

## USDA Food for Progress: Jamaica Spices Project

### Call for Application (CFA) for Partnership

<b>CFA Release Date:</b>	October 22, 2024
<b>Performance Period:</b>	October 22, 2024 – October 21, 2025
<b>Proposal Submission Deadlines:</b>	Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed once per quarter as follows: Quarter 1 deadline: November 20, 2024 Quarter 2 deadline: February 3, 2025 Quarter 3 deadline: May 1, 2025 Quarter 4 deadline August 1, 2025
<b>Contact for Questions:</b>	<i>Attention : Jovan Johnson</i> Jaspicegrants@actdivoca-jm.org

#### 1. Project Background:

The USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project’s goal is to revitalize the spice sector to meet existing export and domestic demands for turmeric, ginger, and pimento. The project will use an inclusive market systems approach to 1) Increase agricultural productivity and 2) Expand trade of agricultural products (domestic, regional and international). The objectives of the project are the following:

- a. To increase the productivity of high-quality Jamaican ginger, turmeric, and pimento by strengthening the capacity of farmers, producer organizations (POs), processors and other private sector entities, while improving the food security and climate resiliency of farmers.
- b. To improve and expand the trade of ginger, turmeric, and pimento products by increasing their quality to meet international standards and connecting farmers and POs with Jamaican and international buyers.

Based on findings from its formative research activities, the USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project sees the inclusive development of the spice sector as foundational to advancing a more productive, diversified, and resilient Spice Sector. The USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project is committed to working with private sector actors, farmer-based organizations, and civil society partners to increase the engagement of women, youth, and other vulnerable groups

within the Jamaican spice value chains. In line with this the project seeks innovative business models/concepts that can address the specific challenges women, youth, and other vulnerable groups face in accessing the skills, management practices, technologies, inputs, extension, and advisory services, and markets they need to thrive in the spice sector.

## **2. Project Outcomes:**

- a. Improved quality of land and water resources
- b. Increased use of improved agricultural techniques and technology
- c. Increased availability of improved inputs
- d. Improved infrastructure to support on farm production
- e. Increased use of financial services
- f. Improved market and trade infrastructure
- g. Increased knowledge by farmers of improved agricultural techniques and technologies
- h. Improved farm management (operations, financial)
- i. Improved knowledge regarding farm management
- j. Increased capacity of government institutions
- k. Improved capacity of key groups in the agricultural production sector
- l. Improved capacity of key organization in the trade sector
- m. Increased access to improved Market Information
- n. Increased leverage of Private Sector Resources
- o. Expanded Trade of Agricultural Products (domestic, regional, and international)
- p. Increased value added to post-production agricultural products
- q. Improved quality of post-production agricultural products
- r. Increased efficiency of post-production processors
- s. Improved post-harvest infrastructure
- t. Increased access to markets to sell agricultural products
- u. Improved marketing of agricultural products
- v. Improved transaction efficiency
- w. Upgrade the capacity of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups to engage in and benefit from the spice sector, whether as producers, wage workers, service providers, or as small firm owners, wage workers, service providers, and small-firm owners, thereby promoting economic empowerment and equitable access to opportunities throughout the value chain.

## **3. Intended Results**

The above outcomes are expected to generate the following specific results within the implementation period of the project:

- a. Increase Jamaica's yields of turmeric, ginger, and pimento on 2,250 hectares by 50 percent, resulting in \$20 million in sales and \$14.5 million in annual export sales.

- b. Increase management and organizational capacity building to a targeted 4,900 participants across the island.
- c. Develop partnerships with 30 firms and strengthen the capacity of the government agencies including the Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Authority, Rural Agricultural Development Authority, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining.

#### **4. Objectives of the Call for Applications**

The USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project aims to partner with market actors, including private sector and non-government organizations, who have the resources and are willing to co-invest in strengthening the Jamaican spices sector.

The partnerships under this Call For Applications must achieve at least one or more of the following:

- a. Attract private sector investment along the spices (Ginger, Turmeric and Pimento) value chain.
- b. Solicit sustainable solutions to the production and supply of clean planting material for ginger turmeric and pimento.
- c. Reposition the spices and their value additions in traditional and non-traditional markets.
- d. Leverage existing and new research and innovations within the spices value chain.
- e. Improved access to financing by value chain players, particularly those at the primary level.

