

VERMONT BUILDING AT THE BIG E

BIG E 2021 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) announces the release of the application for Vermont businesses seeking to vend at the Vermont Building at the Big E event at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, MA. The Vermont Building is one of six New England buildings on the Avenue of the States at the Big E, a 17-day fair and exposition which takes place each September in West Springfield, MA. During this event, which brings in approximately 1.5 million people each year, the Vermont Building is home to a variety of Vermont food and retail businesses, which showcase the best of what Vermont has to offer.

KEY DATES

Release Date:	April 9, 2021
Application Deadline:	July 15 th , 2021
Application Review Period:	July 15 th , 2021

PRIORITY PRODUCTS

The following products are prioritized for the Vermont Building for 2021. Preference will be given to products that use Vermont-sourced ingredients and/or materials and align with current regional/national trends.

- Savory prepared foods that do not emit any grease laden vapors in the cooking process. Fried or grilled foods are not permitted in the building at this time. Food may be par-cooked and heated on site and/or cooked using appliances such as convection ovens, crockpots, microwaves, etc.
- Apple pie or crisp
- Vermont made pottery
- Hot and cold coffee to go
- Other consumer goods such as accessories, art, gifts, jewelry, body products, apparel, and home products.

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CONTACT

PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

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Agency of Agriculture staff are available to assist you during State of Vermont business hours, Monday–Friday, 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM. Assistance may not be available shortly before deadlines.

SUBMISSION POLICY

It is the applicant’s responsibility to adhere to all application instructions including the submission dates and times included in this request for applications (RFA). The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) will accept the last validated electronic submission through the grants management system, [WebGrants](#), prior to the posted deadline as the final and sole acceptable submission of an application.

VAAFAM will not accept submission or re-submission of incomplete or delayed applications after the posted deadline, barring exceptional circumstances.

WebGrants will prevent applications from being submitted after the deadline.

SUBMISSION CONFIRMATION

When an application has successfully been submitted, the applicant will be redirected to an **Application Submitted Confirmation** page with an Application ID number (see example below) and receive a confirmation email.

SECTION I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Application Submitted Confirmation

You have successfully submitted your Pre-Application for Testing Process Application with Application ID [40504]. Grantor has received your application for evaluation.

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

QUICK FACTS

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to provide a unique regional marketing opportunity to Vermont businesses, to elevate the Vermont brand, and to support the Vermont economy.

ELIGIBILITY

Any business or organization will be considered that is registered with the Vermont Secretary of State and has been in business for over one year and is in good standing with the State of Vermont.

COST TO PARTICIPATE

Vendors will be due a standard commission on all sales done at the Big E, payable to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

PROJECT LENGTH

2021 Big E projected event dates: September 17 – October 3, 2021

COVID-19 IMPACTS FOR THE 2021 BIG E

VAAFM and Eastern States Exposition are underway in planning for an in-person Big E event in September 2021. Due to unknown circumstances between the release of this RFA and the event, applicants are encouraged to take into consideration that the event may necessitate safety measures to be taken by vendors and/or any circumstances in which the cancellation of the event may be justified.

RETURNING VENDORS

Any vendors that were scheduled and confirmed to participate in the 2020 Big E event do not need to complete an application for the 2021 event.

OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

VENDOR BOOTHS AT THE VERMONT BUILDING

The Vermont Building at the Big E is host to roughly 28 vendors each September. Booth spaces are offered for both retail and food/beverage products. There are booth spaces for the entirety of the 17-day fair, for 8-9 day rotating spots, and occasionally for 5-7 days. While most booths are inside, there are additional spaces on the grounds for products deemed an appropriate fit.

HARVEST NEW ENGLAND: SINGLE DAY EVENT

Businesses interested in trying their product out at the Big E without a multi-day commitment are encouraged to first participate by vending at Harvest New England Day, a single day event. Vendors participate in the farmers market-style event on front lawn of the Vermont Building. There is no fee to participate at this level. The application process is separate from multi-day vendor participation.

