

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Foreign Agricultural Service

Notice of Request for Information (RFI) Inviting Input About the \$50 Million Non-Traditional Shelf-Stable Commodities Pilot Program

AGENCY: Foreign Agricultural Service, Department of Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Request for information.

SUMMARY: The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture requests comments from the public to inform an understanding on non-traditional, shelf-stable commodities that could be used in food assistance programming. FAS seeks to learn what commodities could be considered outside the traditional food assistance commodities. This RFI offers interested parties the opportunity to provide FAS with information regarding non-traditional, shelf-stable food aid commodities.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by July 30, 2024, to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: USDA invites submission of the requested information through one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- *Email:* FAS will accept electronic submissions emailed to PPDED@usda.gov. The email should contain the subject line, "Response to RFI: \$50 million pilot program."

Instructions: Response to this RFI is voluntary. All comments submitted in response to this RFI will be included in the record and will be made available to the public. Please be advised that the substance of the comments and the identity of the individuals or entities submitting the comments will be subject to public disclosure. USDA will make

the comments publicly available via <https://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Molly Kairn, Program and Management Analyst, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, email PPDED@usda.gov, Phone 202-713-8673.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In October 2023, USDA announced with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) the use of \$1 billion of Credit Commodity Corporation funding to help fill food security gaps and supply safe and nutritious food to the global community in need.

Of this funding, up to \$50 million will be set aside for use in a pilot program that will operate to utilize U.S. commodities that:

1. Have not recently been substantially included in international food assistance programming,
2. Are shelf-stable, and
3. Are suitable for use in feeding food-insecure populations.

These U.S.-grown commodities could include, but are not limited to, nuts; dried fruits; grains such as quinoa, farro, and oats; and canned fish or canned meats.

Request for Information

FAS requests information from the public to help identify non-traditional, shelf-stable commodities that could be used in food assistance programming under the proposed \$50 million pilot program. Non-traditional commodities could include, but are not limited to, commodities that have never been used before in food assistance programming, commodities that have not been used in food assistance programming in at least the last 5 years, and/or commodities that can be made into a new product. Additionally, FAS requests information from the public about non-traditional commodities including:

1. Cost per metric tonnage, or other customary commercial unit of measure, including cost to the U.S. Government,
2. Estimated cost of delivery of commodities to a U.S. port,
3. Packaging details, including transportation/containerization requirements and costs,
4. The expected shelf life under normal storage conditions and adverse

conditions that might be expected in developing countries (*i.e.*, high humidity and temperatures),

5. Any history/documentation of successful storage performance for the commodity,

6. Nutritional benefits for adults and for children,

7. Essential minerals,

8. Testing requirements for food safety,

9. Consumer preparation instructions, if any, including requirements for potable water, fuel, and cooking time,

10. Whether the commodity meets current Food and Drug Administration requirements,

11. The current production capacity in the United States, and seasonality/availability of the commodity for export,

12. Known challenges and barriers around imports, and

13. Intended age range for population if product is fortified.

Please include any relevant data sources. The response to this RFI is voluntary, and the public is welcome to address any or all the questions and provide additional information that may be relevant to seeking information on non-traditional food aid commodities.

Responses may not exceed ten (10) pages per respondent and should focus on addressing the questions described above. Please do not submit applications, proposals, resumes or promotional materials. The submission shall be written in English and typed on standard 8½" x 11" electronic paper (216 mm by 297 mm paper), single spaced, font size 12, with each page numbered consecutively. Any information obtained from this RFI is intended to be used by the Government on a non-attribution basis for planning and developing a pilot program for non-traditional, shelf-stable commodities. This RFI does not constitute a formal solicitation for proposals or abstracts. Your response to this notice will be treated as information only. FAS will not reimburse any costs incurred in responding to this RFI. Respondents are advised that FAS is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted under this RFI. Responses to this RFI do not bind FAS to any further actions related to this topic. Responses will become government property.

No confidential information, such as confidential business information or proprietary information, should be submitted in comments for this RFI. Comments received in response to this notice will be a matter of public record and will be made available for public inspection and posted without change and as received, including any business information or personal information provided in the comments, such as names and addresses. Please do not include anything in your comment submission that you do not wish to share with the public.