#### **5. USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project will contribute resources to the partnerships in one more of the following ways:**

- a. Co-funding through grants, to share risk on implementing innovative business models.
- b. Technical Assistance in the areas of crop production, research, agro-processing, market linkages, product development, certification programs, export and trade of ginger, turmeric and pimento.
- c. Networking with multiple actors or organizations to collaborate around a shared business or industry challenge.
- d. Provide information, expertise, and research as well as capture, measure, and communicate institutional and systemic learning.

**6. Activities under which applications can be submitted:**

Applications can be submitted to the USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project that align with the Project’s objectives, which include any of the eight listed activities below:

**a. Activity One- Inputs: Expand Nurseries and Clean Planting Material Supply (Tissue Culture Laboratories and Nursery operations)**

*The commercial and large-scale production of ginger and turmeric requires adequate supply of clean planting material. Due to the issues facing ginger, specifically rhizome rot, planting material must be produced under laboratory conditions using tissue culture. Following the laboratory processes, planting material is then hardened off inside a greenhouse to prevent exposure to pathogens and acclimatization of plants to environmental conditions outside the lab. Once hardened the material is then rapidly propagated and grown for another production cycle under greenhouse conditions before supplying seed material for planting in open fields. Presently, there is a bottle neck at both the laboratory and nursery levels and as such the project is seeking solutions to significantly increase the output of G0 plantlets from laboratories and to increase the greenhouse space being used for propagation and supply of ginger planting material to farmers. These solutions should also be cost effective, thereby reducing the price of clean planting material.*

*Consideration will be given to nurseries operated by women, youth, and marginalized groups. Additionally, mentorship programs which focus on training women and youth in nursery management, encouraging their full participation in the supply of clean planting materials is encouraged.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity One- Inputs: Expand Nurseries and Clean Planting Material Supply.**

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p>Technical Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly outlines the critical constraint around their production of <b>planting material or tissue culture</b> and clearly states how their proposal and proposed activities will address the issues outlined in section 6 (a) of this Call for Applications.</li> <li>b. Applicant demonstrates their technical competence and ability to execute the activities proposed.</li> <li>c. Applicant clearly outlines the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> <li>d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantage over similar competitors and why they are best suited for the partnership.</li> </ul>	30%
2.	Expected Outcome	20%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant effectively shows that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of activity one (1).</li> <li>b. The proposed partnership will result in an increase in the availability of planting and tissue culture material as mentioned in Activity One.</li> <li>c. The applicant demonstrates how this proposed intervention in nurseries or tissue culture will be sustained beyond the life of the project.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If monetary resources are necessary, a realistic and complete budget, that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</li> </ul>	20%
4.	<p><b>Leadership by Underrepresented Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant demonstrates how proposed activities adequately take into consideration the specific needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>b. The proposed concept/business model and includes specific approaches aimed at addressing gender, youth, and social inclusion constraints linked to the concept/business model.</li> <li>c. Applicant highlights how women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups will benefit from the proposed partnership.</li> </ul>	10%
5.	<p><b>Past performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrated past performance in the nursery and tissue culture industries or similar areas of work</li> <li>b. Provide at least 1 reference from an organization or entity that has worked with your organization in a professional capacity.</li> </ul>	20%

**b. Activity Two-Capacity Building: R&D for Disease Resistance & Climate-Smart Technologies**

**Conduct the genetic classification or identification of varieties among the three spices (ginger, turmeric, pimento).**

*While there are many varieties of Jamaican ginger, turmeric and pimento, there is no genetic classification of these spices. The lack of classification causes two issues: 1) The industrial properties are unknown and therefore these products are not able to go to the market to be sold based on classification for export, resulting in exporters being unable to capitalize on higher quality and 2) The lack of research on genetics makes it challenging for production levels to grow due to a lack of variety specific information. The Activity is interested in identifying how classification of varieties can be used to inform where it is best to plant certain varieties based on soil, climate, and other environmental impacts that affect production.*

