



PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW				
Department Office/Division/Program:	DACF/ARD			
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:	Michelle Webb			
(If applicable) Department Reference #:				
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$ 157,049.18	Advantage CT / RQS #:	20230420*2777	
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:		Proposed End Date:	
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:	7/1/2023	Effective Date:	5/15/2025
	Previous End Date:	6/30/2025	New End Date:	12/31/2025
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:	
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:	
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		Marshall Communication Augusta Me 04330		
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Contract for Agricultural Marketing and Public Relations, including the Real Maine Agriculture Promotion Program.		

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION			
Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	L. Other Authorization

Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

The mission of the Division of the Agricultural Resource Development is to encourage agricultural development and sustainability through education, annual industry events, technical assistance, research, economic development and environmental stewardship of Maine’s existing and future farm businesses. ARD is responsible for the implementation, management and stewardship of the brand Real Maine. This promotions program currently connects consumers and wholesale buyers to Maine’s great food and farm products. Through its primary function, the website, consumers can search for farms in their area or for particular products, fine Maine farmers markets, experience Agricultural Fairs and agri-tourism events throughout Maine, and find information and resources to connect with Maine’s products. The primary feature of this promotion tool is a searchable listings of producers to find access to various Maine agricultural and forestry related products and services, community supported agriculture farms, resources, and related marketing and promotions activities. “Real Maine” is a program of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. It connects people with Maine farmers and food producers. By sharing their stories and giving consumers access to authentic Maine farm products and experiences, we are supporting the growth of an industry that is an essential part of the state’s economy and the quality of life enjoyed by Maine people.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

DACF’s Agricultural Resource Development Division (ARD) has been engaged with marketing and PR firm, Marchall Communications since 6/1/2018. For continuity of services without lapse, it is important to contract with the current vendor through a sole source justification through December 31, 2025 as the Division prepares the next PQVL/RFA for marketing and public relations services. Marshall Communications has elevated the brand, tool kit, searchable website, and resources for both consumers and producers of Maine’s agricultural produce and products. Marshall Communications is uniquely familiar with the developing Real Maine brand. Due to significant staff turnover in both the Bureau and the ARD Division, and a need to revise the official Real Maine seal to be relevant and evergreen in Maine markets and food systems as well as in other states and foreign markets, the Real Maine logo and seal are in mid-revision phase. To stop the contract on 6/30/2024 would set the rebranding activity back and would create a significant expense burden to start from scratch with a new vendor.

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

The cost of the annual marketing, promotions, and ad campaign media is \$157,049.18 for the performance period of 6/1/2025-12/31/2025. This is in alignment with prior contracts and amendments to include DACF ARD Real Maine marketing, Maine Healthy Soil Program, Maine Senior Farm Share Program, agricultural events promotions, media buys, videography, and website maintenance and enhancement. Additionally, these rates align with those that have been received through the PQVL.

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

DACF ARD is in the process of reviewing applications for the PQVL. Once complete, a mini bid will be sent out to all eligible applications to competitively secure a multi-year agricultural marketing and promotions vendor.

PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies.

No – If No, proceed to Part V.

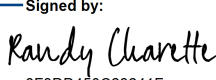
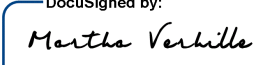
PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE

Maine law contains Conflict of Interest statutes directed to State Departments, State Officers, and Employees Generally under MRS [Title 5, §18](#) and [§18-A](#), in harmony with MRS [Title 17, §3104](#).

The requesting department signatory understands and acknowledges Maine’s Conflict of Interest statutes.

PART VI: APPROVALS

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):	Signed by:  <small>8F3DD450C23241F...</small>		
Typed Name:	Randy Charette	Date:	5/22/2025
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by:  <small>891CE7A1493D45B...</small>		
Typed Name:	Martha verhille	Date:	5/29/2025

