

State of Maine
Master Score Sheet

RFP# 202212201					
Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2					
Bidder Name:		Tender Soles Farm	Little Ridge Farm	Dogpatch Farm	
Proposed Cost:		\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	
Scoring Sections	Points Available				
Section I: Eligibility	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	
Section II: Completeness of Business Plan	5	5	5	5	
Section III: Management Capacity	20	20	15	18	
Section IV: Financial Capacity & Debt Management	10	10	8	9	
Section V: Collateral and Asset Base	20	20	15	20	
Section VI: Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital	30	30	29	30	
Section VII: Other Conditions	15	15	15	15	
TOTAL	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>97</u>	



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION & FORESTRY**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Amanda Beal
Commissioner**

March 24, 2023

Susan Hamel
419 Old County Rd.
Washington, ME 04574

**SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFP # 202212201,
Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2**

Dear Ms. Hamel:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidder(s):

- Dogpatch Farm
- Tender Soles Farm
- Little Ridge Farm

The bidders listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings. The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidders soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFP, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFP are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Redfield", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alex Redfield

Program Administrator
alexander.redfield@maine.gov
(207)592-0640

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION & FORESTRY**

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Governor**

**Amanda Beal
Commissioner**

March 24, 2023

Kate Del Vecchio and Richard Lee
453 Main St.
Richmond, ME 04357

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFP # 202212201,
Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

Dear Ms. Del Vecchio and Mr. Lee:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidder(s):

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION & FORESTRY**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Amanda Beal
Commissioner**

March 24, 2023

Keena Tracy
101 Gould Rd.
Lisbon Falls, ME 04252

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Awards under RFP # 202212201,
Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

Dear Ms. Tracy:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract awards to the following bidder(s):

- Dogpatch Farm
- Tender Soles Farm
- Little Ridge Farm

The bidders listed above received the evaluation team's highest rankings. The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidders soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFP, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFP are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

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Sincerely,

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Alex Redfield

Program Administrator
alexander.redfield@maine.gov
(207)592-0640

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**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFP Coordinator: Alex Redfield

Names of Evaluators: Matthew Boucher, Margaret Cummings, Chris Wood, Leslie Forstadt

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	x	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II: Completeness of Business Plan	5	5
Section III: Management Capacity	20	18
Section IV: Financial Capacity & Debt Management	10	9
Section V: Collateral and Asset Base	20	20
Section VI: Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital	30	30
Section VII: Other Conditions	15	15
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>97</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**OVERVIEW OF SECTION I
Preliminary Information**

Section I. Preliminary Information

Evaluation Team Comments:

The applicant completed Phase 1 and owns at least 5 acres of land. No eligibility issues were identified.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Completeness of Business Plan**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Completeness of Business Plan	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

- The business plan submitted by the applicant includes all of the information required in the RFP.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Management Capacity**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Management Capacity	20	18

Evaluation Team Comments:

- The panel was impressed by the cost analysis of external vs. internal processing costs and potential savings.
- The business plan demonstrates that the applicant has a clear vision and understanding of future growth opportunities.
- Clarity on how the team will function and what skills and roles are represented would provide greater understanding of the assembled capacity to address business needs. At the same time, having such a large team acknowledges how significant this change may be to their business model and have brought in external support to address that.
- This change is big and will expand the scope of the operation significantly. The review panel appreciates the depth and breadth of experience contributed by the team that has been assembled, but feedback centered around treading carefully as growing into such an ambitious structure. There are some additional services available to Maine farmers to help explore *human* resource management beyond business plan development and FFF Program Administrator is happy to make referrals accordingly.
- Experience in adjusting through the history of the operation demonstrates ability to adapt through changing business climates.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Financial Capacity and Debt Management**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section IV. Financial Capacity and Debt Management	10	9