*This activity is committed to ensuring that R&D activities are impactful for all spice sector actors, including women, youth, and other vulnerable groups. Where feasible applicants should consider potential entry points for engaging women and youth in research initiatives – for example, students supporting research activities or as lead farmers hosting field trials.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Two-Capacity Building: R&D for Disease Resistance & Climate-Smart Technologies.**

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p>Technical Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly outlines the critical constraints around their <b>research on Disease Resistance and Climate Change Technologies related to the production of Jamaican Ginger, Turmeric and Pimento</b> and clearly states how their proposal and proposed activities will address the issues outlined in section 6 (b) of this Call for Applications.</li> <li>b. Applicant demonstrates their technical competence in Scientific Research and ability to execute the activities proposed.</li> <li>c. Applicant clearly outlines the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> <li>d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantage over similar competitors and why they are best suited for the partnership.</li> </ul>	30%
2.	<p>Expected Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant effectively shows that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of activity two (2).</li> <li>b. The proposed partnership will result in an increase in the research body of knowledge around disease resistance and the application of climate smart technologies in the production of the three spices.</li> <li>c. The applicant demonstrates how this proposed intervention in nurseries or tissue culture will be sustained beyond the life of the project.</li> </ul>	20%
3.	<p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If monetary resources are necessary, a realistic and complete budget that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</li> </ul>	20%
4.	<p>Leadership by Underrepresented Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant demonstrates how proposed activities adequately take into consideration the specific needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>	10%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. The proposed solution includes specific approaches aimed at addressing gender, youth, and social inclusion constraints linked to Activity 2.</li> <li>c. Applicant highlights how women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups will benefit from the proposed partnership.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p>Past performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrated past performance in scientific research, climate change or similar areas of work</li> <li>b. Provide proof of completion and details of at least one research assignment completed by the applicant.</li> </ul>	20%

c. **Activity Three- Capacity Building: Government Institutions  
(Central repository of spice information and a tracking/monitoring system)**

*There is a lack of market information around spice production within Jamaica. There is not one specific place to access information on production, acreage and who is involved in the spice value chain or sector. The lack of access to data makes it challenging to get a clear overview of how the spice sector is really performing in Jamaica, as well as having data to attract investors to the value chain.*

*This Activity is looking for innovative ideas and solutions to create a central repository of information and a tracking/monitoring system which captures all the activities around ginger, turmeric and pimento. This would create more transparency and information sharing around the sector, which could attract more investment in ginger, turmeric and pimento as well as increase production and best practices due to information and knowledge sharing. The data and knowledge center (which provides market intelligence and information around technical assistance) will target all value chain actors.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Three- Capacity Building: Government Institutions**

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p>Technical Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Government Institution clearly outlines the critical constraints around the <b>tracking or monitoring of activities along the spice value chain (Jamaican Ginger, Turmeric and Pimento)</b> and clearly states how their proposal and proposed activities will address the issues outlined in section 6 (c) of this Call for Applications.</li> <li>b. Applicant demonstrates their mandate and work in the spices value chain and ability to execute the activities proposed.</li> <li>c. Applicant clearly outlines the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> </ul>	30%

	d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantage over other entities and why they are best suited for the partnership.	
2.	<p>Expected Outcome</p> <p>d. Applicant effectively shows that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of activity three (3).</p> <p>e. The proposed partnership will result in an increase in the ability to track and monitor the activities along the spices value chain.</p> <p>f. The applicant demonstrates how this proposed intervention will be maintained beyond the life of the project.</p>	30%
3.	<p>Budget</p> <p>b. If monetary resources are necessary, a realistic and complete budget that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</p>	20%
4.	<p>Past performance</p> <p>c. Demonstrates past performance in the implementation of similar or donor funded projects</p> <p>d. Provide at least 1 reference from the donor/funder of a previous project/initiative.</p>	20%

d. **Activity Four- Capacity Building: Producer Groups/Cooperatives**

**(Rehabilitate Pimento acreages and introduce new harvesting techniques)**

*There are very poor harvesting techniques in Jamaica in relation to pimento production. During the harvesting process, plants are damaged, and branches break, and this impacts the production of the plants for the following year, which results in lower yields of pimento.*

