



Farm to School Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2023 Request for Applications (RFA)

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APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This Application Checklist provides applicants with a list of the required documents. **However, FNS expects that applicants will read the entire RFA prior to the submission of their application and comply with all requirements outlined in this solicitation.** The Application Checklist is for applicant use only and should not be submitted as part of the Application Package.

Complete the following **at least four weeks** prior to submission:

- ☐ Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI);
- ☐ Register in the System for Award Management (SAM); and
- ☐ Register in Grants.gov.

When **preparing your application**, ensure:

- ☐ You are eligible to apply for a grant as described in [Section 3.0](#) "Eligibility Information."
- ☐ The chosen track best fits your project, as described in [Section 1.5](#) "Grant Tracks," and the track is correctly indicated on the Farm to School Coversheet.
- ☐ Application format and narrative meet the requirements included in [Section 4.0](#) "[Application and Submission Information](#)." This includes page limits, priorities outlined in [Section 1.6](#), and all necessary attachments.
- ☐ You include any required letter(s) of commitment (up to a maximum of three letters).
- ☐ If your organization does not operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and/or the School Breakfast Program, you **must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, or from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program.** This letter does count towards the three-letter limit.
- ☐ If applicable, you completed the Optional Priority Group Declaration Checklist ([Appendix C](#)) and included it in the project narrative (not counted towards page limit). **Applicants that do not submit the completed checklist with their application will not receive bonus priority points.**

When **preparing your budget**, ensure the following information is included:

- ☐ The total funding amounts requested on the Coversheet, SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Narrative are identical and do not exceed the maximum request amount for that grant track/type.
- ☐ At least a 25 percent cash or in-kind match is provided with a detailed description and signed letter for ALL matching funds. All matching funds must comply with [2 CFR 200.306](#). **Applicants failing to provide the match contribution documentation will be deemed ineligible and removed from further consideration.**
- ☐ All key staff proposed to be paid by this grant.
- ☐ The percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- ☐ Your organization's fringe benefit rate and amount, as well as the basis for the computation.
- ☐ The type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds.
- ☐ Itemized travel expenses (including type of travel), travel justifications and basis for lodging estimates.
- ☐ Travel expenses for one project staff, including a \$500 registration fee, for the mandatory one-time training meeting with USDA personnel in the first year of the grant. Applicants should use Atlanta, GA as the destination city for budgeting purposes, but know that the final location is subject to change to another location in the Southeastern Region.
- ☐ Types of equipment and supplies, justifications, and estimates, ensuring that the budget is in line with the project description.
- ☐ Information for all contracts and justification for any sole-source contracts.
- ☐ Justification, description, and itemized list of all consultant services.
- ☐ Indirect cost information (either a copy of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if no agreement exists and the applicant has never been approved for a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de

minimis). If applicant is requesting the de minimis rate or indirect costs are not requested, please indicate this in the budget narrative.

When **submitting** your application, ensure you have submitted the following:

- ☐ SF-424 – [Application for Federal Assistance](#) (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424A – [Budget Information and Instruction Form](#) (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424B – [Assurances for Non-Construction Programs](#) (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-LLL – [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities](#)
- ☐ FNS-906 – [Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire](#) ([Appendix E](#))
- ☐ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF - Upload using the “Add Attachments” button under SF-424 item #15)

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I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

1.1 Legislative Authority

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) (42 U.S.C. 1751 *et seq.*) establishes a Farm to School Program in order to assist eligible entities, through grants and technical assistance, in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in the USDA Food and Nutrition (FNS) Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Each year \$5 million is provided to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support grants, technical assistance, and other activities related to USDA's Farm to School Program. Additional funding for the Farm to School Program was made available from the FY 2018 through FY 2022 agriculture appropriations acts and, as a result, USDA expects to award approximately \$12 million under this solicitation. As mandated by the NSLA, selected grant projects are limited to no more than \$100,000 each. However, in anticipation of authority to provide grants of up to \$500,000 in the FY 2023 agriculture appropriations, USDA will consider proposals of up to \$500,000 from State agencies or other eligible organizations proposing projects that are multi-state or national in scope. Final award decisions will depend upon the final appropriation language. The USDA Farm to School Grant Program is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Community Food Systems Division (CFSD).

Authorizing language in Section 18(g) of the NSLA (42 U.S.C 1769(g)) directs the Secretary of Agriculture to award competitive grants, designed to improve access to local foods in eligible schools, for activities such as:

- Training;
- Supporting operations;
- Planning;
- Purchasing equipment;
- Developing school gardens;
- Developing partnerships; and
- Implementing farm to school programs.

The NSLA also directs the Secretary to ensure geographical diversity and equitable treatment of urban, rural, and tribal communities in the distribution of grant awards, as well as give the highest priority to funding projects that, as determined by the Secretary:

- Make local food products available on the menu of the eligible school;
- Serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches;
- Incorporate experiential nutrition education activities in curriculum planning that encourage the participation of school children in farm and garden-based agricultural education activities;
- Demonstrate collaboration between eligible schools, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, agricultural producer groups, and other community partners;
- Include adequate and participatory evaluation plans;
- Demonstrate the potential for long-term program sustainability; and
- Meet any other criteria that the Secretary determines appropriate.

In alignment with the Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential->

[actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-Federal-government/](#)), the FY 2023 Farm to School Grant program takes a comprehensive

approach to advancing equity for all in farm to school programming, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. To reflect this, the FY 2023 Farm to School Grant awards will offer priority scoring incentives to applications serving at least 40% of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; applications from Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) serving tribal communities; applications from organizations led by and serving Black, Indigenous or other communities of color; applications based in and serving rural communities; and applications from agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers. Specific information about FY 2023 funding priorities is available in [Section 1.6](#).

The NSLA also requires each Farm to School Grant recipient to provide matching support in the form of cash or in-kind contributions and agree to cooperate in an evaluation of the program carried out using grant funds. Please refer to [Section 3.4](#) for a discussion of matching and in-kind requirements.

1.2 What is Farm to School?

While individual farm to school programs are shaped by their unique community, geographic region, and scope, the term ‘farm to school’ is generally understood to include efforts that connect schools with local or regional farmers, food processors, and manufacturers in order to serve local or regionally procured foods in school cafeterias. Bringing more locally sourced, fresh fruits and vegetables into school cafeterias is a foundational activity of many farm to school efforts; procuring locally sourced, minimally processed meal items so that the entire school meal is representative of regional options is also a focus of many farm to school programs. Thus, USDA considers farm to school to be inclusive of many types of producers, such as farmers, ranchers, and fishers, as well as many types of food businesses, including food processors, manufacturers, distributors, and other value-added operations. Farm to school also encompasses a variety of meal-serving institutions, including schools, child care, and summer institutions and sites.

