



Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan - Calendar Year 2021

Agency: Washington State Department of Agriculture

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2021 Washington State Department of Agriculture Supplier Diversity Inclusion Plan

Agency's plan to increase participation of certified small, minority, women, and veteran owned firms:

WSDA has assessed our purchasing and procurement history and known upcoming needs; based on the report provided by OMWBE, WSDA utilized OMWBE registered diverse businesses for approximately 16.55% of our total spend in FY20. Regardless of Washington State OMWBE registration status, the WSDA team works hard to support the small business and local economic sectors.

Plan to Increase Participation

- Remain utilizing DES Master Contracts as our first resource for purchasing and contracting needs, wherever feasible.
- Review new OMWBE vendor registration reports for new vendor leads in relevant market sectors.
- Remain focused on our best opportunity to increase diverse business spend, in the following spend categories:
 - Maintenance, Repair and Operations (MRO)
 - Janitorial contracting categories
 - Supply purchases
- Human Resources (HR) related contracting categories, such as mediation and personnel investigations available through the DES Master Contract, where diverse vendors are available under contract. WSDA Human Resources is currently putting together a process for procuring such resources in a streamlined and equitable manner.
- Advertise procurements to diverse businesses for each procurement both in WEBS and our website to allow a fair and open opportunity to a varied range of businesses.
- Speak with vendors, small or large, and provide resources via email and telephone. Our aim is to provide people with actionable information to help them with the goal of working with Agriculture and/or other WA State agencies. When it makes sense, we help walk vendors through the Statewide Vendor registration process.
- Continue to monitor Amazon spend and shift to master contract vendors when available. Work to connect with Amazon to find a better way to identify diverse vendors selling products within the Amazon marketplace.
- Regardless whether vendors are registered with OMWBE, WSDA will continue to actively search for diverse businesses for both small purchases and contracting needs.



- Continue working with Washington State small and local business offices for the Washington State Emergency Food Procurement Project to support Food Banks during the Covid-19 pandemic; further increasing focus on procuring foods grown in Washington State during FY2021 and beyond.

WSDA continues to work to increase our OMWBE certified vendor usage in areas that we can affect spend. In many categories, the overall spend value is small enough that 1-2 purchases have an extraordinary effect on our diverse spend numbers and has a direct correlation with our diverse spend.

During these economically challenging times, the agency has significantly pared down spending and have shifted much of our focus to emergency food procurement. Since February 2020, WSDA has helped to provide over 12 million pounds of food to Washington State food banks.

We work always in the spirit of supporting our State, including forming strong partnerships with local businesses. We have created an internal strategy to ensure our procurement activities support the economy of Washington State and the Northwest. This includes working with a variety of business from small and local, to large corporations with larger purchasing power. A very significant portion of our annual spend is beyond our control and we are not able to shift to diverse vendors, especially at this time.

Obstacles

- WSDA works specific niche markets where resources are often found through word of mouth, associations we are connected with, and/or events attended by employees. Oftentimes, we get the opportunity to enter into direct buy contracts with vendors who are able to self-certify as a small, mini, or microbusinesses in WEBS for services such as program materials, brochures, or graphic design. Many of these vendors, however, are not certified through OMWBE.
- In addition, WSDA sends employees to hundreds of conferences each year that focus on specific subject matter, making it difficult and often impossible to shift that spend to another organization. In most years, there are travel expenses that couple with the conference attendance, but since the Covid-19 pandemic travel rarely occurs and virtual conferences are considerably less costly than in-person events.
- WSDA also holds countless association memberships. Again, due to the specific nature subject matter expertise of the associations, this is spend we are often unable to influence. During the Covid-19 pandemic, WSDA has experienced some associations lowering or waiving their fees.
- In many fiscal years, WSDA has multiple laboratories that need to purchase specialty scientific equipment. Since the Covid-19 pandemic we have experienced fewer purchases of both equipment and related consumables. Through our analysis to date, we have not found diverse vendors to shift spend in the scientific / laboratory sector.
- Due to the unique and varying nature of the agency's policy and operational focus, purchasing and contracting needs don't always align with OMWBE certified businesses. Also, due to the unique nature of the emergency food procurement project and a majority of other WSDA contracts and procurement needs, WSDA has found it an ongoing challenge to identify OMWBE certified vendors to work with. Though we



continue to search for opportunities, the list of currently certified vendors has not been a fruitful resource to date.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, WSDA is the lead agency on the Governor's Food Security Coordination Team (FSCT), working with Washington State Food Banks to address exponential increases in food insecurity across Washington State. While WSDA has not found OMWBE registered vendors to work with, the team has done an incredible job of making emergency food, supply, and PPE procurement decisions that support the local economy.

Total \$ Spent on Local Product	Percentage
WA Grown or Processed	32%
NW Grown or Processed (WA/OR/ID)	19%
Supplied by WA Company or Branch	50%
Supplied by NW Company or Branch (WA/OR/ID)	14%
Total from WA or NW	74%

Notes:

- **74% of all food purchased by the WSDA has been sourced from Washington or Northwest growers, processors, or suppliers.**
- ** 50% of all purchases were from Washington companies or branches.**
- ** 32% of all purchases were derived from Washington growers or processors.**

Subcontractors:

After another extensive search, we are not able to identify any diverse subcontractors within our internal contracts.