*In addition, finding labor to harvest pimento is also challenging. Therefore, many pimento orchards go unharvested each year, resulting in loss of potential income. The project is hence seeking solutions to remedy the issues identified around poor harvesting technique in the pimento industry.*

*Consideration will also be given to applications targeting women and youth in governance and leadership, equipping them with the skills to manage and lead within producer groups.*



**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Four- *Capacity Building: Producer Groups/Cooperatives***

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p><b>Technical Proposal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly demonstrates their ability to effect change within a value chain, to include the adoption of new approaches and technology by value chain actors. The applicant also outlines how these skills will be used to remedy the problems stated in section 6 (d) of this Call for Applications</li> <li>b. Applicant clearly outlines the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> <li>c. Applicant demonstrates their technical competence in training, adult learning and ability to execute the activities proposed.</li> <li>d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantage over similar competitors and why they are best suited for the partnership.</li> </ul>	30%
2.	<p><b>Expected Outcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant effectively demonstrates alignment with the desired outcomes of activity four (4).</li> <li>b. The proposed partnership will result in an increase in the percentage of pimento harvested annually and the use of new harvesting techniques and technologies.</li> <li>c. The applicant demonstrates how the introduction and adoption of new harvesting techniques and technology will be executed.</li> </ul>	20%
3.	<p><b>Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If monetary resources are necessary, a realistic and complete budget that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</li> </ul>	20%
4.	<p><b>Leadership by Underrepresented Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant demonstrates how proposed activities adequately take into consideration the specific needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>b. The proposed concept/business model includes specific approaches aimed at addressing gender, youth, and social inclusion constraints linked to the concept/business model.</li> <li>c. Applicant highlights how women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups will benefit from the proposed partnership.</li> </ul>	10%
5.	<p><b>Past performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrates past performance in the introduction of new techniques and technologies in value chains or similar areas of work</li> <li>b. Provide at least 1 reference from an organization or entity that has worked with your organization in a professional capacity.</li> </ul>	20%

- e. **Activity Five- Training: Improved Agricultural Production Techniques (Training in improved agricultural production techniques for spice production)**  
*Knowledge about spices and spice production is low in Jamaica. Institutions don't have the capacity or knowledge to develop training sessions on spices. There is currently no training material on the commercial production of turmeric for farmers or anyone else associated with the growth of turmeric. Therefore, delivering training in improved production practices is a challenge.*

*This activity wishes to leave extension providers in the best possible position after the JaSpice project ends. Therefore, the activity is seeking creative ideas to increase the capacity of extension agencies and increase production knowledge when it comes to spice production. This can be done through direct training or through online resources and extension platforms. Training materials and approaches must be accessible to all individuals.*

*Consideration will also be given to innovative approaches and materials that can enhance the access of people with disabilities and other marginalized groups to in-person and digital training along with information required to engage in the spice sector.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Five- Training: Improved Agricultural Production Techniques.**

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p>Technical Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly demonstrates their ability to efficiently provide extension service in spice production (ginger, turmeric and pimento) to primary value chain actors and develop training material in the areas of ginger, turmeric and pimento production. The applicant also outlines how these skills will be used to remedy the problems stated in section 6 (e) of this Call for Applications</li> <li>b. Applicant demonstrates their ability to deliver training sessions via an online platform.</li> <li>c. Applicant clearly outlines the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> <li>d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantage over similar competitors and why they are best suited for the partnership.</li> </ul>	30%
2.	<p>Expected Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant effectively demonstrates that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of activity five (5).</li> <li>b. The proposed partnership will result in the provision of extension service and training via an online platform for primary actors in the spices (ginger turmeric and pimento) value chain.</li> </ul>	20%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Development of training material related to commercial production of the three spices.</li> <li>d. The applicant demonstrates how the online training and extension service will be executed.</li> </ul>	
3.	<b>Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If monetary resources are necessary, a realistic and complete budget sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</li> </ul>	20%
4.	<b>Leadership by Underrepresented Groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant demonstrates how proposed activities adequately take into consideration the specific needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>b. The proposed concept/business model and includes specific approaches aimed at addressing gender, youth, and social inclusion constraints linked to the concept/business model.</li> <li>c. Applicant highlights how women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups will benefit from the proposed partnership.</li> </ul>	10%
5.	<b>Past performance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrates past performance in the provision of extension service and training via an online platform</li> <li>b. Provide at least 1 reference from an organization or entity that has worked with your organization in a professional capacity.</li> </ul>	20%

f. **Activity Six- Market Access: Facilitate Buyer-Seller Relationships (Marketing of the superiority of Jamaican Spices)**

