

# **BOSTON GRANTS INITIATIVE COVER SHEET**

**DATE:** June 15, 2011

**NAME OF APPLICANT ORGANIZATION:** Roslindale Village Main Street Farmers' Market

**CONTACT PERSON:** Stephanie Cave, Executive Director, Martha O'Connell, Farmers' Market Manager (part-time) or Jaime Pullen, FM Committee Member & RVMS Board member

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**AMOUNT OF THIS REQUEST:** \$8,000.00

**TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET:** \$32,000

**TOTAL CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET (If different from Project Budget):**  
\$136,360.61

**TOTAL AMOUNT YOUR ORGANIZATION SPENT LAST YEAR:** \$134,971.00

**NUMBER OF STAFF, FULL AND/OR PART-TIME (if any):** 1 part-time farmers' market manager, 1 part-time administrative assistant, 1 full-time executive director

**NUMBER OF KEY VOLUNTEERS:** 13 on Committee; 75 active with Farmers Market organizing (429 paid RVMS members as of June 2011)

**HOW LONG HAS YOUR GROUP BEEN ACTIVE?** 4 years as the RVMS Farmers' Market Committee, a project of Roslindale Village Main Street, which is 26 years old.

**PROJECT PROPOSAL SUMMARY (No more than 2 sentences):**

The Roslindale Farmers Market seeks to deepen our outreach and relationships with low-income families and immigrants and ensure the accessibility and affordability of fresh, locally grown, and pesticide free foods. Additionally, we plan to implement two new initiatives which include (1) a neighborhood based event series looking at the politics of food, health and issues of economic and environmental justice; and (2) launching a fun and meaningful campaign to encourage walking, biking or taking public transportation to do weekly shopping in the neighborhood.

**HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS GRANT PROGRAM?**

Several different neighborhood activists emailed us the link to the Boston Grants Initiative/NEGEF

**CHECK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING THAT APPLY TO YOUR ORGANIZATION:**

X Incorporated as a nonprofit in Massachusetts (Roslindale Village Main Street)

X 501(c)(3) status with the IRS

Federal EIN #042-883-378

## **BOSTON GRANTS INITIATIVE APPLICATION FORM**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Give a brief description of your proposed project. Be sure to include background of the issue, as well as goals and objectives of the project.**

The Farmers' Market of Roslindale Village Main Street (RVMS) is a community-building effort in one of Boston's most ethnically and economically diverse neighborhoods. In the last four years, the RVMS Farmers' Market committee has succeeded in tying the principle of "buying local" -- a message long promoted by small, independent neighborhood merchants -- to a new wave of neighborhood thinking which promotes "buying locally *produced*" food, and staying within walking distance to do the majority of household shopping

The issue of food -- having access to healthy, fresh produce and a range of food products -- is at the heart of many urban justice issues confronted by our neighborhood over several decades. At one point in the 1980s, Roslindale was on the brink of being a "food desert" given the fact that three major grocery stores shut down. During this era, neighborhood residents had to drive to the suburbs or travel for as much as an hour by public transportation to buy food at large supermarkets. (Please contact us for more info on our history of community organizing and development related to food and neighborhood issues.)

In recent years, Roslindale has reversed this trend and become a celebrated *destination for food* within Boston. The neighborhood has more than a dozen ethnic grocers, spice shops and bakeries, small tucked away restaurants and a booming open-air Saturday Farmers' Market -- now with 8 local MA farms (three committed to using sustainable, pesticide-free practices). Organizing and building the Farmers' Market became the focus for a growing enthusiastic core of neighborhood activists starting in 2008. The multi-year effort has paid off! We have gone from having **a base of just a few hundred people** to attracting between **1,600 and 2,300 every Saturday for the 2010 season**.

We are one of the first Farmer's Markets in the city to assertively pursue outreach to low-income residents who qualify for EBT/SNAP (food stamps), WIC (women and infant coupons) and Senior Coupons. We also recognize that many low-income people, and low-wage workers, especially among immigrant residents, do not benefit from EBT/SNAP. In 2010, we produced multi-lingual Farmers' Market materials and chose 22 Farmers' Market Basket winners as part of a promotional raffle each week which was directly tied to our multi-lingual outreach. We were also chosen by the Food Project and the MA Department of Agriculture in 2010 to get special small grants for our outreach to EBT/SNAP customers, based on our track record in 2009. The Food Project matches EBT/SNAP dollars spent at farmers' markets (\$10 for \$10) through its Bounty Bucks Program. The Food Project announced this Spring, that the RVMS Farmers' Market had the second highest neighborhood use of EBT in the entire city for the 2010 season, right after the Fields Corner Market in Dorchester.

