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Section 1: The SMALL SOCIALLY-DISADVANTAGED PRODUCER Program

1.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this grant program is to provide technical assistance to small, socially-disadvantaged agricultural producers through eligible Cooperatives, Groups of Cooperatives, and Cooperative Development Centers.

In this guide, you will find information to help you:

- Assess your eligibility for the SSDPG program
- Understand how and when to apply
- Create a successful application

1.2 Authorization

Section 310B (e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(e)) as amended by section 6013 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008), authorizes this program under the Rural Cooperative Development Grant program.

The SSDPG program is administered by the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) with assistance from Rural Development (RD) field office staff. RBS has published a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the *Federal Register* requesting applications for the current funding cycle. The NOFA contains the application requirements as well as other program information. You should use the NOFA in conjunction with this Guide when assembling your application.

1.3 Available Funding for FY 2012

For fiscal year 2012, approximately \$3 million is available for the grant program.

1.4 SSDPG Program Contacts

We encourage you to contact the Rural Development State Office for your state early in the application process with any questions or ideas concerning your application. The staff will provide advice on draft applications before the application deadline or answer your questions about the application process and program requirements. Please only contact the National Office staff if you are unable to reach the representative from your state.

National Office

(202) 720-8460

cpgrants@wdc.usda.gov

1.5 SSDPG Resources on the Web

Visit our website at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_SSDPG.html.

Section 2: General Considerations for an SSDPG

2.1 Eligible Entities

An entity is eligible to receive an SSDPG if it is a Cooperative, Group of Cooperatives, or Cooperative Development Center whose primary focus is to provide assistance to small, socially-disadvantaged producers and where a majority of their governing board is comprised of members of socially-disadvantaged groups or at least 75 percent of their membership is comprised of socially-disadvantaged producers. Applicants will be required to verify their legal structure in the state in which they are incorporated at the time of application. Public bodies and Individuals are not eligible to receive grants.

2.2 Eligible Grant Purposes

Grant funds must be used for Technical Assistance. Technical assistance is defined as: An advisory service performed for the benefit of a small, socially-disadvantaged producer such as market research; product and/or service improvement/ legal advice and assistance; feasibility study, business plan, and marketing plan development; and training.

2.3 Grant Period Eligibility

Applications should have a timeframe of no more than 365 days with the time period beginning no earlier than the date the grant is awarded (anticipated award date is September 1, 2012), and ending no later than December 31, 2013. Projects must be completed within the 12-month time frame.

2.4 Other Eligibility

- The proposed project must take place in a rural area as defined in the NOFA.
- Applications without sufficient information to determine eligibility and scoring will not be considered for funding.
- Applications that are non-responsive to the notice will be ineligible for funding.

2.5 Ineligible Grant Purposes

Grant funds may not be used to pay for any of the following activities.

- a. Duplicate current services or replace or substitute support previously provided. If the current service is inadequate, however, grant funds may be used to expand the level of effort or services beyond that which is currently being provided;
- b. Pay costs of preparing the application package for funding under this program;
- c. Pay costs of the project incurred prior to the date of grant approval;
- d. Fund political or lobbying activities;

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- e. Pay for assistance to any private business enterprise that does not have at least 51 percent ownership by those who are either citizens of the United States or reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence;
- f. Pay any judgment or debt owed to the United States;
- g. Plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct a building or facility, including a processing facility;
- h. Purchase, rent, or install fixed equipment, including processing equipment;
- i. Purchase vehicles, including boats;
- j. Pay for operating costs of cooperatives or association of cooperatives;
- k. Fund research and development;
- l. Fund any activities prohibited by 7 CFR part 3015 or 3019;
- m. Pay expenses for applicant employee training;
- n. Pay expenses not directly related to the funded project;
- o. Fund any direct expenses related for the production of any commodity or product to which value will be added, including seed, rootstock, labor for harvesting the crop, and delivery of the commodity to a processing facility; or
- p. Purchase land.
- q. Fund architectural or engineering design work for a specific physical facility.

2.6 Security Requirements

A grant agreement will be executed between the recipient and RBS.

Section 3: Application Submission Process

3.1 Filing Applications

You may file an application in either paper or electronic format. Send paper applications by U.S. Postal Service or courier delivery services to the address listed in Section 3.3 of this Guide. File an application electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>, the official Federal Government website. RBS will not accept applications by fax or e-mail.

3.2 DUNS Number and CCR Requirements

Whether you file a paper or an electronic application, you must include a Dunn and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and maintain registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database in accordance with 2 CFR part 25. The DUNS number is a nine-digit identification number which uniquely identifies business entities. You must provide your DUNS number on the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance."