*Jamaica spices are known to be superior to those produced in other countries however, this has not been adequately marketed. The superiority of Jamaican spices is in question due to declining production volumes and quality. The project is therefore seeking innovative solutions to increase the competitiveness of Jamaican spice exports, especially ginger, turmeric and pimento. This solution must be focused on promoting the superiority of Jamaican spices, providing branding and marketing support to drive increased awareness of the value of targeted spices. This solution should also leverage empirical evidence or research which will result in increased domestic and export sales.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Six- Market Access: Facilitate Buyer-Seller Relationships. (Marketing of the superiority of Jamaican Spices)**

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<b>Technical Proposal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly demonstrates their ability to adequately market the three targets Jamaican spices based on their innate characteristics and superiority. The applicant must also outline</li> </ul>	30%

	<p>how their proposal will remedy the problems outlined in Activity 6.</p> <p>b. Applicant clearly outlines the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</p> <p>c. Applicant demonstrates their ability to develop and execute a marketing campaign for the audiences recommended for targeting, local and international.</p> <p>d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantages and why they are best suited for the partnership.</p>	
2.	<p>Expected Outcome</p> <p>a. Applicant effectively demonstrates that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of activity six (6).</p> <p>b. The proposed partnership will result in the effective marketing of Jamaican spices on the internationally and locally.</p> <p>c. The applicant demonstrates clearly how the marketing campaign will be developed and executed.</p>	30%
3.	<p>Budget</p> <p>a. A realistic and complete budget that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</p>	20%
4.	<p>Past performance</p> <p>a. Demonstrates past performance in the development and execution of large complex international and domestic marketing campaigns.</p> <p>b. Provide at least 1 reference from an organization or entity that has worked with your organization in a professional capacity.</p>	20%

**g. Activity Seven- Infrastructure: Post Harvest Processing**

**(Support to post-harvest processing, food safety and efficiency management)**

*There is inconsistency when it comes to value-added products in Jamaica. Currently the country does not have many efficient processors. There is a need to upgrade the production techniques/processes to attain quality and consistency needed for international certification and export. The largest issue Jamaican spice processors face is that the processes are not mechanized and are done by hand. This results in inconsistency during the post-harvest process. There are also high levels of moisture in value-added spice production which is hard to monitor without machinery equipped with sensors. Larger equipment to produce larger batches of value-added spices is also needed. Critical to realize expanded entry to export markets for Jamaican higher value products is the requisite food safety certification or upgrades, the two are inextricably linked. The project is therefore seeking solutions to the identified post-harvest problems. Solutions should also consider the issue of increased energy usage which will result from the increased use of machinery for processing. Consideration will be given to applications from post-harvest firms owned or led by women, youth, and persons with disabilities.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Seven- *Infrastructure: Post Harvest Processing***

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p>Technical Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly demonstrates their ability to improve the post-harvest processing capacity present in the spices value chain.</li> <li>b. The applicant must outline how their proposal will remedy their key problem[s] covered in Activity seven (7) of this Call for Applications</li> <li>c. Applicant clearly outline the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> </ul>	30%
2.	<p>Expected Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant effectively demonstrates that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of Activity seven (7).</li> <li>b. The proposed partnership will result in the increase in processing capacity and competitiveness of Jamaican spices in the local market.</li> </ul>	20%
3.	<p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A realistic and complete budget that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.</li> </ul>	20%
4.	<p>Leadership by Underrepresented Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant demonstrates how proposed activities adequately take into consideration the specific needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>b. The proposed collaboration includes specific approaches aimed at addressing gender, youth, and social inclusion constraints linked to the Activity.</li> <li>c. Applicant highlights how women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups will benefit from the proposed collaboration.</li> </ul>	10%
5.	<p>Past performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrates past performance that has supported the development of the spices processing sector of Jamaican.</li> <li>b. Provide at least 1 reference from an organization or entity that has worked with your organization in a professional capacity.</li> </ul>	20%