In addition to procurement activities, farm to school programs often include agriculture and nutrition-based educational efforts including standards-based curriculum and a whole host of hands-on experiential activities, such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes. For example, students might dissect vegetables in science class, run farm stands using school garden produce to learn business skills, or practice data visualization techniques using plant growth measurements, all contributing to a holistic approach to learning centered on food, agriculture, and nutrition. To embed farm to school activities into school culture, promotional and outreach efforts often aim to keep farm to school activities front and center in both the school and broader community.

As the potential impact of farm to school programs is significant, sophisticated evaluation and impact assessments are routinely used to monitor progress toward goals. Ultimately, farm to school programs are believed to strengthen children’s and communities’ knowledge about, and attitudes toward, agriculture, food, nutrition, and the environment; increase children’s consumption of fruits and vegetables; increase market opportunities for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors, and food manufacturers; and support economic development across numerous sectors.

1.3 Promoting Health and Economic Opportunity Through Farm to School

Farm to school programs can play an important role in improving local economies and increasing health and learning outcomes by connecting children and communities to the farm. Effective and comprehensive farm to school programs incorporate locally and regionally produced foods across the entire plate, connect children to

food and agriculture education, improve consumption of nutritious food, and inspire children to pursue agriculture related careers while establishing the U.S. school cafeteria as a consistently reliable market for U.S. agricultural producers.

Consistent with the authorizing language referenced in [Section 1.1](#), Legislative Authority, to achieve these outcomes with this RFA, USDA intends to strategically invest in a wide variety of farm to school initiatives that improve access to local and regional foods in eligible schools. Helping schools find and procure regionally produced food is a key component of the USDA's local and regional food systems work (<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/food-sector>). For more information on USDA's many farm to school initiatives, or to access resources associated with farm to school, please visit USDA's Farm to School Program webpage at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-to-school>.

1.4 Defining Local Foods

USDA does not define "local" for the purposes of farm to school. Instead, applicants to this RFA may have varying definitions of "local" that align with their particular needs and goals. Local and regional food systems are typically described as areas where all activities associated with producing, processing, distributing, and marketing foods take place. How one defines "local" or "regional" – which are used interchangeably in this RFA – can depend on geographic, social, governmental, physical, or economic parameters, seasonality, and/or other factors. Generally, local procurement aims to direct Child Nutrition Program funds into the local farm economy through purchasing food from nearby producers to use in Program meals. Local procurement options differ greatly across communities depending on district and school size, proximity to agricultural areas, growing season, and demographics.

1.5 Grant Tracks

Grant funds will be made available on a competitive basis, subject to availability of Federal funds, using five grant tracks: State Agency grants; Implementation grants; Turnkey – Action Planning grants; Turnkey – Agricultural Education grants; and Turnkey – Edible Garden grants. Applicant eligibility varies by grant track. For eligibility information, see [Section 3.0](#). Applicants should carefully read the entire RFA before applying to determine which grant track is best for their situation.

1.5.1 Key Objectives

Below is a list of the Program Objectives. Implementation and State Agency applicants may propose any activities aligned with the objective below. Applicants to all Turnkey tracks must adhere to the activities specific to their track of choice. More information is available below in the specific section for each grant track. Note that if awarded, grantees will be required to report on progress towards activities aligned with the required objective using the FNS-908 Performance Progress Report.

Track	Objectives
Implementation	Improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts.
State Agency	Improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts.

Turnkey – Action Planning	Develop a Farm to School Action Plan to facilitate launching or scaling farm to school activities.
Turnkey – Agricultural Education	Plan, implement, and evaluate the integration of farm to school topics into school, childcare, and/or summer site curriculum.
Turnkey – Edible Garden	Plan, implement, and evaluate a food production operation that produces food for school, childcare, and/or summer site activities.

1.5.2 Implementation Grant Activities

Proposed Implementation grant activities must support the required objective, **improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts**. Applicants must clearly indicate in their proposal narrative how proposed activities align with the required objective. If an entity applies for an Implementation grant in excess of \$100,000 up to \$500,000, the applicant must clearly indicate the national or multi-State scope of its project in the application materials. If FNS cannot verify the national or multi-State scope based on the information contained in the application materials, the application may be removed from consideration.

Examples of activities supported by Implementation grants include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting a State or regional farm to school institute;
- Bringing more unprocessed and value-added, minimally processed, regionally sourced meal components into the cafeteria;
- Expanding farm to school programs beyond lunch to bring local products into the School Breakfast Program, SFSP, and/or CACFP;
- Operating service projects that support farm to school initiatives in eligible schools;
- Incorporating food justice, food sovereignty, youth empowerment, or other related efforts into farm to school programming;
- Integrating agricultural education with career and technical preparation programs to encourage the next generation of agricultural producers;
- Ready producers to participate in the school food market by providing training on procurement regulations, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and other food safety-related topics;
- Improving infrastructure to accommodate new local ingredients or local menu items;
- Providing technical support in the form of face-to-face trainings, consultations, webinars, etc.;
- Developing promotional campaigns in support of farm to school initiatives;
- Solving distribution bottlenecks that limit the feasibility of sourcing more regionally produced items by working closely with distributors or serving as a broker to develop business relationships between farmer(s), schools, and aggregation entities such as food hubs or food distributors;
- Encouraging increased consumption of fruits and vegetables through promotional activities, taste tests, and other activities featuring local products;
- Expanding experiential learning opportunities, such as creation of school gardens, developing school-based farmers markets, providing support to ag/food clubs, and/or increasing exposure to local farms and on-farm activities; and,
- Developing and implementing integrated curriculum to reinforce food and nutrition-based learning throughout the school environment or on a local farm(s).

Please note that applicants interested in a limited project to conduct only Action Planning, Agricultural Education, or Edible Garden projects are recommended to apply using the Turnkey track.

1.5.3 State Agency Grant Activities

State Agency grants are intended to promote agricultural education and increase the amount of local food served in eligible facilities participating in CNPs by funding State agencies to support and grow farm to CNP efforts in their States. Proposed State Agency grant activities must support the required objective, **improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts**. Applicants must clearly indicate in their proposal narrative how proposed activities align with the required objective.

