



**Agricultural Marketing Service**  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250  
[www.ams.usda.gov](http://www.ams.usda.gov)

# News Release

Release No.: 133-14

Contact:  
Peter Wood, (202) 720-6179  
[Peter.wood@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Peter.wood@ams.usda.gov)

## USDA Invites States to Participate in Marketing Improvement Program

WASHINGTON, May 1, 2014 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) today announced the availability of approximately \$1 million in matching grant funds through the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP). AMS is requesting grant proposals from state departments of agriculture, state colleges and universities, and other appropriate state agencies. Funds will support research projects to address challenges and opportunities in marketing, transporting, and distributing U.S. agricultural products domestically and internationally. Federal funds awarded must be matched dollar-for-dollar by non-federal funds and/or in-kind resources.

“These grants provide our state partners with matching funds to explore new and innovative approaches to marketing U.S. agricultural products,” said AMS Administrator, Anne Alonzo. “We’re really looking for proposals that demonstrate collaboration among state agencies, universities, producers and other stakeholders. We have seen some creative work in expanding and exploring new markets as a result of these kinds of partnerships.”

Proposals that address issues of importance at the state, multi-state, or national level are encouraged, including projects that:

- Assess challenges and develop ways to assist local and regional producers in marketing agricultural products that meet the mandates of the Food Safety Modernization Act.
- Have the potential to create economic opportunity in rural communities through research relating to marketing in local and regional food systems, and value-added agriculture.
- Contribute to the strategy of a designated [Promise Zone](#).
- Demonstrate sound methods for processing, 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 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 or expanded markets and new uses of agricultural products.

Applicants must submit proposals through the federal website [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on June 16, 2014.

The request for applications, which describes details about the grant opportunity, including eligibility, application requirements and an outline of the review process, is available at [www.ams.usda.gov/FSMIP](http://www.ams.usda.gov/FSMIP), and is linked with the FSMIP opportunity posted on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

A one-hour teleconference is scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2014, at 2 p.m. Eastern time to discuss the 2014 program and give potential applicants the opportunity to ask questions about the request for applications. If you are interested in participating, please send a message to [janise.zygmont@ams.usda.gov](mailto:janise.zygmont@ams.usda.gov) before the teleconference date to receive instructions.

#