

NM HFFF FY25 Rubric

Complete applications submitted by eligible entities will be evaluated and scored based on the criteria below. HFFF Review Committee will base scores only on the information provided in the application.

This is a competitive program, eligible entities will be evaluated and assigned scores according to the quality of the information they provide. There is a maximum of 190 total points.

Each application will be scored by five HFFF reviewers, and the scores will be averaged.

All complete applications will be further evaluated by the HFFF Review Committee of internal and external experts who will determine a consensus ranking of applications that will take into account the application score, project type and geographic diversity.

Budgets will be reviewed and may be adjusted for allowable costs and reasonable uses of funds.

In general, the fund prioritizes projects demonstrating a focus on underserved communities in the following **PRIORITY AREAS**:

- Increasing access to food for historically under-resourced communities
- Addressing workforce development challenges through the creation and retention of jobs in the food and agricultural supply chain.
- Strengthening and diversifying in-state market channel access for small and mid-scale food and agricultural operations
- Advancing food safe storage/aggregation, distribution and transportation in regional food supply chain networks
- Supporting producers in the implementation of regenerative agricultural practices

1. Project Category:

- a. Food Retail (0 to 10 Points), OR
- b. Processing (0 to 10 Points), OR
- c. Production (0 to 10 Points), OR
- d. Aggregation/Distribution/Transportation (0 to 10 Points)

2. Organization Ownership/Management Structure, Partnerships (0 to 15 Points):

Ownership or management structure, appropriate size, and strong relevant project partners including supplier or buyer relationships and/or community partnerships as applicable. Nature of partnerships including duration, impact, or other specific information.

3. Organization Ownership/Management Structure, Experience (0 to 15 Points): How organization's experience to date will ensure a successful outcome for this project.

4. **People and Places Served (0 to 15 Points):** Communities and populations are served through the NM Grown Program, Low- to moderate-income residents, Projects in underserved urban and rural areas. Project identifies the location AND nature of the Underserved Communities they seek to serve, AND a reasonable approximation of the number of individuals who will benefit from the project, critical elements and challenges.
5. **Project Summary: Project Proposal (0 to 15 Points):** Project proposed, including brief overview of business model and description of sustainability of operations, need for grant assistance, and sources of revenue, and whether this is a new project or expansion of existing operation.
6. **Project Summary: Project Proposal – How Support Helps & Fits Mission (0 to 15 Points):** Why HFFF support is necessary to allow the project to move forward? Why is HFFF support and this project important or catalytic to other goals of the organization? Description of how the project fits within your organization's larger mission and other planned activities over the next 12-24 months.
7. **Project Summary: Partnerships (0 to 15 Points):** Describe any partnerships, commercial relationships or existing contracts that are relevant to this project. Partnerships should be meaningful and/or have formal agreements.
8. **Business Model (0-15 Points):** More detailed business model and how HFFF grant funding might allow your organization to expand your existing business model.
9. **Timeline (0 to 15 points):** Provides an overview of project timeline, including current status, key milestones and key factors determining project feasibility and success. Applicant demonstrates that grant funds can confidently be used by Awardee by December 16, 2025.
10. **Project Impact – Priority Points (0 to 15 points):** Priority will be given to projects that have the following attributes:

Applicants asked to describe the relevant metrics of success they anticipate for the proposed project and to make sure to include measures, metrics and/or other quantitative aspects which provide value to the State food supply chain for one or more of the following:

- a. Increasing access to food for historically under-resourced communities
 - b. Addressing workforce development challenges through the creation and retention of jobs in the food and agricultural supply chain.
 - c. Strengthening and diversifying in-state market channel access for small and mid-scale food and agricultural operations
 - d. Advancing food safe storage/aggregation, distribution and transportation in regional food supply chain networks
 - e. Supporting producers in the implementation of regenerative agricultural practices
11. **Budget (0 to 15 points):** Detailed, itemized, presented as table/spreadsheet. We advise including a 5% buffer for inflation in all budgets. You may also upload documentation demonstrating how you arrived at the budget figures (such as

screenshots, quotes, or estimates). Higher scores will be awarded for thorough budgets and backup documentation

12. **Other Funding (0 to 15 points):** Additional funding sources secured.
13. **Budget Narrative (0 to 15 points):** Describes in detail how the elements of the budget support capacity to achieve the goals of proposed project.