



MARBIDCO

**MARBIDCO Matching Grant to the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Grant Program**  
**Application Form**

*“Helping to Finance Maryland’s Food and Fiber Future”*

The **Maryland Department of Agriculture** has received \$3.8 million from USDA to offer grants through the **Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program**. Grant funds will support expanded capacity for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry. MDA will offer two grants:

- **Equipment-Only Grants** range from \$10,000 up to \$100,000; This fixed price grant can only fund equipment and should fit the scope and goals of the RFSI program. No match is required for Equipment-Only Grants.
- **Infrastructure Grants** range from \$100,000 up to \$3 million. This grant can fund capital investments such as construction, equipment (e.g. delivery vehicles, frozen or refrigerated storage, value-added food processing equipment, or other equipment for middle-of-the food supply chain activities) and building renovations. Infrastructure Grants can also fund facility design or engineering, staff time, modernizing systems (e.g. tracking, storage, information technology, etc.), plan development (e.g. Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point plan), and market development. A match is required for Infrastructure Grants and starts at 50% of the total project cost. However, if the main applicant qualifies as underserved, the match requirement will be reduced to 25% of the total project cost.

**MARBIDCO is partnering with MDA** to offer a grant that can be used as part of the non-federal match requirement for infrastructure grants.

- For historically underserved farmers, ranchers or other businesses that qualify under SBA categories of small, disadvantaged business, women-owned small business, or veteran-owned small business – a grant of up to 100% match, up to a maximum of **\$50,000**.
- For all other eligible applicants – a grants of up to 50% match, up to a maximum of **\$50,000**, with this exception: If a unit of local government, rural regional council, or county school system is the applicant, the maximum award could be up to **\$400,000**.

**Eligible applicants for MARBIDCO’s matching grant include:**

- An agricultural marketing group (an LLC), or legally organized farm cooperative including at least **4** Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Providers.
- A wholesale distributor that is selling to at least one institution and aggregating from at least **4** Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Providers.
- Public entity (such as a county government, municipality, community college, university, county school system or rural regional council), either purchasing from or facilitating the aggregation from at least **4** Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Providers.
- Eligible Projects must meet all MDA RFSI application requirements.

Projects that receive tentative approval from MARBIDCO will receive a match verification letter to be submitted with the MDA application. **Only those applicants that are approved by USDA for the infrastructure grant and who demonstrate to MARBIDCO that they will be selling products to wholesale or institutional buyers will receive funding.** (The deadline for receipt of purchase commitment letters is no later than April 30, 2024.)

## **Institutional and Wholesale Buyers**

An institutional buyer could include a state or local government agency (including a correctional institution), school system, hospital, or chain of grocery stores. A wholesale buyer is a food distributor that has an established track record of selling food products to the institutions generally described above. The Maryland Department of Agriculture provides a list (page 42) of some institutional buyers in its publication, **Maryland's Best Expo Directory**. Information can be found at [https://marylandsbest.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/MBestExpoDirectory\\_web3-20.pdf](https://marylandsbest.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/MBestExpoDirectory_web3-20.pdf).

Some examples include:

- Public schools
- University system
- State agencies
- Hospitals
- Prisons
- Wholesale distributors that sell to an institutional buyer

## **Application Submission**

**MARBIDCO's RFSI matching grant application is due Thursday, February 29, 2024**. Send completed applications and all attachments to MARBIDCO RFSI Matching Grant Program, Sierra Criste, 1410 Forest Drive, Suite 21, Annapolis, MD 21403 or [scriste@marbidco.org](mailto:scriste@marbidco.org).

For more information on MARBIDCO's matching grant, contact Sierra Criste, at [scriste@marbidco.org](mailto:scriste@marbidco.org) or 410-267-6807.

For more information about MDA's RFSI Program and the application process, please contact Karen Fedor at [rfsi.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:rfsi.mda@maryland.gov) or 410-841-5773. MDA's RFSI application is due by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, March 15.