Examples of activities supported by State Agency grants include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting a State or regional farm to school institute;
- Hosting a *Bringing the Farm to School: Agricultural Producer Training* as one component of a project containing other activities aligned with the required objective;
- Hiring staff to support statewide farm to school, farm to summer, and/or farm to CACFP efforts;
- Building, expanding, and/or regularly convening a network of key partners;
- Conducting an equity analysis of the agency's farm to school efforts;
- Conducting or attending training specifically focused on equity in farm to school programming;
- Developing or enhancing State-level farm to school, farm to summer, and/or farm to CACFP strategic and/or evaluation plans;
- Offering training and technical assistance to Child Nutrition Program operators on local procurement, school gardens, equity in the food system, or agricultural education strategies;
- Developing a statewide farm to school marketing campaign or recognition program(s);
- Developing, implementing, or enhancing local procurement, garden, and/or agricultural education tracking systems;
- Facilitating peer-to-peer learning among program operators or with other States or agencies to improve program equity, efficiency, and learn best practices;
- Supporting the expansion, tracking, and marketing of local foods to school food authorities (SFAs) through USDA Foods and USDA DOD Fresh programs;
- Hosting State or regional farm to Child Nutrition Program gatherings or buyer-grower meetings;
- Partnering with multiple States to deliver regional farm to school programming;
- Developing State-level curriculum, toolkits, templates, and resources featuring local foods, gardens, food sovereignty, and/or agricultural education;
- Administering sub-grants (mini grants) to Child Nutrition Program operators within the State to initiate or enhance their Farm to School, Farm to Summer, or Farm to CACFP programs.¹

1.5.4 Turnkey – Action Planning Activities

Applicants applying to the Turnkey – Action Planning track agree to conduct specific activities defined by FNS, culminating in the development of a written Farm to School Action Plan for submission to FNS at the end of the period of performance. All activities listed below are required, and applicants to this track agree to complete the required activities using Farm to School Grant funds. Applicants are encouraged to utilize or follow the corresponding proposal narrative provided in [section 4.2](#), as failure to do so may significantly

¹ Recipients of sub-grants in the State Agency track may be any eligible entity for the FY 2023 Farm to School Grant.

weaken the proposal. Additional activities added by the applicant will not be considered and may weaken the application.

- Identify and regularly convene the farm to school planning team, with diverse leadership and membership that reflects the community served.
- Conduct an inclusive and comprehensive action planning process, which might include defining a vision and mission, conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis, key informant interviews, attending trainings, visiting other farm to school programs, conducting pilots or trial runs, brainstorming activities, prioritizing activities. See the USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/farm-school-planning-toolkit>) for inspiration.
- Draft a plan that identifies at least one need in the community that the project will address; includes both local procurement and agricultural education activities; identifies any relevant State and/or local health and food safety requirements and develops compliance strategies/procedures; determines how local foods will be incorporated at the eligible school(s) or service site(s); determines how delivery, processing, and storage of local foods will take place; determines how project partners will promote the farm to school program; identifies diverse funding and other resources to ensure the project's sustainability; and includes an evaluation plan.
- Gather input and/or feedback on the action plan from the broader community.
- Compile and share a final action plan that incorporates both local procurement and agricultural education components, and may include farm to school goals, activities, funding, timelines, evaluation strategies and partners.

More information on submitting a proposal is available in [Section 4.0](#). Please note that Action Plan project grantees are NOT expected to fully implement a comprehensive farm to school program by the end of the grant period, but rather are expected to have a plan in place for how to implement farm to school activities after the conclusion of the grant. Applicants should not propose any implementation activities or tasks. If an organization already has a plan in place and seeks funding to execute their existing plan, the organization should apply to the Implementation, Turnkey – Agricultural Education, or Turnkey – Edible Garden track. Turnkey – Action Planning proposals that emphasize implementation rather than planning may be subject to a reduced score during review and/or removal from consideration.

The action plan does not need to follow a specific format or contain specific elements, as long as it is useful to the community in implementing farm to school activities (both local procurement and agricultural education) in the months and years following the plan's release.

1.5.5 Turnkey – Agricultural Education Curriculum Development and Delivery Activities

The Agricultural Education Curriculum Development and Delivery project focuses on connecting students with their food and/or preparing them for careers in agriculture through thoughtful and relevant agricultural education. The below activities are required for applicants to the Agricultural Education Curriculum Development and Delivery project. Applicants are encouraged to utilize or follow the corresponding proposal narrative provided in [section 4.2](#), as failure to do so may significantly weaken the proposal. Additional activities added by the applicant will not be considered and may weaken the application.

- Establish a curriculum planning team, with diverse leadership and membership that reflects the community served.
- Determine if and how local foods will be incorporated into the curriculum (e.g., taste tests, farm visits).
- Establish a vision, goals, and objectives for the curriculum.

- Determine the desired outcomes and competencies to be achieved from the curriculum.
- Identify state standards connected to the curriculum.
- Identify the student population who will participate in the curriculum.
- Develop or procure the curriculum.
- Determine how the agricultural education curriculum will be integrated into participating schools, CACFP, and/or summer feeding program sites.
- Gather input and feedback on the curriculum from relevant stakeholders.
- Incorporate the agricultural education curriculum into school/site activities.
- Identify strategies for ensuring the curriculum remains integrated with school/site activities beyond the period of performance.
- Conduct an evaluation of the project.

More information on submitting a proposal is available in [Section 4.0](#).

1.5.6 Turnkey – Edible Garden Activities

The Edible Garden Project focuses on developing or improving food-producing gardens based at schools and/or CACFP/SFSP sites. Please note, for the purposes of this opportunity, “Edible Garden” includes any food production operation based at an eligible school or CACFP/Summer site, including gardens, indoor grow towers, greenhouses, farms, aquaponics, livestock, etc. The below activities are required for applicants to the Turnkey grant for Edible Garden Projects. Applicants are encouraged to utilize or follow the corresponding proposal narrative provided in [section 4.2](#), as failure to do so may significantly weaken the proposal. Additional activities added by the applicant will not be considered and may weaken the application.

- Establish or convene an edible garden team, with diverse leadership and membership that reflects the community served, including representation from school/site foodservice professionals.
- Establish a vision, goals, and objectives for the edible garden project, including how the project will increase access to local foods, how it will be used for agricultural education, and how it will be maintained and sustained beyond the grant project
- Identify and comply with any applicable Federal, State, and/or local regulations.
- Develop a garden food safety plan.
- Determine how processing, storage, and ultimate use of school garden foods will take place.
- Carry out the edible garden project including procuring supplies and installation.
- Conduct an evaluation of the project.

More information on submitting a proposal is available in [Section 4.0](#).

1.6 Funding Priorities

In addition to the general program purpose and priorities outlined in [Section 1.1](#), USDA emphasizes the following priorities for FY 2023:

- Applications that serve a high proportion of children (at least 40 percent or more) who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
- Applications from Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) and eligible entities where the leader, and/or 80 percent of the board, and/or 50 percent of the staff are Native Americans, and the proposed projects are serving Native American communities.

- Applications from eligible entities where the leader, and/or 80 percent of the board, and/or 50 percent of the staff are Black/African American, and the proposed projects are serving Black/African American communities.
- Applications from eligible entities where the leader, and/or 80 percent of the board, and/or 50 percent of the staff are people of color and the proposed projects are serving communities of color (defined as Black/African American, American Indian, Alaskan native, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and/or Pacific Islander).
- Applications from small- to medium-sized agricultural producers or groups of small- to medium-sized agricultural producers. Please refer to the specific eligibility criteria in [Section 3.0](#) for the definition of an eligible small- to medium-sized agricultural producer.
- Projects operating in and serving eligible schools/sites located in rural areas. For the purposes of Farm to School Grants, rural is defined as an area where the school participating in the project, or the location of the site participating in the project is located in the attendance boundary of a school with a locality code of 41, 42, or 43 using the National Center for Education Statistics online tool to determine urban/rural classification, as described in [Appendix A](#).

