

# REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM

## NORTHEAST APPLICATION

USDA's announcement of the [Regional Food Business Center Program](#) has been met with a large amount of interest and excitement. The New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets is happy to share that we are leading a collaboration to develop a comprehensive application for a Northeast center. We are currently collaborating with other state departments of agriculture, land grant universities and other key partners to identify a broad Northeast region and envision a center that can serve a wide range of farm and food businesses and meet the long-term goals of the region.

The [National Association of State Departments of Agriculture \(NASDA\) Foundation](#) will serve as the lead applicant on behalf of partners in the region. Those partners will include [Center for Regional Economic Advancement at Cornell University \(CREA\)](#).

If awarded, a steering committee representing the partners and stakeholders in the region will be assembled to guide the Center and its work, including identifying the teams that will make funding determination through the various funding streams. Input will be solicited from stakeholders to inform the application. Additional stakeholder outreach will occur if the application is awarded.

The application will describe how a Northeast Center will address the three areas USDA requests: Coordination, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building. The application will describe that CREA and other partners will have roles in addressing the coordination piece and that the other two requirements will be met through three funding streams: 1) Technical Assistance Grants, 2) Business Builder Grants (up to \$100,000 per entity, as per the RFP), and 3) Market Access Grants.

We are focused on a truly regional center to support the needs of the Northeast food and agriculture sectors in order to have lasting impacts on the food system.

### **NASDA Role**

- Lead applicant to serve as the grant administrator and provide fiduciary responsibility to USDA.
- Once financial awards are determined, provide contracting with awardees, process financial claims.
- Provide grant monitoring and reporting to USDA
- Convene and Chair Steering Committee

### **CREA Role**

- Serve as public-facing entity for the Northeast Center
- Provide coordination for the Center—assist with strategic planning, coordinating supply chain stakeholders, coordinate with USDA and collaborate with Regional Food Centers
- Provide a landing page for the Center where funding opportunities and other resources will be available.