Event Date: Friday, October 1, 2021

Application Deadline: June 30, 2021

To apply, visit: <https://bit.ly/36mmvaG>

IMPORTANT VENDOR DETAILS

- Vermont Building open to the public: 10am – 9pm each day, September 17 – October 3, 2021
- Load In/Out: For vendors participating for the first part of the fair, the building is open for load in and set up from 8am-5pm Monday through Thursday, prior to the start of the Big E. For those ending the fair, load out is Monday 8am-5pm and Tuesday 8am – noon.
 - For vendors loading in or out mid-fair: Load in occurs prior to the building opening on morning of the first day of vending, load-out occurs after close of the building on the last night of vending.
- Deliveries may be made each morning/evening at designated times.
- Daily sales reports should be submitted to via online form by 11am for the gross sales from the day prior.
- New vendors are required to have an electronic point of sales system.

BOOTH DESIGN

Vendors are responsible for programming and decorating their own space. Each booth space is different and should be treated as a retail space rather than a tradeshow space. VAAFM will provide design parameters, layout information, and photos of the booth space for new vendors to plan their booth space ahead of time. Any existing components of the booth shall remain within the booth space during the Big E (counters, shelving, etc.). New vendors (with less than 3 consecutive years of vending) should abide by a “pack in, pack out” policy – no painting walls, affixing shelves to walls, etc. Returning vendors will need to gain approval for any booth alterations.

AMENITIES PROVIDED TO VENDORS

- Limited free tickets and parking for booth staff, within reason and according to parameters set by Eastern States Exposition
- Booth electrical: The electrical system for the Vermont Building is currently undergoing upgrades. Vendors offering prepared foods may be affected by this and will need to work with building managers to discuss the power limitations of the booth space and determine the equipment that will work within the available electrical parameters.
- Booth water: Potable water is available in some booth locations, but not all.
- Storage:
 - Dry Storage: Limited space is available within the Vermont Building. Space is allocated based on how many people request it per year and will be assigned ahead of the fair. This storage is not secure.
 - Refrigeration/Freezer: VAAFM provides a service to vendors by offering freezer and cooler space at no cost. Space is allocated based on how many people need it, projected sales of business, and size/type of products sold. Space is at a premium and is not meant to hold all products for vendors for the duration of their stay, however, off-site options are available nearby.
 - Dead Storage: Storage may be available through the Eastern States Exposition for on-grounds long-term parking of larger vehicles. No electrical access is available.

PRODUCT PRIORITIES

VAAFM has identified the following product priorities for the Vermont Building for 2021. Priority will be given to products that use Vermont-sourced ingredients and/or materials and align with current regional/national trends.

- Savory prepared foods that do not emit any grease laden vapors in the cooking process. Fryers or grilled foods are not permitted in the building at this time. Food may be par-cooked and heated on site and/or cooked using appliances such as convection ovens, crockpots, microwaves, etc.
- Apple pie or crisp
- Vermont made pottery
- Hot and cold coffee to go
- Other consumer goods such as accessories, art, gifts, jewelry, body products, apparel, and home products.

ELIGIBILITY

Any business or organization will be considered that is registered with the Vermont Secretary of State and has been in business for over one year and is in good standing with the State of Vermont.

SECTION I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

HOW TO APPLY

All applicants are required to apply by **July 15, 2021 at 4pm** for participation at the Vermont Building through VAAFM's WebGrants system, at: agriculturegrants.vermont.gov

Any vendors that were scheduled and confirmed to participate in the 2020 Big E event do not need to complete an application for the 2021 event.

For resources and guides for applying through WebGrants, please visit: agriculture.vermont.gov/resources-grant-recipients

APPLICATION REVIEW

All applications will be reviewed by a committee made up of industry stakeholders and representatives of multiple Vermont state agencies.

INVITATION INFORMATION

Invitations will be extended to applicants chosen through the review process. VAAFM building managers will negotiate any specific conditions, alterations to products/menus, equipment, etc. directly with the vendor, coming to agreements on booth-specific terms. Following any negotiations, contracts between VAAFM and the vendor will be drafted.

DEADLINES

Application deadline is May 20, 2021 at 11:00 AM.

