



Food for Progress USDA Regional Agriculture Innovation Network Annual Program Statement

Program Name:	USDA Thailand regional Agriculture Innovation Network
APS Title:	Thailand: Scaling Climate Smart Innovations / RAINAPS-01
Date Issued:	January 19, 2025
Amended:	March 17, 2025 for administrative items and updated Annex C.
Closing Date:	5:00 PM ICT December 31, 2025
Estimated Award Date:	On a rolling basis through December 31, 2025

The USDA Thailand Regional Agriculture Innovation Network (USDA RAIN) is a five-year USDA-funded Food for Progress project implemented by Winrock International (Winrock). This Annual Program Statement (APS) serves as a notice that USDA RAIN is seeking applications to fulfill its primary goal of scaling adoption of climate-smart innovations (CSI) to increase farmer incomes, reduce environmental impact, and expand trade.

Through a series of targeted grants, USDA RAIN will enhance the availability, accessibility, and adoption of agricultural inputs and technology that improve agricultural production and input supply chains in the project's priority provinces. The purpose of this APS is to share information to prospective applicants so they may develop and submit concept notes and, later, applications for funding. This APS and its annexes describe:

- the types of activities for which concept notes will be considered
- the funding available
- the process and requirements for submitting concept notes
- the criteria for evaluating concept notes, and
- following steps to develop and submit a full grant application, for those concept notes that are accepted to proceed to the next step

USDA RAIN anticipates awarding multiple grants under this APS with an anticipated award size ranging between 500,000 THB to 1,300,000 THB, excluding the contribution or investment amount the grantee provides as cost share or leverage.

To be competitive, applications must be fully responsive to all directions within this APS document. Awards will be administered in accordance with all USDA applicable laws, regulations, and Federal Executive Orders. The applicant will also comply with FAS's Award General Terms & Conditions for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, as applicable.

Note that applicants will not receive an award unless the applicant has complied with all applicable System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section F. Applicants may submit an initial concept note prior to registering on SAM.gov, but the registration process may take several weeks to complete; therefore, applicants should begin registration as soon as possible.

This notice is not a binding commitment on the part of USDA RAIN or Winrock to issue an award, nor does it commit USDA RAIN or Winrock to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any concept notes, engagement, collaboration, co-design, or full applications. USDA RAIN and Winrock reserve the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted under this APS. For more information please submit inquiries to RAIN.consultants@winrock.org.

Sincerely,

Khem Suksathit

Grants Coordinator, USDA RAIN



SECTION 1. GRANT FUND DESCRIPTION

Background. The USDA Thailand Regional Agriculture Innovation Network (USDA RAIN) is a five-year USDA-funded Food for Progress project implemented by Winrock International (Winrock). USDA RAIN facilitates adoption of climate-smart innovations (CSI) to increase farmer incomes, reduce environmental impact, and expand trade. Our approach identifies CSI and enhances them by incorporating extension, financial, and data services, and promotes the availability and use of innovations to processors and producers.

USDA RAIN provides training, capacity-strengthening, and technical and marketing development to smallholder farmers (5 hectares or less) and other private sector stakeholders to increase agriculture production and trade through the adoption of CSI technologies and climate resilient practices. USDA RAIN delivers services that provide equitable opportunities for women and youth. USDA RAIN will benefit 30,000 smallholder farmers in Thailand.

Purpose. The purpose of this APS is to solicit concept notes, from eligible applicants (defined as businesses, associations, and local and national non-governmental organizations (preferred) and international non-governmental organizations) whose proposed activities meet USDA RAIN evaluation criteria and contribute to Activity outcomes and/or results.

Technical Focus. USDA RAIN encourages applicants to submit concept notes that contribute to **innovative solutions** in scaling CSI technology. Prioritization should also be given to expanding and strengthening a network of service providers utilizing CSI. Illustrative (not exhaustive) examples of possible activities are featured in Annex A.

USDA RAIN will publicly post detailed instructions on how to submit concept notes when the project has specific objectives to achieve through a series of grants. This does not limit applicants from submitting unsolicited concept notes within the scope of this APS. See below under Section 2.B. for more information about how to submit concept notes.

Grant concept notes and later, applications, must describe:

- The purpose (mission) and objectives of the organization and the proposed activity.
- A description of the proposed activity (i.e. new strategy, innovative approach to constraints, new technologies, digital integration, marketing and distribution channels) and its sustainability.
- A description of who and how the activity will be implemented as an integral part of the applicant's Implementation Plan, including leadership and number of staff or workers.
- A general description of who will benefit from the proposed activity (including estimates of how many people and the target population(s) and the proposed impact on them.
- An estimate of the total amount of the grant funding that would be required to implement the activity, as well as details of applicant's contribution, in cash and in kind, if any.
- Documentation of the organization's history and demonstration of ability to work in target provinces.
- Activities, specific programs, and their anticipated impact.

