

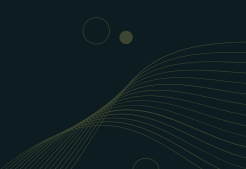


# Food Security



2023

- Food Security Standalone Grant
- Sustainable Practices Training
- Food Central Marketplace
- Farm to Table Chefs Competition



# INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

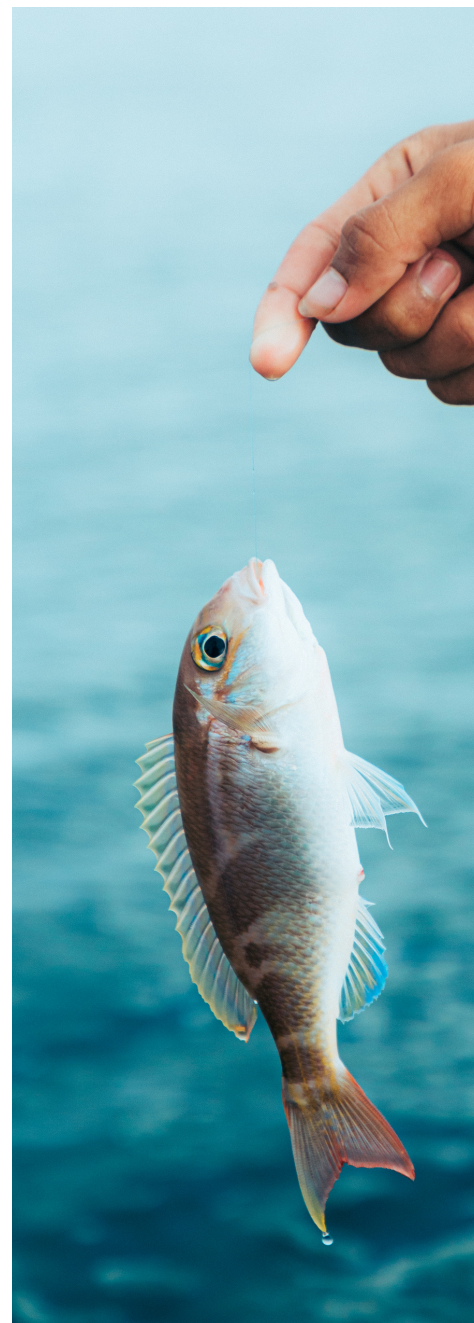
There are unique challenges in the Bahamian economy for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to navigate, including the impacts of COVID-19, limited access to global markets, and the impending issue of food scarcity.

The Bahamas is no stranger to the growing cost of food, due to our reliance on food imports. According to the International Trade Administration The Bahamas imported nearly 90% of its food at an annual cost of about \$1 billion in 2022. MSMEs in the agricultural and fisheries industries can address this growing cost but they have found themselves not being able to access the necessary land, boats and equipment; along with the lack of knowledge on the products that are of the greatest need in the market.

Still, the agricultural and fisheries sectors are ever-growing industries that contribute to job creation, income generation, poverty alleviation and food security. The Food Security Initiative aims to further harness the economic potential of MSMEs within the agricultural and fisheries sectors, as they are an important source for livelihood in The Bahamas.

Under the Guaranteed Loan Programme, the Small Business Development Centre is partnering with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, Bahamas Agriculture and Industrial Corporation (BAIC), Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute (BAMSI) to launch the Food Security Initiative on November 27th 2023. This initiative has the following objectives:

1. Facilitate training sessions to a) inform entrepreneurs in the farming, fishing and supporting industries (eg. packaging, shipping) how to operate sustainable businesses and b) create an ecosystem among these entrepreneurs across various islands;
2. Create commerce opportunities for Farmers and Fishers to create long term client relationships by a) hosting Food Central, a market for farmers and fishers and b) preparing farmers to be featured on the eCommerce Platform;
3. Curate a Culinary Showcase that matches farmers and fishers with prominent chefs in our community to create dishes and show the versatility and creativity of local grown, caught and produced products;
4. Create a survey to understand the effects of locally produced food products on the cost of doing business in The Bahamas;
5. Facilitate strategic partnerships to connect farmers and fishers to local businesses, including restaurants, grocery stores and food distributors;
6. Highlight funded MSMEs who contribute to food security in The Bahamas; and
7. Encourage MSMEs that contribute to food security in The Bahamas to obtain loan and grant funding for land, building, improvements, boats, boat parts, maintenance and repair costs, production equipment, insurance coverage, accounting software, product packaging, climate smart and sustainable upgrades, raw material, branding and marketing services, professional services and incorporation fees.







# THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD GRANT

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & MARINE RESOURCES

The Access Accelerator SBDC and The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Science have partnered to offer grant funding of up to \$40,000 to both startup and existing businesses in the Agricultural and Fishing industries. The total grant funding will be split with 60% of funding going to businesses in the Fishing industry and 40% to businesses in the Agricultural industry. The funding split was created to encourage new entrants into the fishing industry, and industry where the entrance of new businesses are less frequent.

Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria below, complete the training programme outlined on page 3, and submit the following documents before the application deadline:

- Executive Summary (template provided)
- Valid Passport
- NIB Card
- Address Verification (voters card, utility bill)
- Valid Business License
- Boating and Captains License (existing fishing businesses only)
- Vendor invoices and wire instructions

## Eligibility Criteria

- Must be a business positively contributing to the food security concerns in The Bahamas;
- Must be a 100% Bahamian owned business;
- Must commit to completing a 4-week training course;
- If a new fishing business, must provide boating and captain license within 30 days of approval;
- Must pass the adjudication process and
- Must be a business with yearly revenues of less than \$5 million and less than 50 employees.

Applicants must choose vendors that have a business bank account since grant proceeds will not be disbursed directly to applicants nor to vendors that have a personal bank account. As well, applicants will be notified in writing if they are approved or denied funding under the Food Security Grant Programme within 3 weeks of the application deadline.

## Tentative Schedule

Application Period	November 27th- December 11th
Applicants notified on decisions	January 15th
Disbursements begin	January 29th**

\*\*Dates will vary based on awardees providing necessary licenses

# THE TRAINING PROGRAMME



This training will aid in the initiative's goal to encourage innovation and sustainability among MSMEs within the agricultural, fishing and supporting industries that tackle the issues of food scarcity, supply chain disruptions and rising food costs for Bahamians.

Entrepreneurs will walk away with improved technical skills that will immediately impact and improve their business and product, while also creating sustainable farming and fishing practices. The training programme will also include lessons on finance, marketing, and governmental procedures ensuring that entrepreneurs have the knowledge to make their best business decisions. After completing the programme successfully, entrepreneurs will receive a completion certificate.

The training programme will be take place in a hybrid class setting and live across various family islands, including Grand Bahama, Andros, Eleuthera, Exuma, Abaco.

## Objectives:

- To facilitate better business management and encourage better business practices.
- To engage in peer to peer mentorship by sharing information, experiences and best practices on ways to improve quality and value of agricultural and fisheries product and operations.
- To explore emerging trends in the agricultural and fishing industries

## Training Outline

The training will be delivered via virtual sessions conducted over the course of 4 weeks.

**Facilitators:** Industry professionals, BAMSI lecturers, SBDC staff

**Sessions Format:** 1.5 hours training sessions

**Frequency:** Twice per week for 4 weeks

**Cost:** Free





## TRAINING PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Session	Topic
Session 1	Emerging Trends: Exploring new methods for farming and fishing
Session 2	Emerging Trends II: Exploring new methods for farming and fishing
Session 3	Legal and Government Procedures
Session 4	Product & Production
Session 5	Quality Control & Best Practices
Session 6	Financial Literacy 101
Session 7	Cultivating your Brand and Marketing
Session 8	Packaging and Getting to Market



## FOOD CENTRAL

### FARMERS & FISHERS MARKET AND CULINARY SHOWCASE

The Farmers Market will be a public event, where farmers and fishers will sell their goods and build relationships with the public. Farmers, fishers and other food and beverage providers will complete an application by submitting the following:

- Executive Summary
- Explanation/ listing of goods and services
- Logo and other brand details
- Business License
- Photos of products

Up to 40 vendors will be selected to participate in Food Central. It is not required to have received grant funding or completed the training programme to apply to showcase at Food Central. Each vendor will be provided with a table and table cloth with the company name.