In selecting successful applicants, USDA, to the maximum extent practicable, will seek to ensure geographical diversity and equitable treatment of urban, rural, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

If an applicant's project reaches one or more priority groups as outlined above and the applicant would like to be considered for an additional 10 bonus priority points to be added to the scoring of their application, please fill out the checklist included in [Appendix C](#) of this RFA, entitled "Fiscal Year 2023 Priority Group Declaration Checklist" and include the completed statement with the Project Narrative. The Priority Group Declaration Checklist does not count towards the narrative page limit. **Applicants that do not complete the Priority Group Declaration Checklist will not be eligible for consideration of these bonus points.** If USDA is unable to verify information declared on the Priority Group Declaration Checklist, the applicant will not be eligible to receive bonus points.

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

2.1 Type of Federal Assistance

Funding of applications will be provided through the letter of credit process, upon receipt of a properly executed grant agreement and subject to the availability of funding. USDA expects to make funds available to the grantee in advance of need. The submission of an application does not guarantee funding. FNS may announce awards at different times.

The following information is intended to provide applicants with information to help applicants make informed decisions about proposal submissions.

- Total amount of funding expected to award: \$12 million
- Anticipated number of awards: 150
- Anticipated award announcement date: July 2023
- Expected amounts of individual Federal awards: \$10,000 - \$500,000; varies by grant track
- Anticipated start dates and period of performance: July 2023; period of performance varies by grant track
- Anticipated amounts and/or numbers of individual awards: varies by grant track

- Estimated funding per award: varies by grant track
- Application due date: January 6, 2023

Please note:

- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants this year or the subsequent fiscal year, should additional funds become available.

2.2 Award Amounts

Award amounts vary by grant track. Turnkey grant awards will range up to \$50,000, with no minimum award amount. Implementation and State Agency grants will range from \$50,000 - \$500,000. While USDA sets specific Federal award amounts for each grant track, please note that the total project costs (comprised of the Federal award and the non-Federal match portion) may exceed these amounts.

The award amounts for the FY 2023 USDA Farm to School Grant Program will be as follows:

Grant Track	Award Amount
Turnkey Grant – Action Plan	Up to \$50,000
Turnkey Grant – Edible Garden	Up to \$50,000
Turnkey Grant – Agricultural Education	Up to \$50,000
Implementation Grants (\$100,000 or less)	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Implementation Grants (greater than \$100,000)	\$100,001 - \$500,000 (see note below)
State Agency Grant	\$50,000 - \$500,000

Only eligible entities proposing projects of national or multi-State scope may apply for Implementation grants that exceed \$100,000 up to \$500,000. If FNS cannot verify the national or multi-State scope based on the information contained in the application materials, the application may be removed from consideration.

2.3 Period of Performance

Periods of performance vary by grant track. Applicants should anticipate all grant requirements including start-up activities, execution, and closeout activities (final financial and program reports, accounting, etc.). Applicants are expected to plan accordingly to achieve project deliverables within the award period.

The period of performance for the FY 2023 USDA Farm to School Grant Program will be as follows, beginning from the date of the award:

Grant Track	Period of Performance
Turnkey Grant – Action Plan	12 months only
Turnkey Grant – Edible Garden	12 <u>or</u> 24 months
Turnkey Grant – Agricultural Education	12 <u>or</u> 24 months
Implementation Grants (\$100,000 or less)	12 <u>or</u> 24 months
State Agency Grant (\$100,000 or less)	12 <u>or</u> 24 months
Implementation Grants (greater than \$100,000)	24 months only
State Agency Grant (greater than \$100,000)	24 months only

Applicants may not choose any grant period other than 12 months or 24 months. Any other period of performance, for example 18 months, is not permitted. All grant funds must be obligated, and all program activities under the grant (other than activities relating to the closeout of the grant) must be completed by the end of the award period. The closeout of the grant must occur no later than 120 days following the end of the award period, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any grant funds that are not used within 120 days following the end of the award period must be returned to USDA. In addition, final reports are due to USDA no later than 120 days following the end of the award period. For Action Plan Turnkey grantees, the Farm to School Action Plan is due no later than 120 days following the end of the award period.

2.4 Allowable Costs

Among other costs, budgets may include expenses related to personnel, contractors, equipment and supplies, meeting expenses, travel, and trainings. Please see [Appendix B](#) for more information about allowable costs. Financial requirements will be provided in the Terms and Conditions upon award.

Equipment and Supplies: Expenditures for both equipment (i.e., items of personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a cost of \$5,000 or more such as walk-in freezers, coolers, processing equipment, hoop houses, and ovens) and supplies (e.g., knives, cutting boards, gardening or farming implements, and food processors) are allowable expenses. Salad bars are also an allowable expense.

Equipment and supplies purchased using Farm to School Grant Program funds must be used during the grant period for the sole purpose of accomplishing the stated project objective. If purchased equipment or supplies are not fully dedicated to the grant project objective, including beyond the grant period end date, the applicant must determine what percentage of the good's time or space will be dedicated to project activities. This percentage must then be applied to the value of the good in order to determine the amount of Federal funds that can be used to purchase said good. Grantees must follow proper equipment disposition requirements as per 2 CFR 200.313 (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2017-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2017-title2-vol1-sec200-313.pdf>).

For example:

- Purchase of a large walk-in freezer that will store local foods for the Child Nutrition Program but will also store food for the community food pantry.
- Walk-in freezer total cost: \$8,000
- 25% of freezer space used to store food that will be served in the Child Nutrition Programs
- $\$8,000 \times 25\% = \$2,000$ (amount of Federal funds that can be used to make this purchase)

Food Expenses: No more than *10 percent* of the federal share of grant funds may be used for food purchases, and the use must be clearly delineated in the grant budget. Furthermore, no more than *10 percent* of the non-federal match may be used for food purchases, and the use must also be clearly delineated in the grant budget. The ultimate goal of funded projects should be to make local food products available on menus long-term; therefore, purchasing local products should not be a primary use of grant funds. **Food purchases should be limited to educational purposes only, such as farm to school sample tables, taste tests, or promotional use.** Food costs related to conducting a test offering of a new local or regional product are also deemed an appropriate use of funds. Any food purchase, as well as any expenditures associated with food purchases, must be clearly identified within the submitted budget narrative. Grant funds may NOT be used to purchase meals or snacks for training or meeting attendees.