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Potential partners that would rent the facility is a huge asset here, bringing both shared community buy-in to the success of the facility and additional cash flow.
- Expense projections may be conservative.
- Business plan demonstrates deep understanding of the logistics and analysis required to manage a farm operation, but this is now a butcher/charcuterie operation.
- The current meat processing landscape is such that the applicant can't afford *not* to proceed in this fashion.
- Having stored product to support business viability and cash flow during infrastructure investments is a big asset as well.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION V
Collateral and Asset Base**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section V. Collateral & Asset Base	20	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Detail on land management strategy demonstrates an understanding of good stewardship of the physical resource base.
- Current structures seem capable of handling a pivot of this type.
- Land use decisions prioritizing nutrient management are noted.
- Community value of a local butcher is real.
- Such a community-oriented facility stands to serve as a benefit to the ag community more broadly - all while supporting the applicant's bottom line.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION VI
Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section VI: Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital	30	30

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Focus on the reduction of waste and ways to expand on-farm revenue makes a lot of sense. Bringing things in-house eliminates dependence on unreliable external sources.
- Greater clarity on the slaughter vs. processing relationship would be helpful, though savings from both travel and processing costs are clearly identified.
- Pasture rotation and stewardship are clearly articulated, very important for long-term success and profitability. Lots of other external support for this type of management practice throughout the state.
- Partnerships with high-end restaurants noted.
- The scoring criteria are clearly addressed here. Well done.
- E-Commerce model makes a lot of sense to capture visiting customers/folks from away. A monthly 'box' model is a great way to build customer base.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION VII
Other Conditions**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section VII: Other Conditions	15	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

- There is moderate development pressure and threat to conversion is notable.
- Reducing the herd size always has benefits for soil quality.
- Solar array has significant cost savings and leads to external environmental benefits.
- Review panel noted that the timeline for the 2023 season may be incompatible with SOM award timelines and encourages the applicant to think about alternative scenarios for timing.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFP Coordinator: Alex Redfield

Names of Evaluators: Matthew Boucher, Margaret Cummings, Chris Wood, Leslie Forstadt

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	x	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II: Completeness of Business Plan	5	5
Section III: Management Capacity	20	15
Section IV: Financial Capacity & Debt Management	10	8
Section V: Collateral and Asset Base	20	15
Section VI: Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital	30	29
Section VII: Other Conditions	15	15
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>87</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**OVERVIEW OF SECTION I
Preliminary Information**

Section I. Preliminary Information

Evaluation Team Comments:

The applicant completed Phase 1 and owns at least 5 acres of land. No eligibility issues were identified.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Completeness of Business Plan**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Completeness of Business Plan	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

- The business plan submitted by the applicant includes all of the information required in the RFP.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Management Capacity**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Management Capacity	20	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

- 15 years of operation, significant history with the farm through shifts and fluctuations in market composition and productions strategies.
- Made clear efforts to adapt to changes in the marketplace – this demonstrates a proven ability to pivot as an operator.
- May not have sufficiently articulated management capacity as it relates to non-farm elements in the proposed idea for change. Is there experience managing rental spaces or facilitating yoga classes or doing other things laid out in the proposal.
- Divergence in mission may be manageable, but would it detract from the farm management capacity? Some additional thought here would have potentially yielded more favorable scoring.
- The applicant has full decision-making authority over their land and business operations.
- The pieces are here to make it successful, but finding the right people and team, and accordingly, bringing on the right skills and experience to complement existing capacity would be key.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Financial Capacity and Debt Management**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section IV. Financial Capacity and Debt Management	10	8

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Income and expense presentation is really well done and the data included therein is compelling.
- Financing composition for barn construction could be a concern. Are the expense targets reasonable considering the scope of the construction? Is the size of the event space right-sized for the financial capacity and management capacity as currently conceived?
- Note: because the collateral will be based on the construction project, more information on the construction project is needed to instill confidence in the applicant's ability to implement the idea as proposed.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION V
Collateral and Asset Base**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section V. Collateral & Asset Base	20	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

- See comment in Section IV related to interaction between collateral and plan/scope of construction project.
- The business plan would be well suited to consider some of the other challenging impacts of developing the shared use space - is parking possible? If the space can support 100 people, can 100 cars fit on the property without impacting the farm operation?