**g. Activity Eight-Financial Service: Facilitate Agricultural Lending and Investment (Reduce risks for Financial Service Providers to increase lending)**

*Lenders and financial institutions in Jamaica do not understand the risk landscape associated with lending and investing in the spices sector growing cycle and value chain lengths. They are, therefore, hesitant to increase their exposure to provide access to finance when it comes to the spice sector.*

*Many producers do not have the resources to get access to finance as they do not have the collateral, bookkeeping records, skills, and systems in place that are required by the financial institutions to receive access to finance. They are then stuck and unable to grow their operation without proper funding or the ability to grow and develop internally.*

*This activity is seeking creative solutions to decrease the risks associated with investing in the spices sector and to increase the capacity and attractiveness of borrowers to financiers. This would result in increased financial liquidity in the sector to lend/invest thereby helping revitalize the Jamaican spices sector to meet existing export and domestic demand.*

*Consideration will be given for solutions targeting women, youth and other vulnerable groups to assist in overcoming barriers preventing them from accessing finance.*

**Evaluation Criteria for Activity Eight-Financial Service: Facilitate Agricultural Lending and Investment.**

No.	Criteria	Score
1.	<p>Technical Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant clearly demonstrates their ability to help increase lending and liquidity in the targeted spices value chain to grow business enterprises.</li> <li>b. The applicant clearly outlines how their proposal will help significantly address the problems stated in Activity eight (8).</li> <li>c. Applicant clearly outline the role of JaSPICE in this collaboration and why they would not be able to accomplish this intervention on their own.</li> <li>d. Applicant clearly outlines their competitive advantage over similar competitors and why they are best suited for the partnership.</li> </ul>	30%
2.	<p>Expected Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applicant effectively demonstrates that the application aligns with the desired outcomes of Activity Eight (8).</li> <li>b. The proposed partnership will increase the number of value chain stakeholders accessing financing and or lending to the spices sector.</li> <li>c. The applicant outlines its methodology or approach to capacity building.</li> </ul>	20%

3.	<b>Budget</b> a. A realistic and complete budget that is sufficient to accomplish the work proposed, including the leverage (in-kind or cash contribution) to fulfill the objectives of the partnership.	20%
4.	<b>Leadership by Underrepresented Groups</b> a. Applicant demonstrates how proposed activities adequately take into consideration the specific needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups. b. The proposed collaboration includes specific approaches aimed at addressing gender, youth, and social inclusion constraints linked to the Activity c. Applicant highlights how women, youth, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups will benefit from the proposed collaboration.	10%
5.	<b>Past performance</b> a. Demonstrates past performance in the capacity building of community groups and enterprises to access financing. Or demonstrates past performance in creating liquidity in a sector that supports agricultural lending to include MSMEs. b. Provide at least 1 reference from an organization or entity that has worked with your organization in a professional capacity.	20%

## 7) Eligibility Criteria

### a) **Farmer Based Organizations:**

- i) Must be registered (with JACRA, RADA, or another government institution)
- ii) Must have a track record of successful experience in the field of the proposed initiative for more than 1 year
- iii) Each application and budget must include a leverage contribution, minimum of 10% of the budget
- iv) Strong commitment to working with the Activity, adhering to grant guidelines and reporting criteria
- v) Has basic recordkeeping and documentation skills. Preferably the owner of a smartphone or computer.
- vi) If previous grants have been received from any donor, applicant must show evidence of successful utilization of grant.
- vii) If business activity is supported by other donors, additionality should be clearly demonstrated.
- viii) *Exceptions may be made for women and youth applicants (ages 15-29) who have strong business intent and demonstrated potential for growth.*

### b) **Private and Public Sector Entities:**

- i) Must be registered as a business, or non-government or not for profit/ organization. Labs must be ISO Certified.