Partnerships: Partners essential to the proposed project and partners contributing to project activities may require funding from USDA to participate in the proposed project. These funds may be included in applicant budgets as sub-grantees or line-item contractors. Please be sure to describe the specific services provided by the partner and provide a rationale for the partner(s)' services in both the Project Narrative and Budget Narrative. Please see [Sections 4.4](#) and [4.5](#) for more information.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 Eligible Applicants

Entities not meeting the eligibility definitions will be deemed ineligible and removed from competition without further consideration. The following are eligible entities, which are described in more detail below:

- Eligible schools, including nonprofit private and charter schools, which operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program;
- Eligible Child Care Institutions, including non-school based institutions that have an agreement with the State agency to operate the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP);
- Eligible Summer Institutions, including non-school based institutions that have an agreement with the State agency to operate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP);
- State agencies;
- Local agencies;
- Indian Tribal organizations (ITOs)
- Agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers; and
- Non-profit entities.

Entity type must be clearly indicated and unambiguous in all application materials. If USDA cannot determine the applicant to be an eligible entity based on information contained within the application, the applicant may be subject to removal from consideration.

Eligible schools are defined as schools that participate in the NSLP, CACFP, or SFSP as authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) established under section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. The school(s) that comprise the primary focus of the grant project must have an agreement with the appropriate administering State agency to participate in the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or SBP, and must be in good standing. Where a school food authority (SFA) exists, the application must come from the SFA, and only one application per SFA is allowed. School districts should select "Eligible school" when completing the Farm to School Coversheet. For the purposes of this RFA, school districts are not considered local agencies. Multiple applications from within the same entity will not be considered; for example, if both a school district and an individual school within a district apply, neither application will be considered. FNS will not choose between different applications from the same entity to determine which should be forwarded for consideration.

Eligible Child Care Institutions are defined as non-school based institutions that have an agreement with the State agency to operate CACFP. The institutions and site(s) that comprise the primary focus of the grant project must have an agreement with the appropriate administering State agency to participate in CACFP and must be in good standing.

Eligible Summer Institutions are defined as non-school based institutions that have an agreement with the State agency to operate SFSP. The institutions and site(s) that comprise the primary focus of the grant project

must have an agreement with the appropriate administering State agency to participate in SFSP and must be in good standing.

State agencies are any statewide government agency that administers or works in partnership with the agency that administers the Federal Child Nutrition Programs (e.g., Office of Public Instruction, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, etc.). If a State Agency applicant does not administer the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include a letter of commitment from the CNP-administering State agency. This letter of commitment does count toward the three-letter limit.

Local agencies are any unit of government within a State, including but not limited to a county, borough, municipality, city, town, township, parish, special district, or council of governments.

Note: For the purposes of this RFA, school districts, SFAs, and other institutions operating Child Nutrition Programs are not considered local agencies and should select “eligible school,” “eligible child care institution,” or “eligible summer institution” on the Farm to School coversheet as appropriate.

Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) include:

- An Indian tribe, band, or group recognized by the Department of the Interior;
- an intertribal council or group which is an authorized representative of Indian tribes, bands or groups recognized by the Department of the Interior **and** which has an ongoing relationship with such tribes, bands or groups for other purposes **and** has contracted with them to administer a Federal Child Nutrition Program located in an eligible school; and
- tribal entities recognized as charitable under Section 7871 of the Internal Revenue Code (<https://www.irs.gov/government-entities/indian-tribal-governments/irc-section-7871-treatment-of-indian-tribes-as-states>).

Agricultural producers are defined as any individual or entity that produces an agricultural commodity or agricultural food product. Please note that agricultural producers are not limited to those producing fruits, vegetables, or grains, but also include fishers, ranchers, and those raising other livestock for consumption. For the purposes of this grant program, an eligible agricultural producer is any individual or entity who operates a small- to medium-sized farm. A small-to medium-sized farm is any place from which up to \$1 million (gross) of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the previous calendar year. Alternatively, a small-to medium- sized farm is any place with land acreage measuring less than 1,582 acres that produced and sold, or normally would have sold agricultural products.

Groups of agricultural producers are defined as cooperatives, food hubs, or non-profit membership organizations that represent independent producers whose mission includes working on behalf of independent producers and the majority of whose membership and board of directors is comprised of independent producers representing eligible agricultural producers. Groups of agricultural producers must represent small-to medium-sized agricultural producers as their primary stakeholders.

Non-profit entities are defined as any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which: (1) Is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) Is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) Uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations. For the purposes of this grant program, non-profit entities are required to have 501(c)(3) status. **If a non-profit entity operates a child nutrition program, they should select “eligible school,”**

“eligible child care institution,” or “eligible summer institution,” as appropriate, on the application coversheet rather than selecting “non-profit entity.”

- For the purpose of Farm to School Grants, the term “non-profit entity” excludes colleges and universities; college and university foundations; cooperative extension services; hospitals; hospital foundations; and State, local, and Federally recognized Indian tribal governments.

3.2 Other Eligibility Criteria

For all tracks, if a proposal seeks to target a specific school(s) or site(s), the school(s) or site(s) discussed in the project proposal as benefiting from the project must participate in one or more of the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, or School Breakfast Program.

Turnkey Grant Eligibility

Eligible entities for the Turnkey track are eligible schools; eligible child care institutions; eligible summer institutions; local agencies; ITOs; agricultural producers and groups of agricultural producers; and non-profit entities. State agencies are not eligible for the Turnkey track. State agencies which apply to the Turnkey track will have their applications removed from consideration.

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act mandates that Farm to School Grant Program awards improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Consequently, **if a Turnkey applicant does not operate the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or School Breakfast Program, or from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program.** This letter of commitment does count toward the three-document limit.

Implementation Grant Eligibility

Eligible entities for the Implementation track are eligible schools; eligible child care institutions; eligible summer institutions; local agencies; ITOs; agricultural producers and groups of agricultural producers; and non-profit entities. State agencies are not eligible for the Implementation track. State agencies which apply to the Implementation track will have their applications removed from consideration.

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act mandates that Farm to School Grant Program awards improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Consequently, **if an Implementation applicant does not operate the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or School Breakfast Program, or from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program.** This letter of commitment does count toward the three-document limit.

Only eligible entities proposing projects of national or multi-state scope may apply for Implementation grants that exceed \$100,000 up to \$500,000. If FNS cannot verify the national or multi-State scope based on the information contained in the application materials, the application may be removed from consideration.

State Agency Grant Eligibility

Only State agencies are eligible to apply to the State Agency grant track. State Departments of Education, Departments of Agriculture, and Departments of Health are all examples of eligible State agencies. Eligibility is not restricted to the State agency that administers the Child Nutrition Program(s). **If a State Agency applicant does not administer the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must**

include a letter of commitment from the CNP-administering State agency. This letter of commitment does count toward the three-document limit.

Local government agencies, such as city and county government agencies, are not eligible to apply to the State Agency track but may apply for the Implementation or Turnkey track. Any other entity type applying to the State agency track will have their application removed from consideration.

If a State agency proposes to award sub-grants, the applicant must indicate the process for determining awards.