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION VI
Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section VI: Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital	30	29

Evaluation Team Comments:

- There is room in the local market for a space of this size and focus, in fact it might be extra competitive considering the nature of event rentals throughout Southern Maine.
- Lots of strong elements of the proposal - on-farm store/new people in the space - but would love to see additional thoughts and reflections about whether adding these types of projects would detract from the integrity of farm products or farmland.
- The idea as presented will clearly boost profitability, address relevant challenges and obstacles directly, and lead to a more diverse, sustainable operation.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION VII
Other Conditions**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section VII: Other Conditions	15	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Development pressure in the area is relatively high.
- A significant portion of owned land to be protected through FPA.
- There are material economic and environmental benefits to be realized through implementation of this project.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Name of RFP Coordinator: Alex Redfield

Names of Evaluators: Matthew Boucher, Margaret Cummings, Chris Wood, Leslie Forstadt

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	x	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II: Completeness of Business Plan	5	5
Section III: Management Capacity	20	20
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<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**OVERVIEW OF SECTION I
Preliminary Information**

Section I. Preliminary Information

Evaluation Team Comments:

The applicant completed Phase 1 and owns at least 5 acres of land. No eligibility issues were identified.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Completeness of Business Plan**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Completeness of Business Plan	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

- The business plan submitted by the applicant includes all of the information required in the RFP.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Management Capacity**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Management Capacity	20	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Current farm management structure as described will have the capacity to adopt proposed changes as proposed.
- Blend of experienced full and part-time staff more than adequate to support continued operation and income during transition.
- Consistent improvements to the operation over its history indicate the applicant's capacity to manage development and growth well.
- The applicant has full decision-making authority over their land and business operations.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Financial Capacity and Debt Management**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section IV. Financial Capacity and Debt Management	10	10

Evaluation Team Comments:

- The Idea for Change identified in the application and articulated in the business plan should greatly expand capacity and financial health.
- Adding on-site production for value added products, creating a better on-farm retail opportunity, and developing a rental income stream are all great components of farm viability.
- Improving quality and quantity of existing will be a major benefit.
- Business plan helped provide great detail on how this is going to work and how this will benefit overall.
- Ambitious goal for value added production. Fermentation trends and detail included provides a greater level of confidence.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION V
Collateral and Asset Base**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section V. Collateral & Asset Base	20	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Year round farm store could lead to the project impact to financial viability.
- Efficiencies gained will support a transition to no-till and yield greater benefits down the line.
- Noted community support - social capital is also evident

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION VI
Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section VI: Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital	30	30

Evaluation Team Comments:

- This was a very well thought out, concise, detailed business plan with strong assumptions. Well done.
- This plan is compelling and accessible to readers with a variety of experiences, regardless of their fluency with farm operations and strategies.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/2023

**EVALUATION OF SECTION VII
Other Conditions**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section VII: Other Conditions	15	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

- No-till create huge conservation benefits on-farm and more broadly.
- Adding another market creates community benefits.
 - Change is in line with current operational trends and further supports existing mission and values.

STATE OF MAINE INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3.1.23

EVALUATOR NAME: Leslie Forstadt

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments: Pigs, chicken, turkeys; Washington Maine; commercial kitchen to process and value added products, add ecommerce, cold storage and pack and ship area, repairs on building and drive, solar array install, new vehicle purchase; request recommendation for 2% interest rate through Ag Marketing Loan Fund

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- One person with a great deal of experience and connections. Needs training in butchering though will not be primary butcher? Clarification here
- Two children involved in the farm. Unclear how their participation will continue-one seems to be on board. A team of 10 who will be part time and fill in help. Clarity of the workplan with 10 people involved is needed.