To verify that your organization has a DUNS number or to receive one at no cost, call the dedicated toll-free request line at (866) 705-5711 or access the website at: <http://www.dnb.com/us/>. You will need the following pieces of information when requesting a DUNS number.

- Legal name
- Headquarters name and address of the organization

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- Doing Business As (dba) or other name by which the organization is commonly recognized
- Physical address
- Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address)
- Telephone number
- Contact name and title
- Number of employees at the physical location

Similarly, you must register for the CCR at <http://www.ccr.gov>. Assistance with registration is available by calling 1-886-806-8220. The CCR CAGE Code and expiration date may be handwritten on the SF-424. The CCR registration must remain current throughout the grant period.

For more information, see the SSDPG web site at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_SSDPG.html or contact the USDA Rural Development State Office at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html.

3.3 Paper Applications

Paper applications must be received by the deadline date and time. Send an original paper application (no stamped, photocopied, or initialed signatures) to the appropriate State Office as defined in the NOFA. The application and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

3.4 Electronic Applications

File an electronic application at the website: <http://www.grants.gov>. Note that you will need to follow the instructions on the website to submit an application. Your submission will include the required forms (outlined below) and an attachment which should include all remaining elements of your application.

You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can submit an application. If you have not used Grants.gov before, you will need to register with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) and the Credential Provider. You will need a DUNS number to access or register at any of the services. The registration process may take several business days to complete. Follow the instructions at Grants.gov for registering and submitting an electronic application. RBS may request original signatures on electronically submitted documents later.

The CCR registers your organization, housing your organizational information and allowing Grants.gov to use it to verify your identity. You may register for the CCR by calling the CCR Assistance Center at (888) 227-2423 or you may register online at: <http://www.ccr.gov>.

The Credential Provider gives you or your representative a username and password, as part of the Federal Government's e-Authentication to ensure a secure transaction. You will need the username and password when you register with Grants.gov or use Grants.gov to submit your

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application. You must register with the Credential Provider through Grants.gov at the following website: <https://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister>.

3.5 Deadline for Grant Applications

The deadline to submit application is listed under section IV.C. of the NOFA.

All applications must be received by the filing deadline to be considered for funding.

An application will be considered on time if it is postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight no later than the deadline date. If the application is filed electronically, an electronic date and time stamp on or before the deadline will be considered on time. Paper applications must arrive at the State Office address listed in the NOFA.

Section 4: Requirements for a Completed Grant

4.1 Preparing the Application

A complete application includes the following elements.

1. Standard application forms
2. Proposal

To be considered for an SSDPG, you must meet the eligibility requirements and you must submit a complete application by the deadline date and time. You should consult the cost principles (OMB Circular A-122 and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, Section 31.2) and general administrative requirements for grants (7 CFR parts 3015 and 3019) in order to prepare the budget and complete other parts of the application.

4.2 Required Forms

Applicants must complete and submit the following forms to apply for a SSDPG.

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, “Budget Information-Non-Constructions Programs”
- SF-424B, “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs”

4.3 Proposal

4.3.1 Table of Contents

The Table of Contents should include page numbers for each main element of the application, including the Proposal Evaluation Criteria.

4.3.2 Executive Summary

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A summary of the proposal, not to exceed one page, must briefly describe the project, tasks to be completed and other relevant information that provides a general overview of the project.

4.3.3 Eligibility Discussion

The eligibility discussion must provide a detailed discussion, not to exceed 4 pages, describing how you meet the eligibility requirements. If applying as a Cooperative or a Group of Cooperatives, you must verify your incorporation in the State that you have applied by providing the State's Certificate of Good Standing, and your Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. If applying as a Cooperative Development Center, you must provide evidence of your status as a nonprofit corporation or an accredited institution of higher education and a copy of your mission statement. You must apply as only one type of applicant.

4.3.4 Work Plan and Budget

You must describe in detail (not to exceed 4 pages) the purpose of the grant, what type of assistance will be provided and the total amount of funds needed to assist each project. The budget must also present a breakdown of the estimated costs associated with technical assistance activities as well as allocating these costs to each of the tasks to be undertaken for each project. Projects proposing to pay for the operating costs of Cooperatives or Cooperative Development Centers will not be considered.

4.3.5 Evaluation Criteria

Each of the proposal evaluation criteria referenced in the NOFA must be addressed, specifically and individually, in narrative form not to exceed 2 pages for each criterion. The criteria are listed below.

