

Questions and Answers

This document will be regularly updated to address all received questions.

Last update: May 4, 2021

ARE – Request for Application (RFA003)

1- Does ARE program support the cost of water pumps?

Answer: Water pumps are eligible expenses under this intervention.

2- Does Tractor, or harvesting machine for silage corn or harvesting machine for silage wheat covered under ARE program?

Answer: Motor vehicles including tractors and other farm machinery are ineligible expenses. However, farm machinery implements, and attachments are eligible expenses.

1- If the applicant wants to start with 100 dunums surface as pilot plots in the olive orchards, the first year will be for trials of different species, different lands, and types of soils. Not sure if the good result will be generated from the first year. Is that okay in terms of production?

Answer: The RFA is not directive by specifying what type of forage will have to be planted in which areas. ARE wanted to keep the flexibility to the applicant to their knowledge and what grows better in their lands. The anticipated results are broad, it is up to the applicant to adjust as needed cause there is also the farmer element, some might have small lands some large lands. This is a pilot project that is expected to identify and have bright spots, successful trials that we will be able to communicate about and share the successful results with larger public to scale up and help achieve the objectives.

In addition, there are some expectations from the service provider such as the basic knowledge about the type of forages that are best grown on the soil that the service provider will choose (for example: the alfalfa is different from the corn). Moreover, some farmers might not be interested to have any kind of forage that requires high amount of water like the olive trees, therefore, the farmer might choose lentils because it requires little amount of water. After conducting the mapping for the farmers, the service provider should have a matrix to help him know which forage will grow on which land.

2- Is it strict that the service provider should choose a land of olive trees and fruit trees and do the intercropping, or can they choose a bare land and choose 2 or more crops to be intercropped?

Answer: The RFA is specifically for adopting intercropping production systems within orchards (fruit trees or olive trees).

3- Is it possible for the service provider to rent a place to the farmers to put the forage there? Would the funding from ARE cover the rent? Would It be possible if each farmer stores the forage in small spaces?

Answer: It is up to the applicant to design the program depending on the circumstances, the area, and the farmers. No issues with any of the suggestions, that depends on the design that the applicant is providing, and it will be evaluated as a part of whole program.

In terms of storage space rental, it is eligible expense per USAID's rules and regulations and will be evaluated in line with Merit Review criteria listed in the RFA.

4- Will ARE establish service centers?

Answer: The applicant is expected to handle and provide the support to the farmers starting from the production to the harvesting stage followed by the sales and marketing levels. As listed in the RFA, the preference is that the applicant creates a linkage between the farmers and the sales stakeholder. The design and concept of the project are up to the applicant.

5- Does the number of farmers matter? Or is the dunum/land that we will provide matters most?

Answer: As per section 5 of the RFA, each application will be evaluated based on the Merit Review criteria which follows a points-based system, and one of the criteria is the Impact. ARE is in favor of reaching out to the largest number of farmers.

6- Will ARE be selecting 10 applicants/pilot projects?

Answer: The expectations that 10 pilots will be implemented by one or more applicant. If an applicant has a robust presence in 2 different areas (for example: North and South) and have the right capacities to work in 10 pilot plots in these 2 areas, that will hit the target. However, if there is another applicant who can provide larger spectrum of forages in the South area, the award will split between one or more applicant.

7- Can the applicant mix different forages?

Answer: Definitely, the more mixture, the more relevant information ARE, and the applicant will be able to achieve out of this pilot intervention.

8- *If there is more than one applicant applying on same project and if the project requires high expenses of machineries. Does ARE cover the machineries?*

Answer: Section 5 of the RFA lists 7 merit review categories. Following the review of the applications, all the proposal will be scored depending on the categories and a technical review will be conducted to see if the distribution of pilots is wide enough and covers different elements to maximize the outcome of this pilot intervention. If 2 applicants are applying with a lot of similarities (machinery, area, farmers), the evaluation will be based on the points and merit review criteria.

9- *Only one applicant will be chosen to receive the grant even if another applicant submitted the same design?*

Answer: ARE has the capacity to award more than one applicant depending on the proposals received, if 2 proposals are targeting the same area and have the same input, then, the applicant with higher score will be selected.

10- *Is it up to the applicant to propose a budget plan that embraces the 3 stages: Production, harvesting and Sales and Marketing?*

Answer: Budget is an integral part of the proposal and will yield 15 out of 100 points in the review as per section 5 of the RFA. The applicant will be proposing scope, budget, and timeline.

11- *The RFA mentions that it will be measuring milk production; what if the forages are used to feed the animal for meat production?*

Answer: The language in the RFA is not very strict on measuring the impact on milk quality, however, it will be a big plus to have a baseline related to the quantity or quality of milk before the forages were introduced especially in rural areas where herd nutrition is not always optimized. Having the information showing the results before and after will be very beneficial. The fodder or forages are not meant to exclusively feed the milking animals.

Moreover, there might be some other results that would be an outcome from this intervention like the health or the performance of the livestock, and regardless of the results, ARE needs to extract this information. Maybe in some cases the intercropping would not be something to be harvested, it can be a forage used for grazing, i.e., if someone has orchards and sheep, he might use this intercropping and let the sheep graze the orchard; it is very wide and flexible and it is up to the applicant to write the scope/model of this intercropping system.

12- *Should the quality of olive tree fruits be preserved?*

Answer: It is recommended to test for the impact of intercropping with forages to any type of fruit or product yielded.

13- *Seeds should be of certified foreign origin?*

Answer: Certified seeds from foreign origin are not a requirement.

14- *Should pest management be organic approached or integrated or...*

Answer: ARE does not dictate a specific orchard or field management system; but encourages integrated pest management. It is up to the applicant to mention the management practice whether conventional, IPM, ICM, GAP, Organic, or other.

15- *Should fertilizers be organic, chemical, or mixed or by preference?*

Answer: ARE does not dictate a specific type of fertilizers. It is up to the applicant to mention the specify their chosen approach.

16- *Should the quality of fruits be monitored before and after the intercropping?*

Answer: Applicants can compare within the same season on two different plots the difference between yield quantity, quality, or any relevant characteristic.