KEY DATES

DATES MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

April 9	Request for Applications (RFA) released
May 20 at 11:00AM	Deadline to submit full application
May 21 – June 14	Applications review period
June 15th	Notifications of invitations to participate in 2021 Big E
June 2021	(Tentative) Mandatory new vendor on-site visit & orientation at the Vermont Building
July or August 2021	Vermont Building open for two days for vendors to do pre-approved projects in their booth spaces, dates TBD
September 13 - 16	Vermont Building open for vendor set up
September 17 - October 3	Big E open to public

RELATED FUNDED OPPORTUNITIES

TRADE SHOW ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Grants provide Vermont food and forestry businesses with funds to help identify, plan, exhibit and sell their Vermont products at out-of-state tradeshows.

agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/tradeshow

WORKING LANDS ENTERPRISE INITIATIVE

Grants and loans for investments in Vermont's farm, food and forest economies.

workinglands.vermont.gov/

ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

VAAFM offers a menu of funding opportunities as well as business planning and assistance resources available to the Vermont agricultural community:

- Funding Opportunities: agriculture.vermont.gov/grants
- Business Planning & Assistance: agriculture.vermont.gov/businessdevelopment/planning

II. FULL APPLICATION

Big E 2021 – Vendor Application

View our How To Guide for applying through our [WebGrants Application Guide: agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/howtoapply](https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/howtoapply)

Listed below are all questions covered in the 2021 application.

BASIC BUSINESS INFORMATION

- Legal name of business
- Is your legal business name different from your public facing name?
 - If yes: Enter your DBA name:
- Business website
- Do you self-certify that your business is registered with the Vermont Secretary of State and has been in business for over one (1) year?
- Enter the Vermont Secretary of State business ID for your business.
- Is your business headquartered in Vermont?
- Does your business perform substantial business functions in Vermont?
- Do you self-certify that you are in compliance with state regulations and in good standing with the State of Vermont?
- Describe your business in 3-5 sentences.

BUSINESS CONTACT

- Primary onsite contact person
- Onsite contact's email
- Onsite contact's phone
- Point person for contract
- Contract person's email
- Contract person's phone

PRODUCTS

- Vendor type (Food/Beverage or Retail)
- Briefly describe the products you intend to sell at the Big E.
- Why will your products appeal to the Big E attendees?
- Do you intend to carry CBD products or do online sales of CBD?
- Please upload your full proposed menu/product list, using the template.
 - Template includes: product/menu item, description, list of locally sourced ingredients in the item, source of local ingredients

BOOTH PREFERENCE

- Rank your preference on the following options:
 - Indoor: 17 days
 - Indoors: 8-9 days
 - Indoors: 5-7 days
 - Outdoor Food Kiosk: 17 days
 - Outdoor Food Kiosk: 8-9 days

SECTION II: FULL APPLICATION

- Outdoor Farmers Market Style: 1-2 days
- Are you a food/beverage vendor? If yes:
 - Have you vended in the Vermont building in the past three years? If yes:
 - Upload the completed template of your electrical manifest to list the specs of any equipment proposed for your booth.
 - Template includes: equipment, quantity, amps per piece

MARKETING & OUTREACH

- Have you vended at the Vermont for 3 or more consecutive years?
 - If yes:
 - Why are you interested in returning to the Big E?
 - Please articulate how and why this opportunity has supported your business growth
 - What strategies do you employ to reach your Big E customers post-fair?
 - How do you plan to improve the appeal of your booth and customer experience?
 - Please upload a photo of your booth space.
 - If no:
 - Why are you interested in participating in the Big E?
 - What similar event experience do you have to demonstrate capacity to exhibit at the Big E?
 - How will you leverage the Big E as a marketing opportunity?
 - How will you communicate with your Big E customers post-fair?
 - Booths are eclectic in their size, shape and materials. What strategies do you use to showcase your products?
- What tools do you use to communicate with your existing customers? Check all that apply.
 - Options: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, e-newsletters, print newsletters, other
- Describe your business's marketing strategy.
- How does the opportunity to vend fit in with your long-term business goals?