With new support from NEGEF, we'd like to deepen our outreach and relationship-building strategies at the end of the 2011 season as well as pursue two new projects for 2012:

- 1. To make our farmers market reflective of the racial and ethnic diversity of our neighborhood**
  - **Baseline in 2010:** We have volunteers who do periodic demographic counts of everyone who enters the Farmers' Market. Last season, we conducted 11 counts between the 6/5/10 and 10/30/10. We had an average of attendance of 1,878 people *with 26% of the crowd being people of color*. Our highest count and most diverse gathering occurred on our Health and Wellness day, July 30, with 2,310 people attending the farmers' market and 43% being people of color

- **Strategy NEGEF funds will support:** We want to concentrate our outreach and relationship-building throughout the season, with a special push in October 2011 as we hit the height of our harvest and lay the groundwork for 2012. We'd like to replicate some of the successful strategies put in place for Health and Wellness day, especially by deepening our work with health provider networks. We'd also like to have a budget to support additional translation and the recruitment of 5-10 bilingual or multilingual volunteers to become active with the farmers' market. Last year was our first attempt to create quality translation of flyers. Professional translators were paid and added a lot to our efforts; however our source of funding for that work was lost in 2011 when the MA Dept. of Agriculture faced cutbacks and could only provide \$1,000 rather than \$2,500 in a small outreach grant for 2011. The Food Project also discontinued its small grants program. If we can both extend the number of hours of our part-time farmers' market manager to do more outreach and relationship-building in October 2011 and through the winter of 2012 as well as have a budget which offsets translation costs, we will be in a stronger position for 2012.
  - **Goal to Achieve:** Change the mix of those attending the Farmers' Market so that we have **an average of 50% people of color attending by September 2012**
2. **To continue to assertively pursue strategies which increase the affordability of buying produce, especially pesticide-free produce, as available choices for the very lowest-income community members of our neighborhood.**
- **Baseline in 2010:** Our data shows 100 to 120 individual SNAP/EBT customers purchasing a total of \$5,338 of farm produce throughout the 2010 season
  - **Strategy NEGEF funds will support:** EBT/SNAP is only part of the picture. We'd like to see through coordinated outreach efforts the numbers of low-income customers double. We'd also like to put in place a way to measure WIC, Senior Coupons and Veggie Coupons in time for the 2012 Season. We'd like to explore additional promotional strategies which may include ethnic recipe contests or fresh produce cooking demonstrations in a variety of settings as well as reinstituting the Farmers' Market Basket raffle and a new RVMS coupon booklet, which augments how far limited dollars reach for low-income families.
  - **Goal to Achieve:** Double the EBT/SNAP participation by mid-season 2012 and put in place benchmarks to monitor WIC and other coupon programs allowing us to compare October 2011 to progress in the 2012 Season
3. **To launch a neighborhood-based series of events in 2012 season which engages community members in looking at the politics of food, health and issues of economic and environmental justice (New)**
- **Strategy NEGEF funds will support:** Finding new ways, outside of Saturdays at the Farmers' Market to engage community members in viewing such documentaries as *Fresh*, or attracting a neighborhood based production of Emerson's College Theater performance of *Sugar*," by Robbie McCauley [artsemerson.org](http://artsemerson.org). Ms. McCauley is an African-American woman with diabetes who is using this performance as a way to educate and help change the nature of current nutritional habits that are devastating the African American community.
  - **Goal to Achieve:** Deeper conversations about the politics of food, the environment and impact of harmful and/or discriminatory policies and practices on our community. Ideally, RVMS will co-sponsored these events with local health providers, such as the Greater Roslindale Medical Center, Archdale Homes (public housing), ABCD, the local anti-poverty agency and/or local English as Second Language programs.
4. **To sponsor a fun, meaningful and measurable 2012 campaign which promotes "walking," "biking" or public transit-oriented (MBTA or nonprofit vans) as viable ways for everyone to do weekly shopping in our neighborhood. (New)**

- **Baseline in 2010:** We know from our surveys (done 2 times in the 2010 season) that the majority those coming to the Farmers' Market walk (~55%), another 10% take public transit (MBTA) or bike.
- **Strategy NEGEF funds will support:** We'll use the winter of 2011/12 to plan a new campaign with fun incentives, (maybe prizes for most number of steps on pedometers, etc.), health and wellness activities, educational kiosks and alerts featuring the individual health benefits of walking and the environmental, community-impact benefits of lowering our collective carbon footprint
- **Goal to Achieve:** We'd like to set "neighborhood goals" as part of community meetings we will hold in the Spring of 2012. At minimum, we'd like to see a change in the survey results on how you get to the market, and maybe expand this effort to include other local ethnic grocers, bakeries and spice shops where people shop throughout the week.

**Describe the neighborhood or community need(s) and/or challenges that this effort will address.**

Roslindale is an urban neighborhood of Boston, about 2.4 square miles and located approximately six miles southwest of downtown Boston. According to the 2010 Census, 34,663 people live in Roslindale. Approximately 46% are European American, 19% African-American, 23% Latino and 9% multiple races/indicating "other" as a census category. We are now considered a 'majority minority' neighborhood, and actually have been noted as a neighborhood with one of the highest percentages of black people of different races/ethnicities living next door to one another on a block by block level. Our neighborhood has been built by successive waves of immigrants, with Greeks and Italians now several generations established, and greater numbers of Dominicans, Peruvians, Mexicans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Haitians and Albanians now calling Roslindale home.