Geographic Focus: Northeastern Thailand provinces of Chaiyaphum, Khon Kaen, Nakhon Ratchasima, and Ubon Ratchathani.

SECTION 2: AWARD INFORMATION

Estimated Funding Level: The number and value of grant awards are subject to availability of funds. USDA RAIN expects to issue multiple Requests for Applications (RFAs) under this APS, under each of

which we intend to award multiple grants. The anticipated individual award size will typically be between 500,000 THB and 1,300,000 THB excluding cost share or leveraged amount. Applicants are requested to propose activities and budget accordingly.

To be competitive, applicants are encouraged to provide significant contribution (cost-share) or investment (leverage) of their own resources demonstrating their commitment to the proposed activities. The amount should be such to demonstrate commitment to the proposed grant activities to be competitive.

- **Contribution** may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, including real property, equipment, supplies, and other expendable property.
- **Investment** refers to the resources that a partner brings to a public-private partnership, and it includes financial contributions, third party contributions, donated services or property, or intellectual property.

Profitable, growing and well-run commercial businesses are expected to contribute significant contribution or investment. Small, remote, or otherwise disadvantaged organizations may negotiate to contribute less.

To be counted, a contribution or investment must:

- Be verifiable. The applicant must be willing and able to provide sufficient documentation to support all recorded cost-share.
- Not included as contributions for any other USG-assisted program or come from any other USG assistance.
- Necessary and reasonable for efficient and proper accomplishment of the objective(s).

Length of the Grants: Applicants must propose a period of performance that reflects the time needed to implement the activities included in the concept note. RAIN anticipates most grants will have a minimum duration of three (3) months and a maximum duration of six (6) months.

Grants Type: USDA RAIN expects to award grants where the recipient is paid for successful completion of previously negotiated milestones (Fixed Amount Awards - FAA). The FAA allows for the award of a grant for very specific program elements without the need for USDA RAIN to monitor actual costs incurred in the performance of the grant award. USDA RAIN will use this type of award where there is certainty about the cost and when the achievement of results or milestones is readily discernible. To speed up the negotiation process, the USDA RAIN team will work together with the applicant to establish a final milestone schedule.

Other types of awards (in-kind, simplified, or standard grants) may be considered for specific awards based on the nature of the proposed activities, the capacity of the applicant, the estimated total cost of the award and the pre-award assessment of the partner internal operating systems. The USDA RAIN grants team will determine the appropriate grant type during the grant negotiation process.

Questions and Answers. USDA RAIN reserves the right to schedule presentations of the APS information to interested applicants and answer specific questions and will ensure that announcements for these informational sessions, if any, are published in advance of the session to the same web location as this APS. Further awareness and informational events will be held in person at the local levels. Applicants that are interested in attending any of these in-person awareness and informational meetings must email the USDA RAIN grants team at RAIN.consultants@winrock.org in advance to ensure they will receive the meeting notification and instructions to join the session.

SECTION 3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- Legally registered organizations in Thailand with the majority of Thai shareholders and a

minimum of 2 years of demonstrated operations.

- Entities must be in good standing with the appropriate authorities, and compliant with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations.
- Private sector companies, non-for-profit organizations, community-based organizations, cooperatives, private academic and research institutions, training centers and local chambers of commerce. (e.g. information and communications technology provider, agri-technologies, importer, wholesaler, machinery manufacturer/suppliers/repair and/or maintenance, fertilizer manufacturer/ distributor/suppliers, irrigation manufacturer/suppliers/repair and/or maintenance, business development service providers).

The following entities **are not eligible** for consideration:

- Organizations who have received grants from other organizations/programs/donors performing similar work that duplicates the proposed action.
- Any entity that has been found to have misused U.S. Government funds in the past or whose name appears on any U.S. Government or United Nations lists of excluded parties.
- Political parties, groupings, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates.
- Organizations led directly or indirectly by government officials (including public companies, aka parastatals), including when they are office bearers of private companies.
- Organizations that advocate, promote, or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities.

