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SALES CONTACT:

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MEMBER FARMS:

Earth, Water and Seeds

Living Earth Community Farm

Lo Farm

Los Abuelos Farley Farm

Vang C&C Farm

Vegetales San Antonino

Yang Seasonal Garden

Yee Circle Farm

February 7, 2014

Dear City of Madison Food Policy Council,

The Spring Rose Growers Cooperative is excited by the challenge and opportunity posed by the SEED Grant program. As a young business, we are working hard to grow our sales of local produce from our members and achieve financial sustainability. We are always seeking ways to do this while addressing the issues of inequitable food access in our geographic and cultural communities. With our project we will work towards both goals simultaneously in an exciting partnership with Public Health Madison and Dane County. During the primary production season, from June through September, we will deliver boxes of seven or eight different vegetables to satellite public health clinics on a weekly basis. These are sites where mothers collect their WIC benefit checks. On top of the value of their checks, they will be given a voucher of equal value, valid only on site, for immediate purchase of the vegetables available at the mini-market. This structure specifically addresses reasons for the low redemption rate of WIC checks at farmers markets. Additionally, because of the volume we will deliver, we will be able to offer these vegetables at our lower wholesale prices to these clients. In this way we will increase the access to healthy foods for children and families, while also increasing our capacity to aggregate, store and deliver our fresh produce for our member farms. Designed after a model program in Chicago, we believe that this will demonstrate another unique partnership opportunity between the public and private sector. Above all, it will allow us to build stronger community between our culturally diverse membership and the diversity of clients who need and use WIC benefits.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you as we build a more just local food system.

Best Regards,

Cheu Vang
Vang C&C Farm
President of the Board, Spring Rose Growers Cooperative

MADISON FOOD POLICY COUNCIL
 Food Access Improvement "SEED" Grants



APPLICANT INFORMATION

Title of Proposal	Cooperative Harvest for Healthy Communities	Amount Requested: \$10,000.00
Agency/Organization/Group Name	Spring Rose Growers Cooperative	
Contact Person	Kelly Maynard, General Manager	Telephone #: 608-622-2673
Address	810 West Badger Rd. Madison, WI 53713	Email: Kelly.springrosegc@gmail.com

Is your group a 501 (c)(3)?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is your group Incorporated under Chapter 181 Wisc. Stats.?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If no to above, do you have a fiscal agent?	We are legally incorporated under Chapter 185 Wisc. Stats. as a cooperative with EIN and have the ability to receive and manage grant funds.	
		NO <input type="checkbox"/>

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Please limit each answer in this section to 250 words. You may attach additional information related to the questions and budget to this application.

Question 1: How does your proposal address one or more of the areas outlined in "Short-Term programs, policies, actions" in the United Way of Dane County's Healthy Food for All Children 10-year plan?

The Spring Rose Growers Cooperative is a multi-cultural, farmer owned business based in Dane County that aims to create viable livelihoods for our farmer members while improving food access in under-served communities. Our project will address both "Increased equitable access to healthy foods for children and families" and "Increased capacity of neighborhoods and communities to support affordable and healthy food choices" strategies in the United Way report. We propose to provide on-site fresh produce options in a mini-market set-up at three satellite clinics where Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) checks are distributed weekly during the summer production season. This pilot program is based on a successful model in Chicago, where the Windy City Harvest farm of the Chicago Botanical Garden delivers a pre-determined number of fresh produce bags to WIC clinics in certain Chicago neighborhoods. Clients pick up their WIC checks and redeem them all in one place, increasing the redemption rates of these checks for fresh food. We will work this spring with Madison and Dane County Public Health to determine a reasonable value of produce that will be redeemed at each site, and through client surveys will determine which vegetables and fruits we produce the WIC check recipients are most likely to take home and use. We expect that this project will help grow our business by \$15,000 while increasing the purchase and consumption of fresh vegetables by mothers and their families.

Question 2: Please describe your targeted population (e.g. location, ages, ethnicities, income ranges, etc.).

Our target population is mothers and their children and families who are receiving WIC checks around Dane County. The redemption rate of checks for the farmers market program remains low, around 45%, and in clinics not central to downtown Madison, there are limited farmers market opportunities close to the satellite public health clinics where these WIC checks are disbursed to clients. We will work with three of these sites, in Sun Prairie, Middleton and Stoughton, where mothers will receive vouchers to add value to their WIC checks, and where a stock of vegetables produced by our Cooperative will be available for immediate purchase. The vouchers will only be valid on site, adding incentive for immediate use. The majority of WIC clients reside in the city of Madison and 65% are at or below 130% of the Federal Poverty Line. Other densely populated census tracts are in the suburban areas of Sun Prairie, Stoughton and Middleton. Most WIC clients are young mothers, under 25, with almost all under age 35. This program will also be a boost to our Cooperative, which is comprised of Hmong, Latino, and European American farmers working together to create a more viable livelihood through farming.

Question 3: Please describe specifically how the funds from this grant would be used to increase food access (e.g. staffing, programming, supplies, etc.).

Grant funds would go to pre-season promotion, providing language- and culture-appropriate educational materials, and vouchers to add value to WIC checks. Within our cooperative structure we already have the production capacity, a General Manager, and the budget to coordinate the aggregation and delivery of the produce to these three sites. Of the total requested, \$2,000 will be allocated to cover design, translation and printing of materials needed for promotion in the spring. The staff time required of our General Manager and Public Health employees in helping create these materials, as well as spring surveys to determine produce options and post-season evaluation, will be covered by matching funding from other sources. The remaining \$8,000 will cover vouchers for the WIC check recipients that are only valid onsite at the three satellite clinics. The 2013 program that doubled the value of SNAP benefits at the farmers market was highly successful, and through this pilot program we will demonstrate that it can be similarly successful with WIC benefits. Surveys from WIC clients have shown that the check amounts are small and do not warrant a special trip to a farmers' market. They indicated that they would shop at a market if the benefit were greater. By doubling up and offering on-site access, we are reducing barriers and creating opportunities for a successful pilot program.

