \(VetCert\)](#) directory. After contract award (if any), spending with such partners will contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment.
- **Certified by one of SDO's recognized third-party certification bodies but not yet listed in the SDO Directory of Certified Businesses:** Such partners must be certified in eligible categories by one of SDO's recognized third-party certification bodies, which include the [City of Boston](#), the [Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council \(GNEMSDC\)](#), the [Center for Women & Enterprise \(CWE\)](#), [Disability: IN](#), [National LGBT Chamber of Commerce \(NGLCC\)](#), or the [National Veteran Owned Business Association \(NaVOBA\)](#) but have not yet opted to be listed in the SDO Directory of Certified Businesses. In order to opt into SDO's Directory of Certified Businesses, the SDP partner must follow the applicable expedited instructions on SDO's Apply for Recognition as a Third-Party Certified Business webpage. Self-certification is not acceptable. While Bidders may list such proposed SDP Partners on their SDP Plans, spending with such partners will not contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment unless they apply for and are granted SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition. If proposed SDP Partners do not receive SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition, the Contractor must find alternative SDP Partners to meet the SDP Commitment.
- **Not yet certified or recognized by the SDO or one of SDO's recognized third-party certification bodies:** Such partners must be certified in eligible categories by other third-party certification bodies that are not yet recognized by the SDO, such as another city or state supplier diversity certification office, the [National Minority Supplier Development Council](#), or the [Women Business Enterprise National Council](#), but are not listed in the above-mentioned directories. Self-certification is not acceptable. While Bidders may list such

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proposed SDP Partners on their SDP Plans, spending with such partners will not contribute to meeting the Contractor's SDP Commitment unless they apply for and are granted SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition. If proposed SDP Partners do not receive SDO supplier diversity certification or recognition, the Contractor must find alternative SDP Partners to meet the SDP Commitment.

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure that their proposed SDP Partners obtain such certification or recognition by the SDO after contract award (if any). The issuing department and the SDO will not conduct outreach to proposed SDP Partners to ensure their certification. Furthermore, no guarantee may be made that a proposed SDP Partner will be certified, or regarding the time it may take to process a proposed SDP Partner certification. Contractors may direct partners to the SDO's homepage, www.mass.gov/sdo and the [Certification Self-Assessment Tool](#) for guidance on applying for certification.

It is **desirable** for Bidders to provide a description of supplier diversity businesses practices. Specifically, listing contact information for the individual or unit responsible for establishing and maintaining supplier diversity relationships, and including a written policy for establishing and maintaining supplier diversity relationships.

It also is **desirable** for Bidders to use the SDP Plan Form to describe additional creative initiatives (if any) related to engaging, buying from, and/or collaborating with diverse businesses. Such initiatives may include but not be limited to:

- Serving as a mentor in a mentor-protégé relationship.
- Technical and financial assistance provided to diverse businesses.
- Participation in joint ventures between nondiverse and diverse businesses.
- Voluntary assistance programs by which nondiverse business employees are loaned to diverse businesses or by which diverse business employees are taken into viable business ventures to acquire training and experience in managing business affairs.

Evaluation of SDP Forms. To encourage Bidders to develop substantial supplier diversity initiatives and commitments as measures valuable to the Commonwealth, at least 25% of the total available evaluation points for this bid solicitation shall be allocated to the evaluation of the SDP Plan submissions. Because the purpose of the SDP is to promote business-to-business partnerships, the Bidders' workforce diversity initiatives will not be considered in the evaluation.

SDP Spending Reports. After contract award, Contractors must submit reports at least annually to demonstrate compliance with the agreed-upon SDP Commitment. To submit SDP spending reports using the Hub, Contractors must first create a profile in the Hub. Once registered, awarded contractors must report information such as, but not limited to, SDO or SDO-recognized SDP partner(s), spend with SDO partner(s), and total contract sales. Contractors must follow report submission instructions from the issuing department and the SDO.

SDP Spending Compliance. Only spending with SDP Partners that appear in the [SDO Directory of Certified Businesses](#) or in the [SBA Veteran Small Business Certification \(VetCert\)](#) directory shall be counted toward a Contractor's compliance with their SDP Commitment. Spending with SDP Partners that do not appear in the directories above shall not be counted toward meeting a Contractor's SDP Commitment.

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure they meet their SDP Commitment, and the SDO and the issuing department assume no responsibility for any Contractor's failure to meet its SDP Commitment.

SDP Spending Verification. The SDO and the contracting department reserve the right to contact SDP Partners at any time to request that they attest to the amounts reported to have been paid to them by the Contractor.