Further, upon grant award, the grant fund cannot be utilized for the following activities:

- Construction, infrastructure, renovation, or rehabilitation activities.
- Ceremonies, parties, celebrations.
- Purchases of restricted goods without prior approval, or purchases of prohibited goods. Further details will be provided during the APS launch and informational events and in the full application process.
- Any purchase or activity which has already been made prior to the award issuance.
- Prior obligations of and/or, debts, fines, and penalties imposed on the awardee.
- Creation of endowments.
- Expenses related to concept note or application preparation (pre-award or application expenses).
- Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by USDA RAIN, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed activity.
- Other costs that are unallowable under USDA and/or federal regulations, such as alcoholic beverages.
- Indirect costs such as, but not limited to, overhead or indirect fringe (unless the applicant has documented proof of such rates through audits or USAID-issued NICRA).

SECTION 4: CONCEPT NOTE, FINAL APPLICATION, AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This APS is not a request for applications nor a request for proposals. Rather, it provides information for a two-step process consisting of:

1. A request for concept notes.
2. An invitation to organizations of selected concept notes to develop a final application/activity description in collaboration with the USDA RAIN technical team.

USDA RAIN will issue periodic Calls for Concept Notes under their respective Requests for Applications, all of which will fall under the technical objectives of this APS. Concept Notes and

Applications will be accepted throughout the year and will be reviewed per the schedules outlined in each call for concept notes and RFA. Concept notes corresponding to the objectives of the USDA RAIN project may be submitted independent of a Call for Concept Notes and/or RFA.

Once a Call for Concept Notes is released, applicants are encouraged to apply early.

Step 1: Request for Concept Note. Once an applicant submits a concept note in response to this APS and/or RFAs issued under this APS, the USDA RAIN team will conduct an initial review based on the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 3 above. If eligible, the concept note will move to a merit review using the criteria outlined under **Section 5: Merit Review Criteria**, below. The purpose of the initial merit review is to determine whether USDA RAIN will engage in further discussions regarding the proposed activities. The review will result in one of two outcomes:

1. **Decline to Fund:** A decision to forego further consideration of the proposed concept.
2. **Proceed to Co-Creation:** A successful concept note will trigger an offer from USDA RAIN to enter a **two-week period** of collaboration to further define their proposed idea, methodology and approach and develop a full application.

Note that the final application design process is intended to build on a concept note that has strength and potential; it is not intended to develop new concepts from the ground up.

Step 2: Final Application Design. Based on the concept note review, the USDA RAIN team may invite applicants with successful concept notes to proceed with co-creation to develop a full application. Depending on the circumstances, the applicant may design the final application on their own, collaborate with USDA RAIN technical staff, and/or other successful concept note applicants. Throughout the remainder of the process (e.g., up to and through any award that might be issued under this APS), the USDA RAIN team may engage in highly specific, detailed activity design discussions with the applicants depending on the needs and applicant's internal capacity. The goals of this second phase in the two-step grant award process are to explore and validate key challenges and problems and to develop promising solutions or adapt and expand upon existing ones. This second phase is also intended to help identify potential partnerships to support these new or existing solutions and activities.

Concept Note Submission Information:

- Solicited concept notes in response to a Call for Concept Notes must follow the specific guidance provided in the call.
- Unsolicited concept notes must be no longer than four (4) pages. Attachments will not be accepted. Concept notes may be written in English or Thai. Concept notes must be submitted electronically to RAIN.conculstants@winrock.org. Applicants should write "Concept Note: [Name of Applicant Organization]" in the subject line of the email. Please see **Annex B** for the Concept Note form.

After the applicant submits the full technical and cost application it may take up to 120 days from the date depending on circumstances related to procurement, applicant documentation, application processing, USDA approval, and other factors. Awards will be subject to the availability of funds. There is no guarantee a grant application submitted will be awarded.

SECTION 5: MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

Concept notes will be reviewed against the following criteria:

1. The applicant meets eligibility requirements as outlined in Section 3.
2. The proposed activities are responsive to one or more technical focuses included in Annex A of this APS.
3. Solutions proposed clearly contribute to the RAIN project objectives found in Annex A of this



APS, including overall number of beneficiaries and focus on inclusion of smallholder farmers (5 hectares or less), women, and youth.

4. The concept note and subsequent application show that the entity has adequate organizational capability and experience to successfully implement the proposed activities, including staffing and management capacity.
5. The concept note and subsequent application demonstrate that the organization is committed to significant cost-sharing or investment.
6. The applicant demonstrates a substantial potential impact because of its proposed activities and demonstrates efficient use of resources.

