

Community Greenhouse Grant RFA#: ARD.2026.Greenhouse2 April 15, 2026 Information Session Written Question and Answer Summary

Questions About Greenhouse Design or Requirements

Q. Do the greenhouses have to have a power source, or is that just a recommendation?

A. No, a power source is not required. The greenhouse must meet the code standards of your municipality for your intended use and location. Durable greenhouses often have power and/or heat, but neither are required for this grant program.

Q. Do you have examples of particular structures or preferred models of durable greenhouses?

A. We do not have examples of specific durable greenhouse structures. Each applicant's needs and intended use may require differing sizes and structures. We have posted a list of greenhouse vendors that are located in Maine or have a dedicated sales location or representative in Maine. This list is not intended to represent all Maine greenhouse vendors, nor does it intend to convey a requirement to utilize one of these vendors for the purposes of this program. The Department does not endorse or otherwise recommend a vendor and encourages entities and individuals to screen vendor qualifications before entering into an agreement.

Q. Are there any requirements regarding what property or land this is put on? Does the applicant have to own the land?

A. The applicant will most likely be the owner of the land where the durable greenhouse will be installed. However, if this is not your situation, please describe the partnership in your Greenhouse Management Plan and Sustainability Plan sections of the application.

All applicants should be prepared to fully describe a comprehensive and likely feasible sustainability plan that meaningfully aligns with the applicant's five-year vision for the greenhouse utilization. Applicants should also be able to fully describe a comprehensive and likely feasible greenhouse management plan and a commitment that multiple partners will engage to ensure upkeep, maintenance, and ongoing use.

Q. If I have an agreement with our municipality to install a greenhouse on town owned property, do I need to submit a letter that documents this with my application.

A. No, we do not request letters or support or letters to confirm shared resources or land agreements at the time of application. However, such information may be requested from applicants selected for award, before a contract is issued.

Please do describe the land use partnership in your Greenhouse Management Plan and Sustainability Plan sections of the application.

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Q. May we submit letters of support from partners we are working with?

A. No we are not requesting, or able to score, letters of support. Please do describe the partnerships, as applicable in your Shared Community Use, Greenhouse Management Plan and Sustainability Plan sections of the application.

Questions About the Allowable Costs

Q. Is the cost of installing water and/or power an allowable expense?

A. Yes, the costs directly associated with siting and installation (e.g., earthwork, water, power, and utility connections) of a durable greenhouse are allowable.

Q. Is the cost of installing plumbing an allowable expense?

A. Yes, the costs directly associated with siting and installation (e.g., earthwork, water, power, plumbing, and utility connections) of a durable greenhouse are allowable.

Q. Would the labor for installation costs be considered allowable as an installation cost, or unallowable as a personnel and benefits cost? Could we hire a company that does just installation?

A. Grant funds may not be used to cover the cost of applicant (or partner) staff time, even for installation. However, expenses associated with hiring a contractor and/or paying a greenhouse vendor to install a durable greenhouse are allowable.

Q. Would things needed for the inside of the greenhouse like tables, garden beds, benches, and things needed to outfit the greenhouse for food production allowable expenses, or unallowable supplies?

A. Supplies are not allowed to be funded through this grant opportunity. Tables, benches, pots, and potting soil are considered supplies. Items that will be added to the greenhouse, and not purchased directly as part of the greenhouse structure/kit are unallowable. Items that are purchased by a second vendor, to be added to the greenhouse, will likely be considered as supplies. Only the costs directly associated with the purchase and installation of a durable greenhouse, and are allowable.

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Q. Is the cost of making improvements to an existing greenhouse, allowable.

A. No, the only allowable costs are those directly associated with the purchase, siting, and installation of a new durable greenhouse.

Questions About Grant Funding

Q. How many of these grants are you giving out?

A. The Department has \$500,000 to award. The range of each grant award will be from \$10,000 to \$100,000. The total amount of awards that will be made will be dependent on the amount requested by each applicant, in the order of highest to lowest score. If all of the top scoring applicants have requested exactly \$100,000 each, there is going to be 5 awards offered. This may vary drastically if the majority of high scoring applicants request on the lower range of the allowable funding requests.

Q. Is this the first year this grant has been offered?

A. Yes this grant funding has not been available in prior years and is only available through this one time appropriation.

Q. Will this grant be offered again next year, or in the future?

A. No, the funding appropriation was only a one-time allocation. This grant will not likely be offered again in the future.

Q. What is the funding period, when do funds need to be used by?

A. This will be specifically stated in the contracts issued and may be adjusted after the applications are submitted. However, the Department currently anticipates that the contract term, when recipients may spend grant funds, will be from August 2026- June 2027.