- ii) Proponent (business, NGO, or not for profit org) must have a track record of successful experience in the field of the proposed initiative for more than 3 years.
- iii) Each application and budget must include a leverage contribution, minimum of 30% of the budget.
- iv) Strong commitment to working with the Activity, adhering to grant guidelines and reporting criteria.
- v) If previous grants have been received from any donor, applicant must show evidence of successful utilization grant.
- vi) *Exceptions may be made for women and youth applicants (ages 15-29) who have strong business intent and demonstrated potential for growth.*

**c) Ineligible organizations:**

- i) Political parties or their subsidiaries and affiliates
- ii) Organizations promoting anti-democratic policies or illegal activities

**8) Leverage Contribution**

Leverage is defined as the total value of in-kind and cash resources brought by the private sector into the partnership. Leverage counts only new, additional and incremental contributions of resources. Leverage includes anything of value that can be measured including loans received to contribute toward the partnership and services or property such as fixed assets. Leverage is an input, or contribution not the output or outcome of the partnership.

**a) Eligible Leverage Expenses**

Partner leverage contribution must include substantial cash contribution or investment in long life assets such as:

- i) Construction or renovation of facility
- ii) Procurement of land and/or facilities
- iii) Procurement of machinery, equipment, inputs or software
- iv) Labor and staff costs
- v) Other capital expenses, e.g., vehicle,

**9) Ineligible Grant Expenses**

USDA Food for Progress: Jamaica Spices Project will not fund the following activities:

- i) Construction
- ii) Goods that are ineligible under USDA regulations
- iii) Procurement of real estate
- iv) Fee for profit
- v) Payment of loan interest
- vi) Deliverables of a religious nature



## 10) Partnership Co-creation

Selected applications that obtain scores of 70% and above qualify for the partnership co-creation phase. Depending on the applicants, this co-creation or co-design process could look like:

1. Collaboratively designing a partnership with JaSPICE based on shared interests, areas of expertise, and overlap between business, organizational, and development objectives.
2. Bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders to build a shared understanding of a market system and identify high-leverage opportunities for collaborative action (such as sector-wide alliances, value-chain integration using a shared platform, or multi-stakeholder alliances) that will make the market system more resilient, competitive, and inclusive.

The goal of this co-creation process is to collaborate on scoping and designing potential solutions and approaches, explore value propositions, and determine whether, and how, to proceed with a formal partnership.

If we move forward to a formal partnership, this will include identifying the objectives and scope of the partnership, the roles and responsibilities of each party based on respective interests, capacity, and expertise, and intended deliverables.

Part of the co-creation is a risk assessment and due diligence process. JaSPICE will carry out an assessment of the capacity of the applicant to implement the activity, manage the grant funding, and comply with the requirements of USDA. The grant mechanism will be decided based on the results of the pre-award assessment and due diligence.

## 11) Application Submission and Timelines

Applications will be accepted starting from the day of the release of this CFA. Applications will continue to be accepted for a period of 1 year. Screening and evaluation will be done on a rolling basis. The first deadline of applications will be on November 18, 2025. Subsequent rounds of screening and evaluation will happen every three (3) months thereafter, as indicated on the first page of this announcement, unless announced otherwise.

- 12) **Adaptive Management:** USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project implements an adaptive management and implementation approach. Thus, the CFA selection criteria may change at some point as a result of lessons learned and changes in context. Changes will be announced in different media. Interested parties for partnership are advised to check regularly with USDA Food for Progress: Jamaica Spices Project representatives for changes.



Please submit an electronic copy of the application in English to the USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project email: [Jaspicegrants@acdivoca-jm.org](mailto:Jaspicegrants@acdivoca-jm.org) with subject of the message “*Response to Call for Application 2024*”.

Notice to ineligible applications will be sent no later than 30 days after determination of ineligibility.

### **13) Grant Implementation Timeline**

The earliest start date for supported activities to begin is February 1, 2024. Grant Agreements will be for a maximum of 18 months.

**Condition: Issuance of this call for application in no way constitutes a commitment by the USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project or by USDA to execute any agreement or to pay any costs incurred by any applicant for application submissions.**

Please note that the **USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project will fully respect the confidentiality** of proprietary information of all organizations involved in the program.