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Absolutely, yes. There are a lot of projections and plans with what to do with these funds, and anticipated market to purchase products.
- extra product on hand/freezer to bridge gap time

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes: planning for rotational planting, clearing trees

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Strategies are very diverse including upgrades, multiple purchases. Does build up the viability of existing efforts and increases capacity and production

- Niche with the breed and breeding of a particular pig type.

Other Conditions Scoring

Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- want to clear trees, add forage crops
- processing equipment, upgrades (electrician and plumber); plan code for kitchen, possible labor, walk-in freezer and cold storage

- Loss of wholesale/restaurant business with pandemic, looking for new online audiences

-might choose to preserve the land

-timeline by summer market season may not be realistic

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 2/24/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Chris Wood

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Individual Evaluator Comments: Chris Wood

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Very good team but what is the cost of all of these people and what is their reason or why?
- Concern about a lot of work for one person and two part time employees

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Good global coverage on cash flow
- Inflation concern and increased costs – break into ecommerce/wholesale market

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Understanding scope of purchase and work needed.

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 2/24/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Chris Wood

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

- Increase commercial kitchen while also supporting other farmers by renting space to them for a fraction of the cost.
- Food prep/sales experience in market, shipping options to clients and shelf life process changes if shipping across country

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Improved marketing plan needed along with a SCORE mentor??

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 2/28/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matt Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments: Matt Boucher

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Applicant identifies areas of needed growth to ensure project success and has plan to make that growth.
- Management capacity appears significant, has already identified 7 farms that are interested in renting the commercial kitchen for animal processing.
- Applicant has a great sense of the market forces surrounding pork production and seeks to fill a major need considering these forces
- Applicant has assembled a team with diverse expertise that will help transition the business, covering all bases.

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Financial health will be improved, applicant has identified numerous phases of hog production that, when brought under in-house processing, will yield higher profits.
- Has stored product that can support the business during interruptions in operation due to infrastructure work.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 2/28/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matt Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

- Demonstrates significant experience and adjustments made over 10 years in operation to continue business success.

Collateral and Asset Base – “*Can existing resources support this new direction?*”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Has personal cash and in-kind contribution to support infrastructure improvements
- Expected income increases from infrastructure improvements should support loan repayment, contingency plan is discussed if sales and income from infrastructure changes do not reach expected levels. Overall assets and inputs appear appropriate to support new direction.
-

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “*Will it work?*”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- New income includes value-added products such as charcuterie and cash saved by bringing animal processing in-house rather than outsourced. Facilities improvements and training/partnerships outlined indicate that the project will be successful.
- Ecommerce will allow applicant to sell products to tourist customers, this model is broadly successful for other food industries (wine and cider clubs).
- Has a social media marketing plan to increase customer base
- Rotational pastures will keep land healthy and reduce needs for inputs, collectively improving overall sustainability of the business (I.e. the soil and its health is considered an asset that, managed properly, will support farm business goals).

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 2/28/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matt Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- The degree of change to the business is substantial and new, creating a space with community access to support other small family farms in the area will require additional management considerations and will increase farm vitality broadly.
- Major goal of reducing herd size by making up income by increasing farm efficiency will support general conservation objectives regarding soil and water quality. Farm efficiency increases include transitioning to on-farm processing.
- Installing a solar array will cut costs and increase farm sustainability

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Want to build new meat processing facility- need building, HCAAP and other certifications and a new vehicle
- 10-team members → wanted an org chart. But all of the team members seem to have well-defined roles
- ok

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- AMLF loan AND cash grant (25%)
- Will protect 20 acres
- Ag sector benefits
- I think they can financially take on this undertaking
- Stored product can support business
- Have made adjustments/experience
- Investments will save money in the long term (solar energy)