1. Technical Assistance
2. Experience
3. Commitment
4. Work Plan / Budget
5. Local Support

Section 5: Application Review Process

5.1 Eligibility Screening

Your application will be initially screened to determine if it is complete and eligible. If your application is determined to be complete and eligible, it will be further evaluated. If your application is determined to be incomplete, ineligible, or both, you will be notified of the reasons.

5.2 Evaluating the Application

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Each complete and eligible application will be evaluated by a federal employee with experience in business development.

5.3. Scoring Criteria

Applications that are complete and eligible will be ranked competitively based on the criteria listed in Section 4.3.5 of this Guide.

5.4 Application Selection

RBS will rank all complete and eligible applications by their final score. Applications will be selected for funding in rank order, subject to the availability of SSDPG funds.

5.5 Possible RBS Actions on an Application

In making its decision about your application, RBS may determine that your application is:

- Eligible and selected for funding
- Eligible, but offered fewer funds than requested
- Eligible, but not selected for funding
- Ineligible for funding

5.6 Appeals Process

In accordance with 7 CFR part 11, you generally have the right to appeal RBS decisions that are adverse to you. RBS will notify you of your appeal rights when it notifies you of the decision for your application. If RBS has determined its decision is not appealable, you may request that the National Appeals Division (NAD) determine the appealability of a specific decision. The request must be in writing and filed at the appropriate Regional Office, which can be found at <http://www.nad.usda.gov/offices.htm> or by calling (703) 305-1166.

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Appendix A – Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations have been mentioned throughout the text of this Guide, but are listed in one place for easy reference. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is located at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>. The OMB Circulars are located at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_circulars.html. The Federal Acquisition Regulation is located at <http://www.arnet.gov/far/>.

- CFR, Title 7, Part 11, subpart A, “National Appeals Division Rules of Procedures”
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3015, “Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations”
- CFR, Title 7, Part 3019, “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations”
- OMB Circular A-122, “Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations”

Appendix B – Application Checklist

Form of submission

- Submission includes all pages of the application

Content of submission

- 1. Form SF-424
 - Legal name of applicant (Item 5)
 - Applicant's DUNS number (Item 5)
 - Applicant's complete mailing address (Item 5)
 - Name of contact person (Item 5)
 - Telephone number of contact person (Item 5)
 - Employer Identification Number (Item 6)
 - Proposed start date of project (Item 13)
 - Proposed end date of project (Item 13)
 - Federal funds requested (Item 15a)
 - Answer to question, "Is applicant delinquent on any federal debt?" (Item 17)
 - Name of authorized representative (Item 18a)
 - Telephone number of authorized representative (Item 18c)
 - Signature of authorized representative (Item 18d)
 - Date form was signed (Item 18e)
 - Type or hand-write the CCR CAGE Code and expiration date in the margin of the form.
- 2. Form SF-424A
 - Section A
 - Section B
 - Section C (note that matching funds are not required for SSDPG)
 - Section D
- 3. Form SF-424B
 - Signature of authorized representative
 - Title of authorized representative
 - Name of authorized representative
 - Date signed by authorized representative
- 4. Proposal
 - i. Table of Contents
 - Page number Executive Summary
 - Page number for Eligibility Discussion
 - Page number for Budget and Work Plan
 - Page number of Evaluation Criteria
 - ii. Executive Summary (limit = 1 page)
 - Describe the project
 - Describe the tasks to be completed

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- Describe other relevant information that provides general overview of the project.

- iii. Eligibility Discussion (limit = 4 pages)
 - a. Applicant.
 - Describe how you meet the definition of an eligible Cooperative, Group of Cooperatives, or Cooperative Development Center as defined in the Notice
 - Verify your legal structure in the State where you applied.
 - Provide a copy of State's Certificate of Good Standing (Cooperatives)
 - Provide a copy of Articles of Incorporation (Cooperatives)
 - Provide a copy of Bylaws (Cooperatives)
 - Provide a copy of mission statement (Cooperative Development Centers)
 - b. Use of Funds. Describe how the proposed project activities meet the definition of technical assistance.
 - c. Project Area. Describe where the proposed projects are located and that the areas meet the definition of rural area.
 - D. Grant Period. Describe the proposed grant period and how the project will be completed within the time frame. It must not be more than 365 days with the time period beginning no earlier than the date the grant is awarded (anticipated award date is September 1, 2012), and ending no later than December 31, 2013.