STATE WATER QUALITY COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

- As the official designated authority for this application, this is to certify that our organization, business or supervisory union is currently in "good standing" with the Agency of Natural Resources and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. Our organization, business or supervisory union is not a named party in any administrative order, consent decree, or judicial order relating to Vermont water quality standards issued by the State or any of its agencies or departments, and is in compliance with all federal and State water quality laws and regulations. Mark yes or no.
- I am not able to certify that our organization, business or supervisory union is in "good standing" with the Agency of Natural Resources and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for the following reasons. If you check this box, enter explanation.

III. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

CONTRACT & PAYMENT

Successful applicants must sign a contract with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) indicating their intent to vend under the specific terms negotiated with building managers. The contract will include provisions (terms and conditions) set by the State of Vermont as well as any booth- and/or vendor-specific requirements. Review Attachment C - Standard State Provisions and Contracts and Grants (12/15/2017 Revised) at bgs.vermont.gov/purchasing-contracting/forms for the most recent State of Vermont provisions.

Prior to commencement of work, vendor must submit:

- A. A certificate of insurance consistent with the requirements set forth in Attachment C of the grant agreement [Not required if grantee has a current certificate of insurance on file with the Agency of Agriculture.]
- B. A current [IRS Form W-9](#) (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification), signed within the past six months. [Not required if grantee is already a state vendor.] Please refer to the [W-9 Instructions](#) in order to accurately complete your W-9.

COMMISSION PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Following the close of the fair for the season, VAAFAM will generate a full-fair sales report based on the daily gross sales reported by the vendor. Vendors will receive an invoice from VAAFAM with commission due.

CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

A certificate of insurance (COI) is a common requirement for businesses and organizations; most agents are familiar with it. The State of Vermont must be listed as an additional insured on the grantee's policy. We recommend forwarding the insurance requirements below to prospective insurers for accuracy:

Insurance: Before commencing work on this Agreement the Party must provide certificates of insurance to show that the following minimum coverages are in effect. It is the responsibility of the Party to maintain current certificates of insurance on file with the State through the term of this Agreement. No warranty is made that the coverages and limits listed herein are adequate to cover and protect the interests of the Party for the Party's operations. These are solely minimums that have been established to protect the interests of the State.

Workers Compensation: With respect to all operations performed, the Party shall carry workers' compensation insurance in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont. Vermont will accept an out-of-state employer's workers' compensation coverage while operating in Vermont provided that the insurance carrier is licensed to write insurance in Vermont and an amendatory endorsement is added to the policy adding Vermont for coverage purposes. Otherwise, the party shall secure a Vermont workers' compensation policy, if necessary, to comply with Vermont law.

SECTION III: CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

General Liability and Property Damage: With respect to all operations performed under this Agreement, the Party shall carry general liability insurance having all major divisions of coverage including, but not limited to:

Premises - Operations

Products and Completed Operations

Personal Injury Liability

Contractual Liability

The policy shall be on an occurrence form and limits shall not be less than:

\$1,000,000 Each Occurrence

\$2,000,000 General Aggregate

\$1,000,000 Products/Completed Operations Aggregate

\$1,000,000 Personal & Advertising Injury

Automotive Liability: The Party shall carry automotive liability insurance covering all motor vehicles, including hired and non-owned coverage, used in connection with the Agreement. Limits of coverage shall not be less than \$500,000 combined single limit. If performance of this Agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials, limits of coverage shall not be less than \$1,000,000 combined single limit.

Additional Insured. The General Liability and Property Damage coverages required for performance of this Agreement shall include the State of Vermont and its agencies, departments, officers and employees as Additional Insureds. If performance of this Agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials, then the required Automotive Liability coverage shall include the State of Vermont and its agencies, departments, officers and employees as Additional Insureds. Coverage shall be primary and non-contributory with any other insurance and self-insurance.

Notice of Cancellation or Change. There shall be no cancellation, change, potential exhaustion of aggregate limits or non-renewal of insurance coverage(s) without thirty (30) days written prior written notice to the State.