Current and Former Farm to School Grantees

Read this section carefully if your organization currently has a Farm to School grant or received a Farm to School grant within the last three fiscal years (FY 2020 – FY 2022). Except for State agencies, all applicants must have passed the current approved end date on their most recent fully executed FNS-529 by the RFA close date regardless of former grant track, current grant track, or proposed grant track. If an applicant to the Turnkey or Implementation track has not passed the current approved end date on its 529, the application will be removed from consideration.

To be considered for a current (FY 2023) Farm to School award, all entities which received any current or prior year Farm to School grant must submit all deliverables required by the Terms and Conditions, including, but not limited to, all progress and financial status reports. These deliverables must be submitted on or before June 1, 2023. If the required deliverables are not received by the required due date, the applicant will be removed from consideration of this competition.

Note that Turnkey – Action Planning projects are intended for organizations that have never received a Farm to School grant in any prior fiscal year.

Current or former Implementation grantees:

- Organizations which received Implementation grants through the USDA Farm to School Grant Program in the last three funding cycles (FY 2020 – FY 2022) are ineligible to apply for an Implementation grant in FY 2023 regardless of project end date.
- Current and former Implementation grantees, regardless of the year of award, are eligible to apply for any of the Turnkey tracks, with the exception of the FY 2023 Turnkey – Action Planning track, if they have completed all project activities and passed their approved current end date at the time that the RFA closes.
- Current and former Implementation grantees are not eligible to apply for the FY 2023 Turnkey – Action Planning track regardless of the year they received their award or approved current end date.

Current or former State Agency grantees:

- State agencies applying to the State Agency track are not subject to any restrictions based on whether a past Farm to School Grant has ended. State agency applicants to the Turnkey or Implementation track will have their application removed from consideration because State agencies are not eligible for the Implementation or Turnkey tracks.

Current or former Planning grantees:

- Being a current or former Planning grantee does not guarantee an award in FY 2023.

- Current and former Planning grantees who have completed all project activities and passed their approved current end date at the time that the RFA closes may apply to the Implementation track in FY 2023.
- Current and former Planning grantees may apply to any of the Turnkey tracks, with the exception of the Turnkey – Action Planning track, if they have completed all project activities and passed their approved current end date at the time that the RFA closes.
- Current and former Planning grantees are not eligible to apply for the Turnkey – Action Planning track regardless of the year they received their current or former award or their approved current end date.

Current or former Turnkey grantees:

- Current and former Turnkey grantees, regardless of the year of award, are eligible to apply for an FY 2023 Turnkey grant under a different project type, with the exception of the FY 2023 Turnkey – Action Planning track, if they have completed all project activities and passed their approved current end date at the time that the RFA closes.
 - Current and former Turnkey – Edible Gardening grantees are not eligible to apply for the FY 2023 Turnkey – Edible Gardening track regardless of the year of award or the approved current end date.
 - Current and former Turnkey – Agricultural Education grantees are not eligible to apply for the FY 2023 Turnkey – Agricultural Education track regardless of the year of award or the approved current end date.
 - Current and former Turnkey – Action Planning grantees are not eligible for the FY 2023 Turnkey – Action Planning track regardless of the year of award or the approved current end date.
- Current and former Turnkey grantees are not eligible to apply for the Turnkey – Action Planning track regardless of the year they received their current or former award or their approved current end date.

Other current or former Farm to School grantees:

- If an applicant received a Farm to School Grant to any track not specified above, they are ineligible to apply for the FY 2023 Turnkey – Action Planning track. The FY 2023 Turnkey – Action Planning track is intended for interested applicants who have never received a Farm to School Grant award.

All applicants must clearly and consistently indicate their entity type in the submission package. Ambiguity about entity type may result in removal of an application from consideration for award.

3.3 Ineligible Entities

The following entities are ineligible to receive a grant for the Farm to School Grant Program. Applicants identified as any of the entity types described below will have their application removed from competition without further consideration. Please note that the list below is not a comprehensive list of all ineligible entity types. This section is provided as a resource to address frequently asked questions which FNS often receives from one or more of the entity types described below.

- **Individuals**, such as individual parents or teachers, are ineligible for the Farm to School Grant Program.
- **Institutions of higher education**, including colleges and universities, are not eligible for the Farm to School Grant Program. Note that for the purposes of this RFA, Indian Tribal Colleges and university foundations are considered institutions of higher education and are not eligible as the lead applicant. **Institutions of higher education are ineligible regardless of 501(c)(3) status.** Institutions of higher education can be key partners.

- **Hospitals**, as defined by [Section 1861 of the Social Security Act \(42 U.S.C. 1395x\)](#) are ineligible for the Farm to School Grant Program. Note that for the purposes of this RFA, hospital foundations are considered ineligible entities and are not eligible as the lead applicant. **Hospitals and hospital foundations are ineligible regardless of 501(c)(3) status.** Hospitals and hospital foundations can be key partners.
- **Cooperative extension services** are ineligible for the Farm to School Grant Program. Cooperative extension service is defined by USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture as “a nationwide, non-credit educational network that addresses public needs by providing non-formal higher education and learning activities to farmers, ranchers, communities, youth and families throughout the nation.” Cooperative extension services are ineligible regardless of 501(c)(3) status. Cooperative extension services can be key partners.

3.4 Cost Sharing or Matching Considerations

For all grant types, Federal funds should constitute no more than 75 percent of the total project budget. Applicants may not use any federal funds as the source of any part of their match. The grant recipient must show evidence of matching support of at least 25 percent of the total budget in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, including facilities, equipment, or services provided by State and local governments, non-profit organizations, and private sources as defined in The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.). **Failure to provide evidence of matching support of at least 25 percent of the total budget will result in removal of an application from consideration for award.**

Federal Funds (no more than 75% of total) + Match funds (no less than 25% of total) = Project total

Sample Match

Grant Request:	\$100,000
Match Amount:	\$35,000
Total Project Cost:	\$135,000
Match Percent:	26% (match ÷ total project cost)
USDA Percent:	74% (grant request ÷ total project cost)

In-kind contributions are generally defined as the value of goods or services provided by a third-party for the benefit of the grant program, where no funds transferred hands. Applicants may not use Federal funds of any kind, including Federal food service funds, as a match for this grant program. The host agency contribution to support AmeriCorps and FoodCorps service member stipends is unallowable as a match because both AmeriCorps and FoodCorps are federally funded programs. The match contributions reflected in the submitted grant proposal must be documented, including the basis for the value determination, as well as be reasonable, allocable, and allowable under the criteria for this grant award.

Matching funds may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For example, the value of buildings and/or property are unallowable costs for the Farm to School Grant, and therefore unallowable as a source of matching funds. Additional information about allowable and unallowable costs is available in [Appendix B](#). The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306 (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/xml/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-sec200-306.xml>).