Questions About the Application Process

Q. Is there any conflict of interest if our nonprofit has submitted an application to NRCS for their High Tunnel EQIP grant?

A. No. This grant was purposely designed for durable greenhouse projects that are not eligible for the NRCS high tunnel EQIP grant. This grant may only fund durable greenhouse structures covered with rigid polycarbonate sheets or glass. High tunnels are not allowable in this grant program.

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Q. Are there instructions for what is expected for a vendor quote? Do I need a vendor quote from each provider (e.g. earthwork contractor, greenhouse installer, utility connection, etc.)?

A. Yes, the instructions for vendor quote formatting and what must be included in all vendor quotes are provided on page 11 of the RFA.

Applicants may use more than one vendor to complete the purchase and installation. Applicants must submit one vendor quote from each vendor necessary to complete the greenhouse purchase, citing, and installation. For example, if your organization plans to purchase the greenhouse from an online vendor, contract a landscaper to prepare and site the land for the greenhouse, and hire a contractor or other provider to install the greenhouse, you **MUST** submit one vendor quote for each product or service. If only one vendor or service provider will be paid, a single vendor quote is sufficient, provided it includes all expenses requested in the applicant's proposed equipment and installation budget.

Q. How may I ask questions after this information session?

A. The Department has specific formatting requirements and instructions for how potential applicants may seek clarification and/or ask questions about a grant RFA or application. Please follow the instructions

- All questions must be submitted in writing via email to the RFA Coordinator listed on the cover page by May 4, 2026 at 12:00 noon.
- Questions may not be asked via phone or other means not listed in this RFA.
- Questions sent to any other email address or sent without the required subject line may not receive a response.
- **The RFA Number listed on the cover page must be included in the email subject line: RFA# ARD.2026.Greenhouse2**
- The RFA Coordinator will post a written summary of the questions submitted, along with the corresponding answers, on the program website by May 7, 2026.
- All interested parties are responsible for going to the program website listed in this RFA to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary.
- Only those answers issued in writing on the program website will be considered binding.

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Q. What needs to be documented in the application in terms of consulting with the municipal code enforcement officer?

A. All applicants must attest (via an application checkbox) that a leader of the applicant organization with decision-making authority has consulted with a municipal code enforcement officer or otherwise qualified building code representative to confirm that the durable greenhouse submitted on the required vendor quote and described in this application will conform with applicable codes and standards for the intended location and use, including, municipal codes and standards, and if applicable, the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC). At the time of application, the applicant should be reasonably certain that the greenhouse documented on their vendor quote will meet all required codes and standards for the intended use and location.

A letter or other written documentation to confirm this initial consultation is **not** required at the time of application. However, grant applicants selected for an award will be required to provide the Department with a letter, before a contract is issued, from a municipal code enforcement office, an engineer, or another qualified building code representative confirming that the planned expenditures will comply with building code standards for the greenhouse's intended use and location, or that the planned expenditures are exempt from such standards.

Q. If our request includes solar and rain catchment system to augment power and water, would that score our application more favorably? I see there is mention of the Maine Won't Wait Climate Action Plan.

A. No, not necessarily. There is no scoring rubric that specifically favors applicants using solar power and/or rain catchment systems. The question related to the Maine Won't Wait Climate Action Plan is superficially related to how grant funding will help the applicant to increase food production and local food consumption. All applicants must list the types of foods that will be grown in the greenhouse and describe a plan to increase community access to local foods by sharing how foods will be sold, donated, shared, or otherwise distributed to the community. Applicants will use this section to demonstrate how funding will achieve outcomes related to the [Maine Won't Wait Climate Action Plan](#) efforts to strengthen Maine's food system by increasing the amount of food consumed in Maine from producers to 30% by 2030.

However, describing your intended use of solar power and/or rain catchment systems may help the applicant to respond to the two questions related to the Greenhouse Management Plan and the Sustainability Plan.

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Q. Is the Local Food Production question more related to diversifying and increasing the number of food distribution sites and channels, or would increasing the amount of food produced for an existing network of food security partners qualify just as well?

A. This question seeks to better understand how the applicant's project will respond to the proposed problem, gap, or need in the area of local food production. To receive full points, the applicant must fully describe how funding will help increase food production and local food access, and demonstrates a clear vision for the types of foods that will be grown, a plan to increase and provide measurable results of how foods will be sold, donated, shared, or otherwise distributed to the community.

If your project responds to local food security needs by creating a distribution site to reduce barriers, please describe that intent. If your project responds to a need to increase food produced for an existing distribution network, please describe that intent. Either way, the response should be focused on the change in your community that you are trying to make by purchasing, installing, and operating a greenhouse.