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Collateral and Asset Base – “*Can existing resources support this new direction?*”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Very intentional planning
- Better cultivation of land
- Using more of the animal → waste stream management is great
-

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “*Will it work?*”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Yes- business plan demonstrates all of this
- Again I feel like they cannot afford not to take on this expansion
- Ecommerce potential for shipping cured meats

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Will rent out kitchen and pack facility to other farmers
- Lower costs and less waste
- Goal one: on farm processing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Dogpatch Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

- This is a new and different change to the business that would be a net positive for both the farm and the surrounding community
- Goal 2: ecommerce, shipping and POS
 - Seems relevant to keep the farm profitable
- Goal 3: Solar Pannels – save 100,000 dollars per year
- Goal 4: reclaim pasture land
 - This is all around good for conservation and profitability of farm

Reduction in hog capacity is better for the land

- Lard soap→ sustainable not to use oil products, use more of the whole animal and reduce chemicals

STATE OF MAINE INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3.1.23

EVALUATOR NAME: Leslie Forstadt

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: N/A

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments: Lisbon Falls; organic produce CSA and wholesale; will build insulated barn for winter work and customer space, product storage, community event and education space, rentable apartment; consideration for 2% interest loan

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Yes, great deal of experience (10+years) and part time employees (3-5) who stay between 2-6 years
- The market research indicates capacity to manage information and have this project be supported by current and potential customers
- management of non-farming activities and weddings, etc. could be a concern. Capacity for management not addressed in this proposal.

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Appreciate the scenarios thought through in the event funding does not come through. However, this project would benefit best from the funding.

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- current resources cannot support this venture

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Very diverse (non farm specific) income streams and long term plan considered: community events, rental space, apartment (could be for farm manager or employee)
- Realistic, community-engaged ideas with primary funding mechanism being space rental (unique to geographic area) and increased customers (identified as a challenge)

Other Conditions Scoring

Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Business plan goals and objectives are clearly articulated and detailed
- Business to stay the same, diversify non-farming offerings, and increase customer base for existing products

- Recommend funding but slower start to determine capacity to build, then offering community based space of smaller events

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 2/27/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matt Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments: Matt Boucher

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- 15 years in operation; have trialed multiple operating models and settled on one that works well for their needs; have made significant and meaningful efforts to understand changes in market forces and adapt to them.
- Joining CSAware to increase CSA flexibility; working with advisors through two other grant opportunities to make sure business decisions are in line with goals and current standing.
- Advisory team in place to ensure project outcomes are attained.

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Barn will improve financial health. It is an asset that will add significant value-added opportunity, especially as an event space and post-harvest processing center.
- Data presented exemplifies the farm's ability to carry out the project
- CSA model precludes cash flow deficits; debt coverage based on net cash enough to cover loan payments

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 2/27/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matt Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Explicitly not seeking to increase productivity; rather, applicant aims to increase post-harvest efficiency to reduce spoilage, thus earning more profit off of current production level.

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Building a multi-purpose barn will help create value-added opportunities and improve working conditions for employees
- Current barn can lead to product damage and loss. New barn will help bring in new customers for CSA and FarmDrop orders.
- New barn will help alleviate system inefficiencies by ensuring there is dedicated space for each step in the process.
- Marketing plan in place to increase customer-base.

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 2/27/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matt Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Reviewer Notes:

- The change is not highly significant, but the value-added opportunities will bring a new aspect to the business
- Current organic practices support soil health; production will not be increased to meet new financial goals, allowing them to adhere to principles that will sustain soil and water quality.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- 15 years in operation
- Have decision making capacity over farm. 10 acres of farmland will be protected
- Nonfarming entities and business- yoga, cooking and other classes

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Seems financially stable enough to take on the project- if the changes projected are accurate then the farm/business would remain profitable
- Barn budget- may be short \$200,000; barn weddings?
- 2024—trends toward profitability

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

- Newly acquired assets help farm viability and help protect existing quality soils

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Seems like a strong idea- did they complete a market analysis on the need for farm community space/yoga studio?

