

Application Information

Application Number: Review Date: Team Number:

Applicant Name:

Project Title:

Amount Requested: Matching Amount (if applicable):

Promise Zone:

Notes to AMS:

Evaluation Criteria Scoring Summary

Criteria	Maximum Points	Your Scores*
1. Alignment and Intent	25	0
2. Technical Merit	25	0
3. Achievability	15	0
4. Expertise and Partners	25	0
5. Fiscal Plan and Resources	10	0
Sub-Total	100	0
<i>Promise Zone Priority Points</i>	0	0
Total	105	0

*Note that the scores in this column autopopulate from your scores for each evaluation criteria in cells L40, L65, L90, L115, and L141 of this worksheet. Additionally, the *Promise Zone Priority Points* are automatically assigned for applications designated Promise Zone Projects as indicated in cell C11.

Evaluation Criteria

Alignment and Intent (25 Points):

1) The extent to which the application provides a clear and concise description of the specific issue, problem, or need and objectives for the project.

2) The extent to which the project increases domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products and develops new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets, by:

a. Developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of:

FMPP-domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

LFPP-local and regional food businesses (including those that are not direct producer-to-consumer markets) that process, distribute, aggregate, or store locally or regionally produced food products.

3) The extent to which the applicant identifies the intended beneficiaries and how they will benefit, including the number of beneficiaries.

Rating		Scale
Excellent	No deficiencies. Strong, convincing justification. Contains a concise, well-conceived problem/issue statement. The objectives are precise, attainable, and meet the purpose of the grant program and will significantly benefit stakeholders.	21 - 25
Very Good	Slight deficiencies. Convincing justification. Contains a very good problem/issue statement. The objectives fit the intent of the grant program and impact the intended beneficiaries.	15 - 20
Good	Minor deficiencies. Adequate justification and problem/issue statement. The objectives generally align with the purpose of the grant program, but there is room for improvement in the level of detail provided. Project has the potential for successfully benefitting the community/region and the intended beneficiaries.	8 - 14
Fair	Several deficiencies in basic aspects of the project. Includes a justification and problem/issue statement but could have been better stated. The ideas are not well-developed and may not be feasible to support a successful project or significantly impact the beneficiaries.	1-7
Poor	Major deficiencies in one or more aspects of the project. Fails to make a case for the project. The project does not fit the intent of the grant program. Required section or details are missing.	0

Reviewer Raw Score:

Reviewer Notes

Enter some notes to justify your score for the evaluation criteria, which will be used during your team's consensus review discussion.

Evaluation Criteria

Technical Merit (25 Points):

- 1) The extent to which the application presents a clear, well-conceived, and suitable overall methodology for fulfilling the goals and objectives of the proposed project.
- 2) The extent to which the application presents a realistic schedule for implementing the proposed project during the award project period.
- 3) If the project or entity was previously funded, the extent to which the previous lessons learned are incorporated into the proposed project.

Rating		Scale
Excellent	No deficiencies. Clear, well-described, focused, feasible plan and methodology with proper resources. The methodology is suitable and feasible. A clear plan is articulated, including a clear timeline to complete all objectives. If the work was previously funded by FMLFPP or another grant program, the currently-proposed project builds off past success and lessons learned in order to successfully meet goals.	21 - 25
Very Good	Slight deficiencies, but overall a solid project. Project is feasible, personnel and partnerships are appropriate, and timeframe is doable. If the work was previously funded by FMLFPP or another grant program, the currently-proposed project builds off past success and lessons learned in order to successfully meet its goals.	15 - 20
Good	Minor deficiencies. Would benefit from more detail or a stronger focus. The project's work plan/approach generally outlines the applicant's goals and intent, but there is room for improvement as far as specificity of the work and/or the timeline. If the work was previously funded by FMLFPP or another grant program, the currently-proposed project somewhat builds off past success and lessons learned.	8 - 14
Fair	Several deficiencies. Omits discussion of one or more relevant aspects of the work plan, or personnel. If the work was previously funded by FMLFPP or another USDA grant, the currently-proposed project does nothing to build off past success and lessons learned.	1 - 7
Poor	Major deficiencies. Vague and confusing work plan. Unclear who is responsible for the project. Timeframe difficult to understand, unrealistic or not discussed. Required section or details are missing.	0

Reviewer Raw Score:

Reviewer Notes

Enter some notes to justify your score for the evaluation criteria, which will be used during your team's consensus review discussion.