# **MARBIDCO Resilient Food System Infrastructure Matching Grant Program**

## **Applicant Information**

### **1) Legal Name of Entity Applying for Grant:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

### **2) Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

### **3) Project Manager Name:**

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Years of Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

### **4) Applicant Entity Type:**

Agricultural Marketing Association

Farm Cooperative

#### **Business Structure of Agriculture Marketing Association or Farm Cooperative:**

Year & State Established/Incorporated: \_\_\_\_\_

Proprietorship \_\_\_\_\_ Corporation \_\_\_\_\_ Partnership \_\_\_\_\_ LLC \_\_\_\_\_

County Government

Municipality

Regional Council

Community College

University

County School System

**Project Information**

**5) Physical Location of the Project:**

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**6) Requested MDA RFSI Grant Funds: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**7) Requested MARBIDCO Matching Grant Funds: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**8) Other Matching Funds: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**9) Sources and Uses of Funding:**

| <b>Use of Funds</b> | <b>Amount (\$)</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
|                     |                    |
|                     |                    |
|                     |                    |
|                     |                    |
|                     |                    |

| <b>Source of Funds</b> | <b>Amount (\$)</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------|
|                        |                    |
|                        |                    |
|                        |                    |
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|                        |                    |

**10) Farmer Participation. As a separate attachment, for each farmer participating in the project, provide the following information (Must include at least 4 Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Providers).**

- Name
- Business Address
- County
- Telephone and Email address
- Are they a Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Provider. (as determined by MDA)
- GAP Certified: YES/NO
- Number of years farming
- Size of Farm
- Tillable Acres
- Forage Acres
- Agricultural Products Grown (i.e. Vegetables/Table Crops, Grain/row crops, Fruits/Orchard, Livestock)
- 2023 Production volume
- 2024 Projected volume

**11) Brief Description of the Project:**

**12) Required Submission Item(s):**

**A) For Agricultural Marketing Associations and Farm Cooperatives:** Letter of Commitment or Purchase Order or other evidence from Institution or Wholesale buyer to purchase agricultural product from applicant in the 2024 season. If the Institution or Wholesale buyer is a current customer, the letter should indicate if they intend to purchase additional volume.

**B) For Public Sector applicants:** Letter of Commitment to purchase directly from at least 4 Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Providers or Letter of Commitment from Wholesaler or Institutional Buyer to purchase from the project that includes at least 4 Certified Local Farm and Certified Chesapeake Invasive Species Providers.

**These required submission items must be submitted to MARBIDCO by 11:59 PM on Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

**13) Copy of the completed MDA RFSI application. Applications that do not include a copy of the completed MDA RFSI application will not be considered.**

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**DECLARATIONS**

If answering “yes” to any of these questions, please provide an explanation on a separate sheet and attach.

|   |           |          |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Is the business currently involved in bankruptcy?                                   | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| Does the business or any of the management personnel owe any taxes for prior years? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| Have any managers or owners received a felony conviction?                           | Yes _____ | No _____ |

Certain personal information requested by MARBIDCO is necessary in determining your eligibility. Failure to disclose this information may result in the denial of these benefits or services. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by the Maryland Public Information Act, General Provisions Article, Sections 4-101 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (“PIA”)<sup>1</sup>. This information will be disclosed to appropriate MARBIDCO staff and committees, public officials, and MARBIDCO’s auditors for purposes directly connected with approval of the proposed financing and administration of the program for which its use is intended. Such

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<sup>1</sup> The PIA protects certain confidential information from disclosure. Please note that information is not confidential if the information (1) was already known to MARBIDCO, (2) is or later comes into the public domain through no fault of MARBIDCO, (3) is independently developed by MARBIDCO, or (4) comes to MARBIDCO from a third-party which is not in violation of any obligation of confidentiality to Applicant or MARBIDCO.

information can also be shared with State, federal, or local government agencies, and any financial assistance that you receive from MARBIDCO is subject to public disclosure. Proprietary business information is generally not disclosable to the General Public under the Maryland Public Information Act\*.

You authorize MARBIDCO to obtain any additional information, including financial information, concerning the applicant from any source which MARBIDCO reasonably requires in order to determine whether to make the requested grant, including credit histories, credit reports, and credit scores.

**Certifications:**

1. I/we have the right to submit this application.

2. All information in this application and any attachments and addendums is true and complete to the best of my/our knowledge, information, and belief and is submitted so that MARBIDCO and its committee can decide whether to offer financial assistance.

3. I/we agree not to engage in employment practices which deny equal employment rights to persons by reason of (i) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed or national origin; (ii) sex or age, except when sex or age constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification; or (iii) physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability. I/we also agree to comply with the State's policy on maintaining a drug and alcohol-free workplace.

4. I/we hereby authorize all involved in the financing of this project to exchange freely without further authorization and consent, any and all information, including financial information, and reports provided in connection with this application.

Signatures provided by facsimile or other electronic means, for example, and not by way of limitation, in Adobe .PDF sent by electronic mail, shall be deemed to be original signatures.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_