All applicants are required to submit signed match letters verifying matching funds for each cash and/or in-kind resource. Match letters are considered separate from letters of commitment described in [Section 4.5](#), and match letters are not subject to the three-document limit that applies to letters of commitment. An applicant

must include a signed letter verifying matching funds for **every** cash and/or in-kind match resource included in the budget. **Applicants failing to provide the match contribution documentation will be deemed ineligible and removed from further consideration.**

If awarded, the grantee must maintain written records to support all allowable costs claimed as being a match contribution, as well as costs paid by the Federal Government. In the event the grantee does not provide the minimum amount of cost share, as described in the budget, the Government's contribution will be reduced in proportion to the grantee's contribution. These requirements will be described in more detail in the Terms and Conditions provided upon award.

3.5 Pre-Award Screening Requirements

In reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, prior to making a Federal award, Federal awarding agencies, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205, are required to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualifications or financial integrity information. Additionally, Federal awarding agencies are required to have a framework in place for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive Federal awards. The FNS review of risk posed by applicants will be based on the following:

- SAM.gov, the *System for Award Management*, the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of CCR/FedReg, ORCA, and EPLS
- FAPIIS, the *Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System* that has been established to track contractor misconduct and performance
- FNS Risk Assessment Questionnaire
 - Applicants must complete the Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire that allows FNS to evaluate aspects of the applicant's financial stability, quality of management systems, and history of performance, reports, and findings from audits. The questionnaire contains a number of questions that may be an indicator of potential risk.

The evaluation of the information obtained from the designated systems and the risk assessment questionnaire may result in FNS imposing special conditions or additional oversight requirements that correspond to the degree of risk assessed.

3.6 Acknowledgement of USDA Support

As outlined in 2 CFR 415.2, grant recipients shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any publications written or published with grant support and, if feasible, on any publication reporting the results of, or describing, a grant-supported activity. Recipients shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any audiovisual which is produced with grant support, and which has a direct production cost of over \$5,000.

- When acknowledging USDA support, use the following language: "This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture." Grantees should follow the [USDA Visual Standards Guide](#) when using the USDA logo.
- Grant recipients *may* be asked to host USDA officials for a site visit during the course of their grant award. All costs associated with the site visit will be paid for by USDA and are not expected to be included in grant budgets.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 Content and Form of Application Submission

FNS strongly encourages eligible applicants interested in applying to this program to adhere to the following application format. The proposed project plan should be presented on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with at least 1-inch margins on the top and bottom. All pages should be single-spaced, in 12-point font (10-point font may be used in tables, charts, and graphs as long as they are clearly readable).

The project description with relevant information must not exceed the maximum page limit, which does not include the cover sheet, table of contents, resume(s), letter(s) of commitment, budget narrative, and required forms. All pages of the narrative, excluding the form pages, must be numbered.

Special Instructions:

- The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act mandates that Farm to School Grant Program awards improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Consequently, **if an Implementation or Turnkey applicant does not operate the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or School Breakfast Program, or from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program.** This letter of commitment does count toward the three-letter limit.
- If a State Agency applicant does not administer the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include a letter of commitment from the CNP-administering State agency in order to be eligible to receive an FY 2023 Farm to School Grant. This letter of commitment does count toward the three-document limit.
- Late application submissions will not be considered in this competition. FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications unless they are submitted via Grants.gov by the deadline. No additions or revisions will be accepted after the deadline.
- Applications submitted without the required supporting documents, forms, and/or certification will not be considered.
- Applications missing a written proposal or budget narrative will not be considered.
- FNS reserves the right to request clarification on any application submitted in response to this solicitation.
- Applications not submitted via Grants.gov will not be considered. FNS will not consider emailed, mailed, or hand delivered applications.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through Grants.gov by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.

All applications, unless otherwise noted, should meet the following formatting guidelines:

- Applications must include a table of contents (not counted towards page limit).
- All applications must include a narrative response:
 - 3-page maximum length for Turnkey track narrative response (Background and Need plus Proposal Narrative).
 - 5-page maximum length for Implementation or State Agency narrative response.
 - 3-page maximum length for Project Work Plan Table response in Implementation or State Agency applications (does not count towards the 5-page limit for narrative response). Formatting the table in landscape orientation rather than portrait orientation is acceptable, but the 3-page maximum length still applies.

- A **suggested** word count is provided for each subsection of the proposal narrative.
- Narrative response page restrictions apply only to the content of the narrative proposals and do not apply to other required forms/attachments, nor to the budget-related documents. Pages exceeding the stated page limits may be omitted during the review process. Applications that do not include required narratives will be removed from consideration.
- 1-page maximum length for each resume of key staff or, if a key position has not been filled, a job description which includes desired knowledge, skills, and education. Up to three resumes may be submitted.
- 1-page maximum length for each letter of commitment, up to three letters.
- All applicants are required to submit a budget narrative. There is no page limit on the budget narrative, and it does not count toward the page limit for any other section. A budget narrative template is available in [Appendix D](#) of the RFA, which applicants are **strongly encouraged** to use for completing the budget narrative section of their application. If the budget narrative is created in a spreadsheet, please “print to PDF” before submitting in order to preserve formatting and ensure it fits on the standard page.

Letters of commitment should be written in size 12-point Times New Roman font using standardized letter formatting and are not to exceed one page. Letters may be addressed to “Gregory Walton, Chief, Grants Management Operations Branch.” Information provided beyond the page limit will not be considered. Applications that do not follow guidelines may be subject to a reduced score during review. These documents must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the “Add attachments” button under SF-424 item #15 and submitted via Grants.gov. Letters submitted separately or outside the Grants.gov web portal will not be accepted.

4.2 Turnkey Application Content: Project Narrative

In order to apply for a Turnkey track, applicants must indicate that they will complete the activities prescribed in [Section 1.5](#) and include a section in their narrative for Farm to School Background and Need (see below). The combined Background and Need plus Farm to School Project Work Plan must not exceed three total pages.

All Turnkey applicants must:

- Submit a budget narrative describing appropriate use of grant funds. Include a narrative line-item description for every line-item expense, show how that expense supports the project goals, include the calculation that shows how that expense was derived, and briefly describe how the total amount for that line-item was determined. More information is available below and in [Section 4.4](#) Application Content: Budget and Budget Narrative. Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to use the budget narrative template available in [Appendix D](#).
- The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act mandates that Farm to School Grant Program awards improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Consequently, if a Turnkey applicant **does not operate the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or School Breakfast Program, or from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program.** This letter of commitment does count toward the three-document limit.

- For all entity types, include at least one and no more than three one-page letter(s) of commitment from the most important community organizations, farms, and/or businesses that will be involved in the project.
- Attach a one-page resume for up to three staff who will be paid using grant funds.