SECTION 6: GENERAL INFORMATION OF USDA GRANTS REQUIREMENT

Awards will be administered in accordance with provisions contained in USDA applicable laws, regulations, and Federal Executive Orders. The applicant will also comply with FAS's Award General Terms & Conditions for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, as applicable Information on these terms and conditions can be accessed [here](#) or by contacting the USAID Agricultural Inputs grants team at RAIN.consultants@winrock.org.

SAM Registration: There is a mandatory requirement for the applicant to obtain a Unique Entity Identified (UEI) number by registering in the U.S. System for Award Management ([SAM.gov](https://sam.gov)). Step-by-step instructions for SAM registration are provided in Annex D and can also be found by clicking on this [link](#).

Procurement Restrictions: USDA has defined a list of restricted goods that require written approval prior to procuring. Restricted items include agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, contraceptives and condoms, pesticides, used equipment and fertilizer.

Mandatory Certifications: Before a grant award can be signed, the receiving entity representative must sign the following certifications:

1. Certification regarding Lobbying
2. Certification regarding Terrorist Financing
3. Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking
4. Representation regarding Prohibition on Providing Federal Assistance to Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements
5. Any other certification applicable when the grant award is signed according to the grant type.

SECTION 7: POINT OF CONTACT

The point of contact for this APS is the USDA RAIN Grants team. Questions during the APS process can be sent to: RAIN.consultant@winrock.org. Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this APS must request it in writing before the APS expiration date. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this APS will be furnished promptly to all other interested parties, if that information is relevant in crafting either the concept notes or final applications or if the lack of it would be detrimental to any other prospective applicants.

ANNEX A - ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES UNDER USDA GRANTS PROGRAM

Technical Focus	Illustrative Activities
<p>Agricultural Machine. USDA will strengthen public and private sector capacities to improve access to affordable agricultural machinery for cassava farming, addressing labor shortages and inefficiencies. Partners will promote the use of machines like the All-in-One Cassava Planting Machine and Rapid Weeding Machine to enhance planting and weeding efficiency while reducing labor demands. To support adoption, USDA’s partners will collaborate with machinery suppliers, service providers, and local stakeholders to establish rental and service networks, ensuring equitable last-mile distribution. Additionally, partners will disseminate best practices for mechanized farming through training programs, community demonstrations, and digital platforms to maximize the benefits of mechanization for farmers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting Mechanized Farming: Launch campaigns to highlight the benefits of machines like the All-in-One Cassava Planting and Rapid Weeding Machines. 2. Establishing Rental Networks: Develop affordable rental and service models with suppliers and local providers for smallholder farmers. 3. Training Programs: Train service providers and farmers on machine use, maintenance, and efficiency. 4. Demonstration Plots: Showcase productivity gains with mechanization through demonstration plots in farming areas. 5. After-Sales Support: Expand networks for repair services, spare parts, and maintenance to ensure machinery reliability. 6. Collaborative Partnerships: Work with governments and stakeholders to promote equitable and sustainable machinery distribution.
<p>Smart Fertilizer. The USDA will strengthen public and private sector capacities to improve access to affordable smart fertilizers for cassava farming, addressing nutrient inefficiencies and boosting productivity. Partners will promote the use of advanced fertilizers, such as controlled-release fertilizers (CRF) and nutrient-enriched foliar sprays, to enhance nutrient delivery and reduce environmental impacts. To support adoption, USDA’s partners will collaborate with fertilizer producers, distributors, and local stakeholders to establish efficient supply chains and community-based distribution networks, ensuring equitable access for farmers. Additionally, partners will disseminate best practices for smart fertilizer use through training programs and on-farm demonstrations to maximize the benefits of these innovations for sustainable cassava production.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote Smart Fertilizer Use: Conduct campaigns to show benefits of how smart fertilizers, like controlled-release fertilizers (CRF) and foliar sprays, enhance productivity and reduce environmental impact. 2. Establishing Distribution Networks: Collaborate with suppliers, cooperatives, and local retailers to develop accessible and affordable distribution channels for smallholder farmers. 3. Training Programs: Organize training for farmers and service providers on proper application techniques, optimal timing, and dosage of smart fertilizers to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. 4. Demonstration Plots: Set up demonstration plots to highlight the productivity improvements and cost savings achieved with smart fertilizers compared to conventional methods. 5. Collaborative Partnerships: Engage with governments, research institutions, and private stakeholders to support policy alignment and create incentives for the adoption of smart fertilizers.
<p>Drone Spraying. The USDA will enhance access to affordable drone spraying technology for cassava farming to address labor shortages and improve crop management efficiency. This initiative promotes advanced drones for precise application of fertilizers and pesticides, reducing labor and input waste. USDA partners will collaborate with manufacturers, service providers, and stakeholders to establish rental networks for equitable access. Best practices will be shared through training, demonstrations, and outreach, empowering farmers to adopt precision agriculture for sustainable farming.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting Drone Spraying Technology: Launch awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of drone spraying, such as precision application, reduced labor demands, and resource efficiency. 2. Establish Drone Service Networks: Develop rental and service models with drone manufacturers, service providers, and local stakeholders to make drones accessible to smallholder farmers. 3. Training Programs: Conduct hands-on training sessions for farmers and service providers on drone operation, maintenance, and safe application of fertilizers, pesticides, and other inputs. 4. Demonstration Plots: Set up field demonstrations showcasing the efficiency, cost savings, and productivity improvements achieved with drone spraying technology.