Program Resources and Assistance. Contractors seeking assistance in the development of their SDP Plans or identification of potential SDP Partners may visit the SDP webpage, www.mass.gov/sdp, or contact the SDP Help Desk at sdp@mass.gov.

8. Agricultural Products Preference (only applicable if this is a procurement for Agricultural Products). Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006 directs the State Purchasing Agent to grant a preference to products of agriculture grown or produced using locally grown products. Such locally grown or produced products shall be purchased unless the price of the goods exceeds the price of products of agriculture from outside the Commonwealth by more than 10%. For purposes of this preference, products of agriculture are defined to include any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural, or horticultural commodities; the growing and harvesting of forest products; the raising of livestock, including horses; raising of domesticated animals, bees, and/or fur-bearing animals; and any forestry or lumbering operations.

RFR - Required Specifications for Commodities and Services

9. Best Value Selection and Negotiation. The Strategic Sourcing Services Team or SSST may select the response(s) which demonstrates the best value overall, including proposed alternatives that will achieve the procurement goals of the department. The SSST and a selected bidder, or a contractor, may negotiate a change in any element of contract performance or cost identified in the original RFR or the selected bidder's or contractor's response which results in lower costs or a more cost effective or better value than was presented in the selected bidder's or contractor's original response.

10. Bidder Communication. Bidders are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring department or any member of the SSST regarding this RFR except as specified in this RFR, and no other individual Commonwealth employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question or inquiry concerning this RFR. Bidders may contact the contact person for this RFR in the event this RFR is incomplete or the bidder is having trouble obtaining any required attachments electronically through COMMBUYS.

11. Contract Expansion. If additional funds become available during the contract duration period, the department reserves the right to increase the maximum obligation to some or all contracts executed as a result of this RFR or to execute contracts with contractors not funded in the initial selection process, subject to available funding, satisfactory contract performance and service or commodity need.

12. Costs. Costs which are not specifically identified in the bidder's response and accepted by a department as part of a contract will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFR. The Commonwealth will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders responding to this RFR.

13. Electronic Communication/Update of Bidder's/Contractor's Contact Information. It is the responsibility of the prospective bidder and awarded contractor to keep current on COMMBUYS the email address of the bidder's contact person and prospective contract manager, if awarded a contract, and to monitor that email inbox for communications from the SSST, including requests for clarification. The SSST and the Commonwealth assume no responsibility if a prospective bidder's/awarded contractor's designated email address is not current, or if technical problems, including those with the prospective bidder's/awarded contractor's computer, network, or internet service provider (ISP) cause email communications sent to/from the prospective bidder/awarded contractor and the SSST to be lost or rejected by any means including email or spam filtering.

14. Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). All bidders responding to this RFR must agree to participate in the Commonwealth Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) program for receiving payments, unless the bidder is able to provide compelling proof that it would be unduly burdensome. EFT is a benefit to both contractors and the Commonwealth because it ensures fast, safe, and reliable payment directly to contractors and saves both parties the cost of processing checks. Contractors may track and verify payments made electronically through the Comptroller's [Vendor Web system](#). A link to the EFT application may be found on the [OSD Forms](#) page (www.mass.gov/lists/osd-forms). Additional information about EFT is available on the [VendorWeb](#) site (www.mass.gov/osc). Click on MASSfinance.

Successful bidders, upon notification of contract award, will be required to enroll in EFT as a contract requirement by completing and submitting the *Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form* to this department for review, approval, and forwarding to the Office of the Comptroller. If the bidder already is enrolled in the program, it may so indicate in its response. Because the *Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form* contains banking information, this form, and all information contained on this form, shall not be considered a public record and shall not be subject to public disclosure through a public records request.

The requirement to use EFT may be waived by the SSST on a case-by-case basis if participation in the program would be unduly burdensome on the bidder. If a bidder is claiming that this requirement is a hardship or unduly burdensome, the specific reason must be documented in its response. The SSST will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis and communicate the findings to the bidder.

15. Executive Order 509, Establishing Nutrition Standards for Food Purchased and Served by State Agencies. Food purchased and served by state agencies must be in compliance with Executive Order 509, issued in January 2009. Under this Executive Order, all contracts resulting from procurements posted after July 1, 2009, that involve the purchase and provision of food must comply with nutrition guidelines established by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The nutrition guidelines are available at the Department's website: [Tools and Resources for Implementation of Executive Order 509](#).