Evaluation Criteria

Achievability (15 Points):
 1) The extent to which the Outcomes and Indicator(s) is/are feasible for the scale and scope of the project including:
 a. How indicator numbers were derived, with a clear means to collect feedback to evaluate and achieve each relevant Outcome indicator;
 b. The anticipated key factors that are predicted to contribute to and restrict progress toward the applicable indicators, including action steps for addressing identified restricting factors.
 2) The extent to which the proposed project can be easily adaptable to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems.
 3) The extent to which the applicant provides a comprehensive plan to disseminate the project's results (both positive and negative) electronically and in person to target audiences, stakeholders, and interested parties.

Rating		Scale
Excellent	No deficiencies. The proposed project is extremely-likely to succeed based on its goals, objectives, and selected performance measures. The applicant has an exceptionally-detailed plan to evaluate the work and collect feedback to achieve each relevant objective. Based on the proposal, the work is easily adaptable to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems. The challenges discussed are realistic and the strategies to address them appear well-defined and practical. Outcomes and indicator(s) are appropriate for the scale and scope of the project.	12 - 15
Very Good	Slight deficiencies. The proposed project is likely to succeed based on its goals, objectives, and selected performance measures. The applicant has a solid plan to evaluate the work and collect feedback to achieve each relevant outcome Indicator (s). Based on the proposal, the work is adaptable to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems. The challenges discussed are realistic and the strategies to address them are adequate. Outcomes and indicator(s) are mostly appropriate for the scale and scope of the project.	8 - 11
Good	Minor deficiencies. The proposed project may succeed, but it is difficult to tell to what degree. The applicant's evaluation plan needs improvement. It is not clear how the work is adaptable to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems. The challenges discussed may be realistic and the strategies to address them relevant. The applicant could improve their plan to disseminate results of their work. The applicant could strengthen outcomes and indicator(s).	4 - 7
Fair	Several deficiencies. The proposed project is unlikely to succeed and the work has been done before. There are few details regarding an evaluation plan and the work is not adaptable to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems. The challenges discussed are not realistic and the strategies to address them may not be adequate. The applicant does not have a clear plan to disseminate results, their outcomes and indicator(s) are few or are unclear.	1 - 3
Poor	Major deficiencies. The proposed project cannot fulfill its goals, objectives, and selected performance measures and the work is unoriginal. Required information and details are missing.	0

Raw Score:

Reviewer Notes

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Evaluation Criteria

Expertise and Partners (25 Points):
 1) The extent to which the proposed project represents a substantial and effective diverse array of relevant partnerships and collaborations to accomplish the project's goals and objectives and meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries, including:
 a. Commitment from the key staff demonstrated through Letters of Commitment from Partner and Collaborator Organizations;
 b. The key staff who will be responsible for managing the projects and the individuals (name and title) who comprise the Project Team;
 c. The expertise and experience of the Project Team necessary to successfully manage and implement the proposed project.
 2) The extent to which the application describes plans for coordination, communication, data sharing and reporting among members of the Project Team and stakeholder groups, both internal applicant personnel and external partners and collaborators.
 3) The extent to which the application describes how the project, and its partnerships and collaborations, will be sustained beyond the project's period of performance (without grant funds).

