

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Department Of Agriculture Seeking Farmers To Participate In Farm To Hospital Program

Community Center / **Published On February 14, 2019 11:40 PM /**

Staff **February 14, 2019**



Department of Agriculture (D.O.A.) Commissioner nominee Positive Nelson on Wednesday announced that D.O.A.'s marketing division was seeking to recruit a total of 13 farmers, 6 in each district while reserving an opportunity for 1 applicant on St. John to participate in the Farm to Hospital (FTH) Program.

According to Government House, the program will provide selected applicants with technical assistance and training on best planting practices, crop variety selection, irrigation, and post-harvest-techniques. D.O.A. has secured federal funding from the USDA-Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) FY 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant to establish the program to operate in conjunction with the Harvest of the Month initiative in

the U.S. Virgin Islands. The selected farmers will function in concert to grow fruit/vegetable crops which will be presented on the hospital 's lunch menu as the harvest of the month in both island districts, the release said.

All individuals interested in participating in the program may request an application via e-mail: billy.abraham@doa.vi.gov, or pick up one from D.O.A. in either district.

Selected applicants must possess the following minimum requirements:

- Adequate water supply
- Farmer's License
- Health Card
- Land (proprietorship of property is not mandatory; however, if the property belongs to another party, then express permission from the landowner must be granted).

The Farm to Hospital - Harvest of the Month program seeks to establish a formal supply chain relationship between hospitals and farms in which both parties benefit. Hospitals benefit by upholding the shared mission of many hospitals to 1) promote healthy living, 2), provide a model from which patients may learn, and 3), foster a healthy food environment. Farmers benefit because FTH programs create an alternative marketing channel for their products

The deadline to submit applications to the D.O.A.'s marketing division is 4:59 p.m. February 28, 2019. Applications may be submitted electronically to billy.abraham@doa.vi.gov.

All questions regarding this opportunity should be sent to the above email address.