ANNEX B – CONCEPT NOTE FORM

Maximum Length: Four (4) pages, paper size A4. The only attachment accepted is a copy of the organization’s most recent registration and tax clearance certificate (or value added tax certificate, if applicable)

Concept Note

I. Basic Information

Name of Organization	
Activity Title	
Target Crop	
Target Province(s)	
Start / End Date	

II. Objective

- What is the key objective(s) to be achieved?

III. Background

- Background of organization, expertise.
- What kind of support is being provided with the grant?
- What is the situation before RAIN intervention (before grant)?
- What could be changed after RAIN intervention (after grant)?

IV. Business Model

- What is the business model being developed?
- How will smallholder farmers (5 hectares or less) benefit from your activities?
- How will smallholder farmers (5 hectares or less) benefit from activities/innovations after the grant has ended?
- How will the business run after the grant ends?

V. Scope of Work

- What are the activities or steps to be completed according to the business model above?

VI. Deliverables

This table provides illustrative deliverable numbering only. Please structure the deliverables from the proposed activities in a way that best demonstrates the anticipated outputs of the grant concept.

Deliverable	Expected Due Date
Activity 1:	
<i>Example:</i>	
Deliverable 1.1:	1.1 – June 30, 2025
Deliverable 1.2:	1.2 – Aug 30, 2025
Activity 2:	
Activity 3:	



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VII. Budget

Amount (THB)	Description	Notes
	TOTAL	

VIII. Farmer Impact

List of RAIN target provinces: Please see Annex C. for detail for a matrix of USDA RAIN’s target provinces, crops, and CSI.

Province	RAIN target crop	Estimated Users (smallholder farmers)

Prepared by: _____
(Full name, signature, and title as applicable)

Contact Detail of Organization

- Phone Number:
- Email Address:
- Website Address:

Company seal:

ANNEX C – USDA RAIN TARGET PROVINCES, DISTRICTS, AND MUNICIPALITIES

This table outlines USDA RAIN’s geographic focus. While applicants can be in any part of Thailand, the proposed grant activity must have demonstrable impact on smallholder farmers or other relevant participants in this working area.

CSI	Province(s)	USDA RAIN Target Impact	Target crop(s)
Agricultural Machine	Nakhon Ratchasima	350	Cassava
	Chaiyaphum	350	Cassava
	Khon Kaen	300	Cassava
	Ubon Ratchathani	1,000	Cassava
	Others	500	Cassava
IoT for the irrigation system	Chantaburi	1,000	Durian
	Others	500	Durian
Controlled-release fertilizers (CRF)	Nakhon Ratchasima	1,000	Cassava
	Chaiyaphum	1000	Cassava
	Khon Kaen	500	Cassava
	Others	500	Cassava
Customized fertilizers	Nakhon Ratchasima	2,000	Rainfed Rice
	Chaiyaphum	2,000	Rainfed Rice
	Khon Kaen	2,500	Rainfed Rice
Drone Spraying	Nakhon Ratchasima	5,000	Cassava/ Rainfed Rice
	Chaiyaphum	5,000	Cassava/ Rainfed Rice
	Khon Kaen	5,000	Cassava/ Rainfed Rice
	Chantaburi	1,000	Durian
	Others	1,000	Cassava/ Rainfed Rice
Greenhouse and irrigation system for rapid propagation CMD resistant varieties	Nakhon Ratchasima	2,000	Cassava
	Chaiyaphum	2,000	Cassava
	Khon Kaen	2,000	Cassava
	Others	2,000	Cassava
Materials and equipment for the irrigation system for planting CMD-resistant varieties in farmers' fields	Nakhon Ratchasima	1,000	Cassava
	Chaiyaphum	1,000	Cassava
	Khon Kaen	1,000	Cassava
	Others	1,000	Cassava



DISCLAIMER

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