



## Agriculture and Markets

### FreshConnect CSA for SNAP Grant Program Round 1 – Questions and Answers August 11, 2023

*These questions and answers have been edited for clarity, brevity, and anonymity. Only questions specific to this grant program have been included. Questions about accessing and interfacing with the New York State Grants Gateway system should be directed to:*

[grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov)

1. **Question:** *Where and how in the application's budget should the partial reimbursement for CSA shares be listed?*

Answer: The funds used for the reimbursement of CSA share cost should be listed under Contractual.

2. **Question:** *Is there a way to see the application questions prior to entering Grants Gateway and selecting the application package?*

Answer: The Program Specific Questions for this application in Grants Gateway are:

- How will your project work plan expand SNAP participant's access to NY-grown CSA shares by reducing the cost to the participant while providing the total value to the producer providing the CSA share
- Describe your budget in detail - between \$10,000- \$50,000. Provide a narrative for expenses that are eligible and reasonable.
- Identify the producer(s) which run a CSA program that accepts SNAP as payment that your organization is planning to partner with for this project.

3. **Question:** *Will awardees need to meet MWBE goals for this grant opportunity?*

Answer: While we encourage the utilization of MWBE entities, there are no MWBE goals set for this specific grant opportunity.

4. **Question:** *Can an applicant identify their own CSA program?*

Answer: No. The applicant for this grant is intended to be a separate organization that is partnering with an operational CSA that already accepts SNAP. These grant funds are intended to be used only for partial reimbursement of the reduced-cost CSA share purchases by SNAP customers and the allowance for administrative expenses is not intended to be used to subsidize the operational costs of running the CSA program itself.

5. **Question:** *Does the applicant need to accept SNAP as payment or just the CSA producer?*

Answer: Only the CSA producer needs to be capable of accepting SNAP for CSA payments. The applicant organization is the intermediary for state funded reimbursement to the CSA operator for the balance of a reduced-cost CSA share purchase by SNAP customers.

6. **Question:** *Can a CSA operator be identified by multiple applicants/applications for this grant?*

Answer: A CSA operator can be targeted by multiple applicants/applications but only one of those applications can be selected because as soon as it is awarded funds it would be ineligible for further state funding for that exact same purpose under section 4D of the RFA document for this grant which identifies "Costs supported in whole, or in part, by other State or federal funding" as ineligible. So, if the same CSA were targeted by two different eligible applicant entities, the one that would be awarded would be decided by which application arrived first AND is determined eligible.

7. **Question:** *How do the SNAP participants pay for the remaining cost of the CSA share?*

Answer: The CSA's SNAP customers do not pay the full cost of the CSA share. The CSA operator is agreeing to accept a pre-defined reduced-cost SNAP payment for the CSA share which will be reimbursed on a regular basis by the grant awardee organization, based on regular SNAP transaction reports provided by the CSA operator.

8. **Question:** *If the SNAP participant is a shareholder under the FreshConnect CSA program, is their current SNAP benefit reduced?*

Answer: Because federal SNAP rules do not allow for paying all up-front like a typical CSA share, the SNAP customer is purchasing the CSA share at the time of its pickup/delivery. The only impact this grant has on a SNAP customer's benefits is the amount of their benefits they are choosing to spend for each individual reduced-cost CSA share.

9. **Question:** *Can a farm producer that is starting a new CSA be targeted for this grant?*

Answer: No. Only CSAs that are already operating, and already accept SNAP benefits as a form of payment will be considered eligible.

10. **Question:** *Can an organization with fiscal sponsorship apply for this grant?*

Answer: Any applicant organization for this grant is effectively acting as the fiscal sponsor for the CSA operator's participation in this program.

11. **Question:** *How does payment for the organization and farmer work for this grant?*

Answer: The CSA operator agrees to accept a pre-defined reduced-cost CSA share payment from SNAP-paying customers, and then provides their SNAP transaction reports to the awarded organization on a regular basis to claim the balance of funds for the full price of a CSA share. The grant awardee will directly reimburse the CSA operator for the balance of the cost using the State grant funding.

12. **Question:** *Where can I view the recording of the Public Information webinar about this grant opportunity?*

Answer: The recorded informational webinar for this grant can be found on its funding opportunities page on our website: [FreshConnect CSA for SNAP - Funding Opportunity](#)

13. **Question:** *Can we include marketing and outreach to SNAP households as part of direct program costs?*

Answer: No. Any funds not being used to directly reimburse CSA share costs must be part of the 20% admin allowance.

14. **Question:** *Are SNAP recipients required to pay for 50% of the cost with their SNAP dollars?*

Answer: Yes. SNAP CSA customers will be expected to pay at least 50% of the cost of the CSA share at the time they pick it up. The percentage will vary based on the application for funds requested and specified grant fund contribution.

15. **Question:** *Can we combine this funding with other grant funding to further subsidize the cost of the CSA?*

Answer: In the RFA document for this grant, we stipulate that applications for this grant cannot apply for funding that is available through other State or Federal sources - so if there is additional grant funding that is already contributing towards the cost of CSA shares from the targeted producer, it is possible we may not find the application eligible.

16. **Question:** *Do multi-farm CSAs qualify for this grant?*

Answer: Multi-farm CSA are an acceptable target for applications for this grant. The CSA operator needs to be sourcing the food products directly from local farms and producers in partnership agreement with the CSA – not through a food hub, auction house, retail markets, wholesale purchases, or other indirect means.