During the farmers market, 7 sets of farmers and fishers will be matched with 7 chefs for a culinary showcase. Farmers and Fishers will put together locally sourced ingredients and chefs will curate and cook up to two dishes for guests who attend the food central to taste and vote on their favourite. The goal is to show what can be created with locally grown and produced food.

Guests who attend Food Central will sample each chefs dish and vote for the overall best dish. First, second and third place prizes will be awarded.





# GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAMME

## THE SBDC FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME

To cover startup or expansion costs that exceed \$70,000, businesses positively contributing to Food Security in The Bahamas may apply for up to \$500,000 under the SBDC's flagship funding programme, called the Guaranteed Loan Programme. To apply for funding under the Guaranteed Loan Programms, entrepreneurs must submit these additional documents:

- Business Plan
- Historical Financial Statements
- Vendor invoices
- Wire Instructions
- Corporate Documents
- Key Personnel resumes
- SBDC Business Overview
- SBDC non disclosure agreement
- BDB cover page
- BDB disclosure agreement
- Personal Statement of Affairs
- Drivers License and NIB card

If entrepreneurs are not able to provide a business plan and/or historical financial statements, the SBDC will engage a professional Plan Writer and/or certified Public Accountant to prepare these documents. The SBDC will also subsidize up to \$1,500 of the writer's fee and up to \$500 of the accountant's fee.

Once all the required documents for a loan and/or equity funding application are received by the SBDC, the documents will be assigned to a First Reviewer who will score the business plan using the criteria outlined on the SBDC's Business Plan Review form. The First Reviewer will only recommend the business plan for a second review if it scores 80 points or higher. If the business plan scores 79 points or lower, the First Reviewer will submit the completed Business Plan Review form to the business owner and professional writer to make recommended changes for improvement. As long as the business owner agrees in writing to the changes and the professional writer achieves a business plan quality score of 80, the First Reviewer will forward the business plan and corresponding documents to one of the SBDC's Second Reviewers. The purpose of the second review is to ensure the MSME's business plan meets the SBDC's quality standards and is ready for the scrutiny of the Investment Committee. After the second review stage is satisfied, startup and existing business owners will be invited to an Investment Committee meeting and given the opportunity to pitch their business plan and funding request to 8 Committee members.

# GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAMME CONT'D

If the Investment Committee approves the business for and IDB or MIGA loan guarantee, the Funding Manager will submit a guaranteed loan application and/or venture capital application to following funding partners.

- Fidelity Bank
- Royal Bank of Canada
- Bahamas Development Bank
- Bahamas Entrepreneurial Venture Fund
- Bank of The Bahamas
- Commonwealth Bank
- Simplified Lending
- Sunshine Finance
- National Workers Cooperative Credit Union
- Teachers & Social Workers Cooperative Credit Union

Based on the Investment Committee policy, MSMEs based in the Agricultural and Fishing industries are eligible for an IDB or MIGA guarantee up to 90%.

Upon the approval of the guaranteed loan, financial institution(s) will issue a Guaranteed Loan Offer Letter for the business owner(s) to sign and a Guarantee Agreement for the SBDCs leadership to cosign. Once both letters are signed by relevant parties, the financial institution(s) will facilitate loan proceed disbursements.







## BUDGET

The food security initiative is for a 3-year period with an annual budget of \$4,021,200 as described to the right

The annual budget will help 50 Agriculture and Fisheries MSMEs throughout The Bahamas contribute positively to the Food Security concerns in the country, become more sustainable and improve their business practices through access to funding and training on business and sustainability practices.

**Standalone Grants (25)**- \$1,000,000  
**Training Sessions**- \$15,000  
**Food Central**- \$30,000  
**Marketing and Advertising**- \$10,000  
**Business Plans (20)**- \$10,000  
**Historical Financial Statements (10)**- \$5,000  
**Investment Committee Meetings (20)**- \$11,000  
**Matching Grants (12)**- \$240,000  
**Guaranteed Loans (12)**- \$2,700,000