- iv. Work Plan/Budget (limit = 4 pages)
 - Describe the purpose of the grant
 - Describe the type of assistance and the total amount needed for each project
 - Budget must present a breakdown of estimated costs associated with activities/tasks for each project

- 5. Evaluation Criteria (limit = 2 pages for each criterion)
 - i. Technical Assistance
 - ii. Experience
 - iii. Commitment
 - iv. Local Support – you may submit up to 10 letters of support

Appendix C – Application Outline

This appendix provides a suggested, not required, format for a 2012 SSDPG application. Each required element is listed with the relevant text from the NOFA. Many of the elements also include sample language and/or tables.

Please note: You **MUST** read the NOFA. Simply following the sample format does not guarantee that your application will be determined to be eligible and complete, or that it will be funded. If you have questions during the application process, please contact your state representative.

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Version 7/03

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE		2. DATE SUBMITTED	Applicant Identifier																					
1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction		April 1, 2008																						
		3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE	State Application Identifier																					
		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY	Federal Identifier																					
5. APPLICANT INFORMATION																								
Legal Name: ABC Rural Cooperative Development Center		Organizational Unit: Department:																						
Organizational DUNS: 00-000-0000		Division:																						
Address: Street: 1400 Independence Ave, SW. City: Washington County:		Name and telephone number of person to be contacted on matters involving this application (give area code) Prefix: Ms. First Name: April Middle Name Last Name Fools Suffix:																						
State: DC	Zip Code 20250	Email: cpgrants@wdc.usda.gov																						
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 00-00000000		Phone Number (give area code) 202-720-7558	Fax Number (give area code) 202-720-4641																					
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision If Revision, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es) (See back of form for description of letters.) Other (specify)		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: (See back of form for Application Types) 0 Other (specify)																						
10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: TITLE (Name of Program):		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service																						
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (Cities, Counties, States, etc.): Virginia		11. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Assisting Virginia's Small, Minority Agricultural Producers																						
13. PROPOSED PROJECT Start Date: October 1, 2008 Ending Date: September 30, 2009		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS OF: a. Applicant: n/a b. Project: VA-1, VA-5, VA-10																						
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>a. Federal</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">175,000⁰⁰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. Applicant</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">100,000⁰⁰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. State</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. Local</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. Other</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. Program Income</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td>\$</td> <td style="text-align: right;">275,000⁰⁰</td> </tr> </table>		a. Federal	\$	175,000 ⁰⁰	b. Applicant	\$	100,000 ⁰⁰	c. State	\$.00	d. Local	\$.00	e. Other	\$.00	f. Program Income	\$.00	g. TOTAL	\$	275,000 ⁰⁰	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? a. Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON DATE: b. No: <input type="checkbox"/> PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E. O. 12372 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OR PROGRAM HAS NOT BEEN SELECTED BY STATE FOR REVIEW	
a. Federal	\$	175,000 ⁰⁰																						
b. Applicant	\$	100,000 ⁰⁰																						
c. State	\$.00																						
d. Local	\$.00																						
e. Other	\$.00																						
f. Program Income	\$.00																						
g. TOTAL	\$	275,000 ⁰⁰																						
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT. THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED. a. Authorized Representative		17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If "Yes" attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No																						
Prefix: Ms.		First Name: April																						
Last Name: Fools		Middle Name:																						
b. Title: Executive Director		Suffix:																						
d. Signature of Authorized Representative		c. Telephone Number (give area code): (202) 720-7558																						
		e. Date Signed: April 1, 2008																						

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Standard Form 424 (Rev.9-2003)
Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102

Reset Form

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BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

OMB Approval No. 0348-0044

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY						
Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget		
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)	Total (g)
1.	10.771	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$	\$	\$ 275,000.00
2.						0.00
3.						0.00
4.						0.00
5. Totals		\$ 175,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 275,000.00
SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES						
6. Object Class Categories (f)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Total (5)		
a. Personnel	90,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$	\$		\$ 135,000.00
b. Fringe Benefits	10,000.00	5,000.00				15,000.00
c. Travel	5,000.00	5,000.00				10,000.00
d. Equipment						0.00
e. Supplies						0.00
f. Contractual	70,000.00	45,000.00				115,000.00
g. Construction						0.00
h. Other						0.00
i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h)	175,000.00	100,000.00	0.00	0.00		275,000.00
j. Indirect Charges						0.00
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j)	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		\$ 275,000.00
7. Program Income						0.00

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Standard Form 424A (Rev. 7-97)
Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102

