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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS-TM-10-0074; TM-10-01]

#### Solicitation of Applications for the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)

**AGENCY:** Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announces a solicitation of applications for competitive grant funds for fiscal year (FY) 2011, subject to final appropriation action by Congress, which would enable States to explore new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the U.S. marketing system. Eligible applicants include State departments of agriculture, State agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate State Agencies. Applicants are encouraged to involve industry groups, academia, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders in developing proposals and conducting projects. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the information collection requirements have been previously approved by OMB under 0581-0240, Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP).

Historically, Congress has appropriated funding for this program. This notice is being issued prior to passage of a FY 2011 Appropriations Act, which may or may not provide an appropriation for this program, to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing, submit applications, and give AMS time to process applications within the current fiscal year.

**DATES:** Proposals will be accepted through February 17, 2011.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit proposals and other required documents to: FSMIP Staff Officer, Transportation and Marketing Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street, NW., Room 3002-South Tower, Washington, DC 20036; telephone (202) 694-4002; e-mail [janise.zygmont@ams.usda.gov](mailto:janise.zygmont@ams.usda.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Janise Zygmont, FSMIP Staff Officer; telephone (202) 694-4002; fax (202) 694-5950; e-mail [janise.zygmont@ams.usda.gov](mailto:janise.zygmont@ams.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** FSMIP is authorized under Section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627). FSMIP provides matching grants on a competitive basis to enable States to explore new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the U.S. marketing system. Eligible applicants include State departments of agriculture, State agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate State Agencies. Other organizations interested in participating in this program should contact their State Department of Agriculture's Marketing Division. State agencies specifically named under the authorizing legislation should assume the lead role in FSMIP projects, and use cooperative or contractual linkages with other agencies, universities, institutions, and producer, industry or community-based organizations as appropriate. Multi-State projects are encouraged. In such projects, one State assumes the coordinating role, using appropriate cooperative arrangements with the other State agencies and entities involved in the project.

Proposals must be accompanied by completed Standard Forms (SF) 424 and 424A. AMS will not approve the use of FSMIP funds for advertising or, with limited exceptions, for the purchase of equipment. Detailed program guidelines may be obtained from the contact listed above, and are available at the FSMIP Web site: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/FSMIP>.

#### Background

FSMIP funds a wide range of applied research projects that address barriers, challenges, and opportunities in marketing, transportation, and

distribution of U.S. food and agricultural products domestically and internationally.

Eligible agricultural categories include livestock, livestock products, food and feed crops, fish and shellfish, horticulture, viticulture, apiary, and forest products and processed or manufactured products derived from such commodities. Reflecting the growing diversity of U.S. agriculture, in recent years, FSMIP has funded projects dealing with nutraceuticals, bioenergy, compost and products made from agricultural residue.

Proposals may deal with barriers, challenges, or opportunities manifesting at any stage of the marketing chain including direct, wholesale, and retail. Proposals may involve small, medium, or large scale agricultural entities but should potentially benefit multiple producers or agribusinesses. Proprietary proposals that benefit one business or individual will not be considered.

Proposals that address issues of importance at the State, Multi-State or national level are appropriate for FSMIP. FSMIP also seeks unique proposals on a smaller scale that may serve as pilot projects or case studies useful as a model for other States. Of particular interest are proposals that reflect a collaborative approach among the States, academia, the farm sector and other appropriate entities and stakeholders. FSMIP's enabling legislation authorizes projects to:

- Determine the best methods for processing, preparing for market, packing, handling, transporting, storing, distributing, and marketing agricultural products.
- Determine the costs of marketing agricultural products in their various forms and through various channels.
- Assist in the development of more efficient marketing methods, practices, and facilities to bring about more efficient and orderly marketing, and reduce the price spread between the producer and the consumer.
- Develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade, and packaging in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices.
- Eliminate artificial barriers to the free movement of agricultural products in commercial channels.
- Foster new/expanded domestic/foreign markets and new/expanded uses of agricultural products.

- Collect and disseminate marketing information to anticipate and meet consumer requirements, maintain farm income, and balance production and utilization.

All proposals which fall within the FSMIP guidelines will be considered. FSMIP encourages States to submit proposals that address the following objectives:

- Creating wealth in rural communities through the development of local and regional food systems and value-added agriculture.
- Developing direct marketing opportunities for producers, or producer groups.

#### Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the FSMIP information collection requirements were previously approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and were assigned OMB control number 0581-0240.

AMS is committed to compliance with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA), which requires Government agencies in general to provide the public with the option of submitted information or transacting business electronically to the maximum extent possible.

#### How To Submit Proposals and Applications

Applicants have the option of submitting FSMIP applications electronically through the Federal grants Web site, instead of mailing hard copy documents. Applicants considering the electronic application option are strongly urged to familiarize themselves with the Federal grants Web site well before the application deadline and to begin the application process before the deadline. Additional details about the FSMIP application process for all applicants are available at the FSMIP Web site: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/FSMIP>.

FSMIP is listed in the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance" under number 10.156 and subject agencies must adhere to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bars discrimination in all federally assisted programs.

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1621-1627.

Dated: December 16, 2010.

#### David R. Shipman,

*Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-02-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food and Nutrition Service

#### Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request—Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Store Applications, Forms FNS-252, 252-E, 252-R, 252-2, and 252-C

**AGENCY:** Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on this proposed information collection. This collection is a revision of a currently approved collection in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and concerns Retail Store Applications (Forms FNS-252; FNS-252-E; and FNS-252-R).

**DATES:** Written comments must be received on or before February 22, 2011 to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments may be sent to: Ronald Ward, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 426, Alexandria, VA 22302. Comments may also be submitted via fax to the attention of Ronald Ward at (703) 305-1863 or via e-mail to: [BRDHQ-WEB@fns.usda.gov](mailto:BRDHQ-WEB@fns.usda.gov). Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.

All written comments will be open for public inspection at the office of the Food and Nutrition Service during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday) at 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 426, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of this information collection should be directed to Ronald Ward at [BRDHQ-WEB@fns.usda.gov](mailto:BRDHQ-WEB@fns.usda.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—Store Applications.

*Form Number:* FNS-252, 252-E, 252-R, 252-2, and 252-C.

*OMB Number:* 0584-0008 and 0584-0553.

*Expiration Date:* July 31, 2011.

*Type of Request:* Revision of a currently approved collection of information.

*Abstract:* Section 9(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, (the Act) (7 U.S.C. 2018(a)) requires that FNS determine the eligibility of retail food stores and certain food service organizations to accept SNAP benefits and to monitor them for compliance and continued eligibility.

Part of FNS' responsibility is to accept applications from retail food stores that wish to participate in SNAP, review the applications in order to determine whether or not applicants meet eligibility requirements, and make determinations whether to grant or deny authorization to accept SNAP benefits. There are currently four application forms designed for that purpose approved under the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) No. 0584-0008—the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Application for Stores, Form FNS-252 and FNS-252-E (paper and online version, respectively); the Meal Service Application, Form FNS-252-2; and the Corporate Supplemental Application, Form FNS-252-C used for individual (chain) stores under a corporation. FNS is also responsible for reviewing retail food store applications at least once every five years to ensure that each firm is under the same ownership and continues to meet eligibility guidelines. In order to accomplish this regulatory requirement, FNS collects information from retail food stores using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Application for Stores—Reauthorization, Form FNS-252-R. This information collection is approved under OMB No. 0584-0553. In our previous submission to OMB, FNS received approval to merge this information collection with OMB No. 0584-0008, which FNS intends to do at this time.