16. HIPAA: Business Associate Contractual Obligations. Bidders are notified that any department meeting the definition of a Covered Entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) will

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include in the RFR and resulting contract sufficient language establishing the successful bidder's contractual obligations, if any, that the department will require in order for the department to comply with HIPAA and the privacy and security regulations promulgated thereunder (45 CFR Parts 160, 162, and 164) (the Privacy and Security Rules). For example, if the department determines that the successful bidder is a business associate performing functions or activities involving protected health information, as such terms are used in the Privacy and Security Rules, then the department will include in the RFR and resulting contract a sufficient description of business associate's contractual obligations regarding the privacy and security of the protected health information, as listed in 45 CFR 164.314 and 164.504 (e), including, but not limited to, the bidder's obligation to: implement administrative, physical, and technical safeguards that reasonably and appropriately protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the protected health information (in whatever form it is maintained or used, including verbal communications); provide individuals access to their records; and strictly limit use and disclosure of the protected health information for only those purposes approved by the department. Further, the department reserves the right to add any requirement during the course of the contract that it determines it must include in the contract in order for the department to comply with the Privacy and Security Rules. Please see other sections of the RFR for any further HIPAA details, if applicable.

17. Minimum Quote (Bid Response) Duration. Bidders Quotes made in response to this Bid must remain in effect for at least 90 days from the date of quote submission.

18. Prompt Payment Discounts (PPD). All bidders responding to this procurement must agree to offer discounts through participation in the Commonwealth's Prompt Payment Discount (PPD) initiative for receiving early and/or on-time payments, unless the bidder provides compelling proof that it would be unduly burdensome. PPD benefits both contractors and the Commonwealth. Contractors benefit by increased, usable cash flow as a result of fast and efficient payments for commodities or services rendered. Participation in the Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) initiative further maximizes the benefits with payments directed to designated accounts, thus eliminating the impact of check clearance policies and traditional mail lead time or delays. The Commonwealth benefits because contractors reduce the cost of products and services through the applied discount. Payments that are processed electronically may be tracked and verified through the Comptroller's Vendor Web system. The PPD form may be found as an attachment for this Bid on [COMMBUYS](#).

Bidders must submit agreeable terms for Prompt Payment Discount using the PPD form within their proposal, unless otherwise specified by the SSST. The SSST will review, negotiate, or reject the offering as deemed in the best interest of the Commonwealth.

The requirement to use PPD offerings may be waived by the SSST on a case-by-case basis if participation in the program would be unduly burdensome on the bidder. If a bidder is claiming that this requirement is a hardship or unduly burdensome, the specific reason must be documented in or attached to the PPD form.

19. Public Records. All responses and information submitted in response to this RFR are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L., c. 66, s. 10, and to c. 4, s. 7, ss. 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes, including marking by bidders of information as confidential during the quote submission process in COMMBUYS, shall be disregarded.

20. Reasonable Accommodation. Bidders with disabilities or hardships that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of RFR information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to the contact person. Requests for accommodation will be addressed on a case by case basis. A bidder requesting accommodation must submit a written statement which describes the bidder's disability and the requested accommodation to the contact person for the RFR. The SSST reserves the right to reject unreasonable requests.

21. Restriction on the Use of the Commonwealth Seal. Bidders and contractors are not allowed to display the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Seal in their bid package or subsequent marketing materials if they are awarded a contract because use of the coat of arms and the Great Seal of the Commonwealth for advertising or commercial purposes is prohibited by law.

22. Subcontracting Policies. Prior approval of the department is required for any subcontracted service of the contract. Contractors are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Human and social service subcontractors are also required to meet the same state and federal financial and program reporting requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as contractors.

23. Acceptable Forms of Signature

Effective June 15, 2021, for all 1) CTR forms, including the Standard Contract Form, W-9s, Electronic Funds Transfer

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(EFT) forms, ISAs, and other CTR-issued documents and forms, or 2) documents related to state finance and within the statutory area of authority or control of CTR (i.e. contracts, payrolls, and related supporting documentation), CTR will accept signatures executed by an authorized signatory in any of the following ways: 1. Traditional “wet signature” (ink on paper); 2. Electronic signature that is either: a. Hand drawn using a mouse or finger if working from a touch screen device; or Page 2 b. An uploaded picture of the signatory’s hand drawn signature 3. Electronic signatures affixed using a digital tool such as Adobe Sign or DocuSign. If using an electronic signature, the signature must be visible, include the signatory’s name and title, and must be accompanied by a signature date. Please be advised that typed text of a name not generated by a digital tool such as Adobe Sign or DocuSign, even in computer-generated cursive script, or an electronic symbol, are not acceptable forms of electronic signature.