Daniel Whitley,

Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

[Docket #: RBS–22–BUSINESS–0029]

Notice of Processing Timeline Change for the Rural Energy for America Program for Fiscal Year 2024

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (the Agency) is issuing a notice of the Agency's intention to remove the self-imposed restriction that all Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 applications that are submitted under the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) prior to June 30, 2024, and were not funded in the national unrestricted pooling competitions, must be withdrawn. The Agency is also updating its approach for application reviews. This Notice also outlines the Agency's prioritization of Underutilized Renewable Energy Technologies (UT) in National Office competitions for FY 2024.

DATES: Applicable July 15, 2024.

ADDRESSES: You are encouraged to contact your United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development (RD) State Energy Coordinator well in advance of the application deadline to discuss your project and ask any questions about the application process. Contact information for State Office Energy Coordinators can be found at www.rd.usda.gov/files/RBS_StateEnergyCoordinators.pdf.

Program guidance and application forms may be obtained at www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/energy-programs. To submit

an electronic application via grants.gov, follow the instructions for the REAP funding announcement located at www.grants.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jonathan Burns, Program Management Division, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 774–678–7238 or email CPgrants@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Extension for REAP FY 2024 Applications

The Agency published two funding opportunity notices and a correction notice in the **Federal Register** for REAP for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024. The first funding notice was published December 16, 2022 (87 FR 77059). The second funding notice was published March 31, 2023 (88 FR 19239), and the correction notice was published May 31, 2023 (88 FR 34823). The second funding notice and the correction notice are applicable to applications received on or after April 1, 2023 (FY 2024). The two notices state that obligations will take place through September 30, 2024, and complete and eligible applications which were not funded in the national unrestricted pooling must be withdrawn.

Due to the continued overwhelming response of the funding opportunity, the Agency continues to experience longer than anticipated turnaround times. The Agency recognizes this may negatively affect applicants and, to provide equitable treatment, the self-imposed deadline on the national unrestricted pooling competitions for FY 2024 will be extended. The Agency will continue processing FY 2024 applications, those received through June 30, 2024, until December 31, 2024. Unlike many prior years, National Office pooling of Unrestricted Funding is estimated to occur within the first quarter of the 2025 calendar year.

Applications received by June 30, 2024, that remain incomplete on January 1, 2025, will be withdrawn. Unfunded applications from the national competitions will not be moved into the FY 2025 funding cycle and must be withdrawn. Those applicants may submit a new application to compete in FY 2025 competition(s) if they have not already started their project or incurred project costs.

Agency Approach for Application Reviews

To maximize efficiency and address the backlog of applications, the Agency will use the following processing

procedures effective on the publication date of this Notice.

Completeness Application Review

If an application does not meet the definition of complete application, according to 7 CFR 4280.103, the Agency will send a notification identifying those parts of the application that are incomplete and no further action will be taken on the application.

The Agency will give 15 business days for applicants to provide the missing documentation. The application will be withdrawn, and the applicant notified if the required documentation is not received within the 15 business days or if the information submitted by the deadline is insufficient.

Application processing will continue if all documentation is received timely and is sufficient to meet the definition of a complete application.

Eligibility Review for Complete Applications

The Agency will review for applicant and project eligibility and financial and technical feasibility. If the Agency requires additional clarification or documentation, the Agency will send a notification and give 15 business days for the applicant to provide the information.

The application will be withdrawn, and the applicant notified if the required information is not received within the 15 business days or if the information submitted by the deadline is insufficient.

Application processing will continue if all information is received timely and is sufficient for determining applicant and project eligibility. The applicant will then receive a notification of the eligibility review outcome.

Prioritization of Underutilized Renewable Energy Technologies (UT)

To carry out the Inflation Reduction Act's intention to have set aside competition for UT, the Agency anticipates holding National Office competitions, exclusively for projects proposing the use of UT. These National Office competitions are anticipated to be held through the end of FY 2024, as needed.

In addition, the FY 2024 National Office Unrestricted pooled competition will first consider funding project proposing the use of UT in accordance with the March 31, 2023, REAP NOSA (88 FR 19239). This Unrestricted National Office pooled competition is