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SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES					
(a) Grant Program	(b) Applicant	(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e) TOTALS	
8. SMPG	\$ 100,000.00	\$	\$	\$ 100,000.00	
9.				0.00	
10.				0.00	
11.				0.00	
12. TOTAL (sum of lines 8-11)	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 100,000.00	
SECTION D - FEDERAL CASH RESOURCES					
	Total for 1st Year	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
13. Federal	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 43,750.00
14. Non-Federal	100,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
15. TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14)	\$ 275,000.00	\$ 68,750.00	\$ 68,750.00	\$ 68,750.00	\$ 68,750.00
SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT					
(a) Grant Program	FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (Years)				
	(b) First	(c) Second	(d) Third	(e) Fourth	
16. SMPG	\$	\$	\$	\$	
17.					
18.					
19.					
20. TOTAL (sum of lines 16-19)	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	
SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION					
21. Direct Charges:			22. Indirect Charges:		
23. Remarks:					

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OMB Approval No. 0348-0040

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

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9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§1531-1544).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

SAMPLE

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL	TITLE Executive Director
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION ABC Rural Cooperative Development Center	DATE SUBMITTED April 1, 2008

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Table of Contents

For ease of locating information, each proposal must contain a detailed Table of Contents (TOC) immediately following the Title Page. The TOC should include page numbers for each component of the proposal. Page numbers should begin immediately following the TOC. The TOC should include page numbers for the Eligibility Discussion, Budget and Work Plan and Evaluation Criteria. It is recommended that you start your application with the required forms and number those forms beginning with the Roman numeral “i.” The Title Page and Table of Contents should also be numbered with small Roman numerals. The Executive Summary should be page number 1. Example language is included below.

Table of Contents

<u>Element</u>	<u>Page</u>
SF-424	i
SF-424A	ii
SF-424B	iii
Table of Contents	IV
Executive Summary	1
Eligibility Discussion	2
Budget/Work Plan	3
Evaluation Criteria	4

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Eligibility Discussion

Describe in detail how the applicant meets the eligibility requirements. This discussion is **limited to four (4) pages**. Pages in excess of the four-page limit will not be considered.

Applicant: You must describe how you meet the definition of an eligible “Cooperative”, “Group of Cooperatives”, or “Cooperative Development Center” as defined in the Definitions section of the Notice. If applying as a Cooperative or a Group of Cooperatives, you must verify your incorporation in the State that you have applied by providing the State’s Certificate of Good Standing, and your Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. If applying as a Cooperative Development Center, you must provide evidence of your status as a nonprofit corporation or an accredited institution of higher education and a copy of your mission statement.

Use of Funds: You must provide a detailed discussion on how the proposed project activities meet the definition of technical assistance as defined in the Notice.

Project Area: You must provide specific information on the project’s planned location and describe how the area meets the definition of “rural area” as defined in the Notice.

Grant Period: You must provide a time frame for the proposed project and discuss how the project will be completed within that 12-month time frame.

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Budget/Work Plan

You must describe in detail (not to exceed 4 pages) the purpose of the grant, what type of assistance will be provided and the total amount of funds needed to assist each project. The budget must also present a breakdown of the estimated costs associated with the technical assistance activities as well as allocating these costs to each of the tasks to be undertaken for each project. You should also discuss each proposed task in narrative form as part of the work plan and explain the costs for the budget. Example tables are included below.

Task	Personnel	Time Period	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total Cost

	Budget Category 1	Budget Category 2	Budget Category 3	Total
	Grant Amount	Grant Amount	Grant Amount	Grant Amount
Task 1				
Task 2				
Task 3				

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Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Each of the evaluation criteria referenced in Section V.A. must be specifically and individually addressed in narrative form.

1. Technical Assistance. Your application will be evaluated to determine your ability to assess the needs of small socially-disadvantaged producers, plan and conduct appropriate and effective assistance, and identify the expected outcomes of that assistance.
2. Experience. Points will be awarded based upon length of experience of identified staff or consultants in providing technical assistance.
3. Commitment. The Agency will evaluate your commitment to providing technical assistance to small, socially-disadvantaged producers in rural areas. Points will be awarded based upon the number of agricultural, small, socially-disadvantaged producers being assisted.
4. Work Plan / Budget. The Agency will review the detailed actions and timetable for implementing your proposal provided in your work plan. A higher score will be awarded to plans that are clear, logical, and realistic. Budgets will be reviewed for completeness.
5. Local Support. Points will be awarded based on the strength of support from potential beneficiaries of the technical assistance activities of the cooperative or cooperative development center and from other developmental organizations. The application may also contain 10 letters of support to provide evidence of local support.