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Increased space brings more people to the farm to participate in agriculture
- Biggest challenge: increasing CSA customers
- Want to: increase CSA members, create firm barn design, find partners/class educators

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 2/24/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Chris Wood

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: N/A

Individual Evaluator Comments: Chris Wood

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- 15 years in business
- Overall understanding of plan is impressive

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Financial concern around the building of the farm due to lack of experienced builders along with making sure you have the right architect to help with the build.
- Also inflation impact on build and cost of materials and labor.

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- 25 acres of farm land with ten acres available to farm
- Area CSA is important growth component and ability to partner with other farms is key. Especially in that area

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Little Ridge Farm

DATE: 2/24/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Chris Wood

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: N/A

Reviewer Notes:

- My concern is mixed use of space and ability to pivot if one idea is not working. Rental of space for events is challenging to understand so I would want to see a separate business plan for the venue and also around costs.
- Again more focus on CSA growth and support for that versus the barn build which due to the rental space and apartment could even be broken out from the farm as a separate entity.

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Moderate devt. pressure, only growing over time. Significant pivot can be exciting.

STATE OF MAINE INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 2.28.23

EVALUATOR NAME: Leslie Forstadt

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: N/A

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Individual Evaluator Comments: Organic veg, flower, ferment, fruit. Richmond. 36'x50' building with a year-round farm stand, commercial kitchen, walk-in cooler, wash/pack/and storage.

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Will have one FT farmer, multiple staff (3) and multiple part time family (2) funded
- Farm's current capacity seems very strong, has evolved over time. The proposed project does not introduce too many new elements-it provides infrastructure primarily in the form of building, refrigeration, kitchen

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- greatly increased capacity for financial health with reduced time for current efforts, increased capacity to make products on site, store on site, and rent to other producers (kitchen)
- very strong business plan that makes the case this will be effective
- cash flow forecast shows there are available assets, shows planning capacity and financial management and prioritizing are strengths

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Very much so, and community support noted repeatedly-they sell multiple other vendors and want to support peers with the kitchen, access to the farm stand year round
- Will have building (infrastructure) on site that increases capacity
 - No till and soil quality

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Very viable plan if estimates are accurate, which I do not have reason to doubt
- Asset to local community
- Increased sales capability year round

Other Conditions Scoring

Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- no major changes seen per se, except increased efficiencies and further support of mission and values
- supporting transition to no-till farming

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 2/25/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matthew Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments: Matt Boucher

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- 10 years of operation; Applicant is expanding on current business model rather than transitioning to a new one, so changes to be implemented are likely to be successful.
- Consistent farm improvements since property purchase in 2015 suggest applicants are prepared and capable of managing and succeeding from this project.
- Advisory team in place to ensure continued success, project implementation, etc.

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Increasing value-added opportunities by adding a commercial kitchen will support overall financial health
- Data suggesting 15% growth per year suggests farm has correct trajectory
-

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 2/25/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Matthew Boucher

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Increases in value-added sales of kimchi will support infrastructure improvements
- Transition to no-till will improve land productivity significantly

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Infrastructure improvements transition farm to year-round enterprise with increased ability to sell goods from other farms.
- Strong sense of market trends that will factor into business decisions
-

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Infrastructure improvements will reduce operational strain so applicant can transition to no-till production, which will significantly improve soil health and water quality.
- Marketing plan in place to attract new customers; expanding reach by increasing farmer’s market participation

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by individual evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is required that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Have decision making capabilities on the farm
- Asking for a new building to house farm store, refrigeration, wash/pack station and commercial kitchen
- Diversified experience to run farm

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- year round income is a plus
- numbers seem to add with projected growth- projected trends
- I feel confident their business plan supports finances to take on the project and is sufficient.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