Inquiries and requests for information regarding this Call for Applications can be submitted by email to [Jaspicegrants@acdivoca-jm.org](mailto:Jaspicegrants@acdivoca-jm.org)

**Annex A. Application Template**

**USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices  
GRANT APPLICATION TEMPLATE**

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Date of submission:	
Business/Organization name:	
Address of the Business/organization:	
Business Owner:	Name:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
	<input type="checkbox"/> Age more than 29 <input type="checkbox"/> Age 15- 29
Manager: (if different from the owner)	Name:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
	<input type="checkbox"/> Age more than 29 <input type="checkbox"/> Age 15- 29
Sector of the Business/Organization:	
Contact information:	Address, email, phone:

## 2. ELIGIBILITY CHECK

Please check all applicable boxes and provide details as requested

### A. Registration

Registered as a business (patent or legal entity)

Date of registration:

### B. Past Performance

Applicant (business or person/s) has track record of successful business performance (> 3 years)

Please provide a brief description of your organization from establishment to date.

**If business is commercial/for profit** please provide information on sales turn-over in last three years or size of investments/loan portfolio, markets/customers and number of employees:

**If Business is a Service Provider (BSP)** please provide names of clients, size of contracts, significant accomplishments from previous work, number of employees:

**If business is a Non-Government Organization(NGO)/Community Based Organization** please provide information on the structure of the organization, registration status, details on previous projects executed.

**If the applicant is a government entity** please provide information on the entity's mandate and act, details on previous projects and funding source.

### C. Leverage Contribution Commitment

Please specify your intended leverage contribution:

Summary of applicant's cash contribution to the activity (in US\$):

Fixed assets investment (in US\$) \_\_\_\_\_

Operating/Working capital (in US\$) \_\_\_\_\_

Source:  Loan     External investor     Own funds

Requested Grant from **USDA Food for Progress: Jamaica Spices Project** (in US\$) \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Grant:

Equipment     Technical support     Marketing support     Capacity Development     Other

If Other is Chosen, please explain:

**D. Activity implementation**

*Please specify location or locations (Parish/Town):*

Are you a former grant beneficiary?  **Yes**       **No**

*If yes, please state donor source and describe how the grant was utilized and the outcome in terms of additional sales, new markets and new jobs:*

Do you commit to submit regular monthly reports to **USDA Food for Progress: Jamaica Spices Project** based on the grant agreement?

Yes, I commit     No, I cannot commit

*Please check if your organization represents or is related to any of the following groups:*

Political parties, groupings, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates

Organizations promoting anti-democratic policies or illegal activities

**3. CONCEPT NOTE**

A. *Please refer to Section 6: Activities under which applications can be submitted and identify the specific activity and outcome/s of the **USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project** to which the proposal will contribute:*

B. *What is your proposed solution/technical proposal?*

C. *Where do you see potential for USDA Food For Progress Jamaica Spices Project to collaborate with you on this solution? (co-funding, technical assistance, capacity development, networking, advisory services)? What is the role of the JaSPICE project? Why would you not be able to accomplish this intervention on your own without the support of the JaSPICE project?*

D. What are the expected outcomes from your proposed solution.

E. Please outline below the total resources that will be needed to execute the proposed solution.

Description	Total
JaSPICE contribution	
Cost share	
Leverage	

\*\* Please use the budget template attached to capture budget details.

F. How will the activity consider the inclusion of women, youth and marginalized groups?

G. Please outline your past performance with implementing the proposed solution or similar activities.

**By Signing this application, the Applicant certifies the following:**

The information set forth in the above application are true and complete to the best of their knowledge and understand that falsified statements on this application in any detail shall be considered sufficient cause for disqualification from further consideration for funding.

Within the previous three years, the applicant (business and business owners) did not knowingly engage in transactions with, or provide material support or resources to any known terrorist group or individuals or organizations associated with any known terrorist group.

Applicant Understands that issuance of this application in no way constitutes a commitment by the **USDA Food for Progress Jamaica Spices Project** or by USDA to execute any agreement or to pay any costs incurred by any applicant for application submissions.

**Signature of Authorized Official:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date