We think it takes the efforts of a whole community to change lifestyles, patterns of injustice and the way people engage in community life. The Farmers' Market is but one organizing effort, but so far it's succeeded in both the spirit of how it brings the many parts of our community together and the tangible nature of the way people buy locally produced food.

Working with very low-income people on the issue of shopping locally and the affordability of fresh locally-grown food presents challenges as well as opportunities. The following facts encourage us:

- According to the Department for Transitional Assistance (Dec 2010), Roslindale has **5,092** residents with SNAP/EBT and the total SNAP dollars allotted for those residents is **\$652,547**.
- In the surrounding neighborhoods, there is also high EBT use: **5,595 in Hyde Park, 7,709 in Mattapan, 1,448 in West Roxbury, and 5,213 in JP**. In those four neighborhoods there are 4 total farmers markets, but based on raffle entry addresses, we know lots of people come to Roslindale as their Farmers' Market, and the Food Project data also confirms our accessibility.
- We know that there is a **very high use of WIC, Senior Coupons, and Veggie coupons** at the market. (One farmer says "hundreds of dollars per Saturday market" -- and we need to find a better way to track this and engage more with WIC and other coupon programs)
- A total of **\$5,338** spent over the 2010 season with lots of repeat customers (our counts show about 100 – 120 distinct customers).
- The majority of residents of Roslindale live within 0.5 to 1 mile walking distance of Adams Park; we think walking is a viable, life-style change we can support as a community-wide initiative.
- We're ideally situated to be accessible for other neighborhoods as well as Roslindale -- there are 14 MBTA bus lines traveling directly through Roslindale Village from Forest Hills (the end of the Orange line subway, about 1 mile from Adams Park) Forest Hills is the outbound terminal for bus route to such Boston neighborhoods as Mattapan, Hyde Park, West Roxbury as well as our "competitors" in suburban shopping centers located in Dedham, MA.

## **What is the level and nature of involvement of the community-at-large?**

*Outreach:* in the first 3 seasons, volunteers went door-to-door and gave fliers to over 6,000 households, once a month. In 2010, we arranged for four public elementary schools to have students bring home fliers about the farmers' market and bounty bucks program. We have also created a webpage, [Facebook](#) page, have [Twitter](#), or send periodic email updates and send press releases to print media.

In 2010, we had 75 volunteers help with everything from promotions, to setup and breakdown on Saturdays, to food demonstrations and developing recipe cards. We have built an extensive network of relationships with Boston Public Schools – the Sumner, Bates and Irving Schools (1,498 students, with close to 80% of these students participate in free or reduced lunch programs), Healthy Roslindale Coalition/Rozzie Reps – network of community youth; Roslindale Community Center - 75 after-school and summer program participants; ABCD/Southside Head Start - 310 Head Start and ESOL clients; Roslindale WIC – 900 individuals and families participate; Greater Roslindale Medical and Dental Center - 300 low-income patients; Roslindale Social Security Administration – 300 local seniors; Rogerson House – 227 affordable elder housing residents and day program clients; Casserly House/Florence St. Housing Development – 125 residents; Washington-Beech Housing Coalition - 225 affordable housing residents; Stonybrook Village - 550 affordable housing residents. However, we've been limited in terms of dedicated staff time (volunteers have opened the doors, but we need more staff time to build closer collaborative relationships.)

## **If your project is successful, what changes will occur in your community and its environment?**

- A neighborhood farmers market which matches the racial and ethnic diversity of our neighborhood, in terms of community members shopping and gathering, the musicians featured, the composition of vendors and the health and environmental activists using the farmer's market as a venue for outreach and demonstrations (by 2012)
- A diverse neighborhood which unites around our Farmers' Market and local food options and demonstrates in *measurable* ways, the impact of buying local, buying locally produced food and doing it in sustainable ways, such as walking, biking or taking public transit (2012 and beyond)
- More local merchants and restaurants who begin to use and/or feature their connection to sustainable practices and locally grown food (long range)

## **PROJECT BUDGET**

**1) Itemize anticipated expenses and income for this Project Proposal. Also note in-kind services (donated materials and/or labor) you may receive for this proposal.**

Please see Attachment A for both our current budget, proposed budget with NEGEF funding and our financial history. Major expenses and income are summarized below, as requested.

### **Expenses: \$8,068**

\$4,368 - adds 14 weeks FM Mgr

\$750 - new banner for outreach

\$750 - translations of materials (Spanish, Haitian Creole, Albanian)

\$650 - printing postcards/flyers

\$1,000 - promotional campaigns (e.g., walk incentives, ethnic recipes)

\$800 - Raffle-Farmers Market Basket Oct 2011 - Season 2012

### **NEGEF Income Request: \$8,000**

Principal sources of support (such as membership dues, individual donations, grants, special events etc) for \$31,000 Farmers' Market Budget (See Attachment A)

\$15,235 – Vendor Fees

\$1,000 – Department of Agriculture Grant for 2011

\$2,500 – Fundraising Events