Collateral and Asset Base – “*Can existing resources support this new direction?*”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Yes- directly supports the new development/improvement of a building that would keep the farm open year-round
- No till: makes soil more productive for longer
- Connection to other farms

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “*Will it work?*”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies, marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Expand existing CSA, on-farm sales and add another farmers market- will work
- k
-

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Goal 2: reduce stalking time of farm store
- Goal 3: reduce time of fermented products

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 3/1/23

EVALUATOR NAME: Maggie Cummings

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: DACF

- Goal 4: increase veggie washing and packing efficiency
-

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 2/24/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Chris Wood

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: N/A

Individual Evaluator Comments: Chris Wood

Management Capacity

Scoring Guidance: Does the applicant have the experience, skills, and capacity to successfully implement the change as described to their operation? Consider experience based on number of years farming, diversity of agricultural experience, or other factors.

Reviewer Notes:

- Good partners to support farm growth
- 11 years in business
- Good experience of owners in field. Need support from a business advisor for either marketing/sales strategy to go into larger stores for their fermented products.

Financial Capacity and Debt Management

Scoring Guidance: Will the Idea(s) for Change improve the Business' financial health? Has the Farm demonstrated sufficient data collection and record-keeping skills required to take on a project as proposed in the Business plan? Is the Farm sufficiently financially stable to take on this project?

Reviewer Notes:

- Costs for work seems in line with current economics
- Really like the plan to change how they farm to more work smarter not harder. Even on the plan for the stand is all about efficiency. This will help keep labor costs reduced.

Collateral and Asset Base – “Can existing resources support this new direction?”

Scoring Guidance: The application and business plan demonstrate that the Applicant will improve the productivity of the land (soil quality, fertility, water holding capacity), the physical condition of the buildings and equipment, and maintain any newly acquired assets to increase the overall sustainability of the farm business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Plan is to try farm stand and fermented product – good foundation and farm stands add significant value opportunity for the store. Especially location based.
- 45 acres with 15 farmable and 30 wooded

Farm Vitality & Development of New Capital – “Will it work?”

Scoring Guidance: The Business Plan demonstrates, through better strategies,

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202212201

RFP TITLE: Maine Farms for the Future Phase 2

BIDDER NAME: Tender Soles Farm

DATE: 2/24/2023

EVALUATOR NAME: Chris Wood

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: N/A

marketing, production efficiencies and upgrading of facilities and equipment, a likely increase in profitability and overall net worth that will improve the overall sustainability of the Farm Business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Out of all applications this is the only unique food product that has an opportunity to separate the farm and allow for larger scale sales if can get into different markets and stores.

Other Conditions

Scoring Guidance:

(A) The Business Plan identifies how the current or proposed farm operations will accomplish broader conservation objectives such as protecting water quality, improving wildlife habitat, or maintaining open space and local scenic and cultural amenities as long as such practices enhance or maintain the profitability of the farm.

(B) The percentage of the farmland owned by the applicant that is to be protected under the Farmland Protection Agreement.

(C) The degree to which the change in the business is new and different to the business.

Reviewer Notes:

- Great proposal, good community and conservation values. Exciting opportunity.
- Moderate/growing development pressure.



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202212200

Chris Wood

RFP TITLE: Farms for the Future Phase 1

I, NAME, accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

DocuSigned by:

Chris Wood

2/14/2023

Signature

Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202212200

Leslie Forstadt

RFP TITLE: Farms for the Future Phase 1

I, NAME, accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

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DocuSigned by:

Leslie Forstadt

3/13/2023

Signature

Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202212200
RFP TITLE: Farms for the Future Phase 1

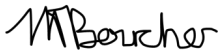
I, Matthew Boucher, accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

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2/15/2023

Signature

Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202212200
RFP TITLE: Farms for the Future Phase 1

I, Maggie Cummings , accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

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I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

Margaret Cummings 2/14/23

Signature

Date