Rating		Scale
Excellent	No deficiencies. The applicant has clearly articulated the project's management plan and partnerships. The project's key participants and cooperative linkages are diverse and well-qualified to work on local and regional agricultural activities and their past performance illustrates that they are capable of fulfilling their obligations. Partners are actively engaged in the project and have a vested interest in helping the applicant fulfill the project's activities and outcomes. All participants are actively committed to communicating the results of the project to ensure success beyond the life of the grant.	21 - 25
Very Good	Slight deficiencies. The applicant has articulated the project's management plan and partnerships. The project's key participants and cooperative linkages are mostly diverse and qualified to work on local and regional agricultural activities and they are capable of fulfilling their obligations. Partners are engaged in the project and have an interest in the applicant fulfilling the project's activities and outcomes. Participants are committed to communicating the results of the project to help sustain success beyond the life of the grant.	15 - 20
Good	Minor deficiencies. The management plan and partnerships are not extraordinary and the diversity and qualifications of key participants and cooperative linkages could be strengthened. Partnerships are mentioned, tangential and therefore not wholly engaged in the project and its not clear what role they will play. There is no clear indication that the partners will help communicate the project results to help sustain the project beyond the life of the grant.	8 - 14
Fair	Several deficiencies. The management plan and partnerships are severely lacking, or the qualifications of key participants and cooperative linkages are insufficient. There are few partnerships and if provided at all, are tangential or not included in the work plan/ approach. There is little to no plan to communicate the project results and there seems to be little interest in sustaining the project beyond the life of the grant.	1 - 7
Poor	Major deficiencies. There is no management plan and no mention of partnerships or cooperative linkages. There is no plan to communicate the project results and no mention of sustaining the project beyond the life of the grant. Required information and details are missing.	0

Reviewer Raw Score:

Reviewer Notes

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Evaluation Criteria

Fiscal Plan and Resources (10 Points):
 1) The extent to which the application Budget Narrative/justification provides a clear, detailed description for each budget line item, and:
 a. Budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project
 b. Budget relates logically to the Project Narrative describing the project.
 2) The extent to which the application provides evidence that critical resources and infrastructure are currently in-place that are necessary for the initiation and completion of the proposed project.
For LFPP Projects -The extent to which the applicant demonstrates its partners' or collaborators' contribution of non-Federal cash resources or in-kind contributions are available and obtainable for the project as evidenced through the submitted Matching Funds and Letters of Match Verification.

Rating		Scale
Excellent	No deficiencies. Budget clearly correlates to each project objective and accounts for all proposed activities. All items are allowed and reasonable. The overall budget is fully appropriate for the scope of the project. Stated infrastructure competently exists and will allow the project to start and be completed on solid footing, and will even sustain the project beyond the grant's performance period. For LFPP Projects: Letters of matching funds verify funding sources and demonstrate how valuations were established.	7 - 10
Very Good	Slight deficiencies. Budget largely correlates to each of the project objectives and accounts for all major proposed activities and most minor proposed activities. All major items and most minor items are allowed and reasonable. The overall budget is appropriate for the scope of the project. Stated infrastructure exists and will allow the project to start on solid footing. For LFPP Projects: Letters of matching funds verify most, if not all funding sources and demonstrate how valuations were established.	5 - 7
Good	Minor deficiencies. Budget may not consistently correlate to each project objective but project goals will likely be met. Most major and minor items are allowable and reasonable. The overall budget is generally appropriate for the scope of the project. Stated infrastructure is appropriate, but may not be sufficient to solidly start/complete the project. For LFPP projects: Letters of matching funds verify most, if not all funding sources and demonstrate how valuations were established.	3 - 5
Fair	Several deficiencies. Budget does not correlate well to the project. Some major and multiple minor items are not allowable and/or reasonable. The overall budget request may be over or underestimated for the scope of the project. Stated infrastructure are inadequate to insure on-time start of the project and weaken chances of success. For LFPP projects: Letters of matching funds cannot be clearly verified sources or demonstrate how valuations were established.	1 - 2
Poor	Major deficiencies. Many serious shortcomings in the budget. Many items are clearly not allowable and/or reasonable. There is no correlation between the budget and the project objectives. The overall budget request is significantly either too large or too small for the scope of the project. Required information and details are missing.	0

Reviewer Raw Score:

Reviewer Notes

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According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0240 The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.