Question 4: Please describe your specific goals of this proposal and how you intend to measure the outcomes.

As a growing business, we are hoping to increase our sales while also fulfilling a critical part of our mission – fresh, healthy food access for all. As members of minority and under-served communities ourselves, we see every day the impact that limited healthy food access is having on our families and friends, and we seek to find every possible way to continue to connect those people with the food we produce. This project aims to increase the redemption rate of WIC checks for fresh produce at satellite clinics where readily accessible markets do not exist. As we do already, all sales of specific produce items will be tracked throughout the season, both by customer and farm provider. On a weekly basis we will track the total sales to clients at each satellite clinic, and compare to the total value of produce provided. Public Health offices will track the redemption rate of the checks and vouchers onsite, and through simple, in-season surveys will elicit feedback from clients on how they are using the produce, which items they like best, and the relevance of the educational materials. Through a WIC post-season behavior survey, we will assess preferences around types of vegetables, preparation techniques and changes in consumption patterns for both the mother and child.

FUNDING DETAILS

A) What other funding sources have you sought and/or received to support this proposal? Please describe if any other sources are matching funds contingent on securing city funds.

Our General Manager, who will coordinate the logistics of supply and delivery of vegetables to the WIC sites, is paid out of our operational budget from our sales income. We have an additional \$4,900 from the Community and Regional Food Systems project at UW-Madison to put towards the time of our General Manager and translators in ensuring the successful implementation of this proposal. Those funds are not contingent on securing city funds, and we will be able to pilot a simplified version of the program that does not include value-adding vouchers without city funds. The time of the Public Health Dietician and the WIC Director involved in the project will be covered by their salaries.

B) SEED Grants are intended to be one-time, one-year grants. How do you anticipate replacing city funds in the future?

After demonstration of the ways in which the pilot program was successful and ways it should be improved, we will seek future funding from health insurance companies, foundations, and private entities to continue to offer the vouchers for WIC check recipients. Operational costs will be absorbed by the Cooperative through the growth in sales from our member farmers and we will be able to re-use educational and promotional materials with minimal updates. Wingra and Access Community Health Clinics have committed to participating in such a program in 2015 and have given verbal in-kind support of resources and time from staff, doctors, nurses and health educators.

COORDINATION/COLLABORATION

Please describe the relationship between your group and other applicable stakeholders, including, but not limited to: other funders, targeted populations, potential participants, other organizations or groups offering services in the same or similar area, collaborating partners, and/or governmental bodies (350 words max.).

The Spring Rose Growers Cooperative is building on the existing relationship between Public Health Madison and Dane County and one of its member farmers. Los Abuelos Farley Farm established a market stand outside of the East Washington Clinic in 2011, and for three seasons has sold fresh vegetables to WIC clients right where they pick up their checks, one day a week. This market stand has attracted consistent traffic and good sales volume – at least \$300 per market day. As one of the members of the Cooperative, this farm will be contributing to this proposed program at satellite clinics. Unlike selling through a distributor, our Cooperative has worked hard to build a business owned and shaped by all of our members. We make the decisions on price and crop allocation per farmer, and each have a vote in decisions of the Co-op. The remaining seven farm members supporting this project with their produce will be: Earth, Water and Seeds Farm (Oscar Ferreira); Living Earth Community Farm (Ian Aley); Lo Farm (Neng and Youa Lor); Vang C&C Farm (Cheu and Chia Vang); Yang Seasonal Garden (Austin Yang and Mylia Vang); Yee Circle Farm (Yee Ythao); and Vegetales San Antonio (Pedro and Panfilo).

The Community and Regional Food Systems Project is a large research and community engagement project based at UW-Madison examining many aspects of local and regional food systems, determining innovative ways to grow these food systems from produce to consumer, and make them more equitable, sustainable and inclusive. In their second phase they are particularly interested in examining successful community partnerships. Through their support we are aiming to show the type of successful public-private partnerships that can prove beneficial and profitable for all partners involved. We will summarize the experiences of this pilot project for the book they are producing as part of the project, in hopes that it can serve as a model for partnerships around the country.

PERSONNEL CHART

Title of Staff Position	F.T.E. *	Proposed Hourly Wage^
General Manager	0.42	\$20/hr
Translation	0.02	\$20/hr
Public Health Dietician	.05	\$30/hr (with benefits)
WIC Director	.1	\$40/hr (with benefits)
TOTAL	0.59	

*F.T.E = Full Time Equivalent employee = 2080 hours = 1.00 F.T.E.

^Note: All employees involved in programs receiving City of Madison funds must be paid the established Living Wage as required under Madison General Ordinance 4.20. The Madison Living Wage for 2014 is \$12.45 per hour.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Budget Expenditures	Total Project Costs	Amount of City Dollars Requested	Amount of Other Revenues/In-Kind Support	Remaining Funding Gap (if any)
WIC Vegetable Vouchers	\$8,000	\$8,000	-	-
Promotional Materials	\$1,500	\$500	\$1,000	-
Educational Materials	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	-
Coordination, vegetable aggregation and delivery	\$4,000	-	\$4,000	-
Pre-season and post-season surveys	\$5,000	-	\$5,000	-
In-season client support	\$6,440	-	\$6,440	-

DISCLAIMER AND SIGNATURE

I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature Kelly R Maynard, General Manager

Date February 7, 2014