Required Section: Farm to School Background and Need

- Identify the community and organizations participating in your project. Describe the current status of farm to school initiatives within your participant population and/or organization and explain how the turnkey project will fit into (or result in) your comprehensive farm to school plan.
- Describe how the project team includes leadership and members from the community being served by the project.
- Describe how the project team reflects the community being served and ensures that the values, cultures, and needs of the community are represented.
- Describe your experience planning and implementing farm to school initiatives (even if limited) that demonstrates your organization has the background necessary to successfully execute the proposed project.
- Include details about any existing farm to school processes or plans that will make clear to USDA that you will be able to continue project activities beyond the period of performance.

Required Section: Farm to School Project Work Plan

The proposal work plan templates on the following pages are populated with all required activities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to copy and paste the template into a text editor (e.g., Microsoft Word) and edit columns B and C in order to provide the requested information. Additional activities will not be considered. Removing or modifying the wording of any activities in column A may result in removal from consideration. It is strongly recommended that applicants do not edit column A. Applicants may only apply to one Turnkey track. Ensure that you complete only the template that corresponds to your desired project.

Note that activities on the Project Work Plan are aligned with the objectives identified in [Section 1.5.1](#) and are the same activities that grantees will use to report on progress using the FNS-908 Performance Progress Report during the period of performance (see [section 6.5.2](#) and [Appendix F](#) for more information).

Required Section: Budget (no limit on section length)

Provide an itemized budget describing appropriate use of grant funds and briefly describe how the total amounts were determined. **Include a narrative line-item description for every line-item expense, show how that expense supports the project goals, and include the calculation that shows how that expense was derived.** All budget line-item expenses must be allowable costs as defined in this RFA and 2 CFR 200 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E>). If key partner(s) are receiving a portion of grant funds to provide essential services, justify the organizations' participation in the project by describing their experience, expertise, and specific services to be provided. Ensure that all budget line-items and partner services align with the activities described in the Project Work Plan. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the budget narrative template, available in [Appendix D](#), when completing this section.

Proposed costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives. Include a total project budget, the amount requested from USDA, and the match contributed to the project. Remember, USDA will contribute no more than 75 percent of the total project costs; applicants must include a funding match of at least 25 percent of the total project cost from non-federal sources. A sample budget

template that applicants may complete is available in [Appendix D](#) and on the Resources for Grant Program Applicants webpage at: (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/resources-farm-school-grant-program-applicants>). Please also see [Section 2.4](#), [Section 3.4](#), and [Appendix B](#) for additional information.

All applicants **must** submit a budget narrative and SF-424A (see [Section 4.4](#) for more information). All funding requests must be in whole dollars only. Failure to include either or both documents may result in removal from consideration.

4.2.1 Action Plan Project Work Plan Template

A: Required Activity (do not edit)	B: List tasks required to accomplish activity	C: Responsible party for each task	D: Proposed Timeline
Attend one-time training meeting (Grantee Gathering) with USDA personnel.			
Identify and regularly convene the farm to school planning team, with diverse leadership and membership that reflects the community served.			
Conduct an inclusive and comprehensive action planning process, which might include defining a vision and mission, conducting a S.W.O.T. analysis, key informant interviews, attending trainings, visiting other farm to school programs, conducting pilots or trial runs, brainstorming activities, prioritizing activities. See the USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit for inspiration.			
Draft a plan that: identifies at least one need in the community that the project will address; includes both local procurement and agricultural education activities; identifies any relevant State and/or local health and food safety requirements and develops compliance strategies/procedures; determines how local foods will be incorporated at the eligible school(s) or service site(s); determines how delivery, processing, and storage of local foods will take place; determines how project partners will promote the farm to school program; identifies diverse funding and other resources to ensure the project's sustainability; and includes an evaluation plan.			
Gather input and/or feedback on the action plan from the broader community.			
Compile and share a final action plan that incorporates both local procurement and agricultural education components, and may include farm to school goals, activities, funding, timelines, evaluation strategies, and partners.			

4.2.2 Agricultural Education Project Work Plan Template

A: Required Activity (do not edit)	B: List tasks required to accomplish activity	C: Responsible party for each task	D: Proposed Timeline
Attend one-time training meeting (Grantee Gathering) with USDA personnel.			
Establish a curriculum planning team, with diverse leadership that reflects the community served.			
Determine how local foods will be incorporated into the curriculum (e.g., taste tests, farm visits).			
Establish a vision, goals, and objectives for the curriculum.			
Determine the desired outcomes and competencies to be achieved from the curriculum.			
Identify State standards connected to the curriculum.			
Identify the student population who will participate in the curriculum.			
Develop or procure the curriculum.			
Determine how the agricultural education curriculum will be integrated into participating schools or sites.			
Gather input and feedback on the curriculum from relevant stakeholders.			
Incorporate the agricultural education curriculum into school/site activities.			
Identify strategies for ensuring the curriculum remains integrated with school/site activities beyond the period of performance.			
Conduct an evaluation of the project.			

4.2.3 Edible Gardening Project Work Plan Table

A: Required Activity (do not edit)	B: List tasks required to accomplish activity	C: Responsible party for each task	D: Proposed Timeline
Attend one-time training meeting (Grantee Gathering) with USDA personnel			
Establish or convene an edible garden team, with diverse leadership and membership that reflects the community served, including representation from school/site foodservice professionals.			
Establish a vision, goals, and objectives for the edible garden project, including how the project will increase access to local foods, how it will be used for agricultural education, and how it will be maintained and sustained beyond the grant project			
Identify and comply with any applicable Federal, State, and/or local regulations.			
Develop a garden food safety plan.			
Determine how processing, storage, and ultimate use of school garden foods will take place.			
Carryout the edible garden project including procuring supplies and installation.			
Conduct an evaluation of the project.			

4.3 Implementation Track and State Agency Track Application Content: Project Narrative

Implementation track and State Agency track applicants must organize their applications according to the requirements in this section. Please note that these are two different tracks with separate eligibility requirements, including eligible activities. Both tracks will use the same project narrative structure. For more information about each track, please see [Section 1.5](#) Grant Tracks and [Section 3.0](#) Eligibility Information.

While preparing a proposal narrative, applicants should provide the information requested, in the order presented below. Please note that each section of the proposal narrative will be evaluated independently. Only address those items asked within each section. Additional information outside the scope of each independent section will not be considered.

Suggested word counts are included for each section to help applicants stay within the page limits, but only the page limits will be enforced. The combined Farm to School Background and Readiness; Staffing, Partnerships, Management, and Quality Assurance; Evaluation Plan; Sustainability; and Project Work Plan Narrative sections all together must not exceed five pages. Content beyond the five-page limit will not be considered. The Project Work Plan table is subject to a separate three-page limit. Consequently, all six sections combined should not exceed eight pages. There is no page limit on the budget materials.

- **Farm to School Background and Readiness (suggested length of 400 words or less):** Identify the community and organization(s) participating in your project. Describe the need for the project, how that need was identified, and explain how the specific proposed project is designed to address or meet the need.

Describe how the project team includes leadership and members from the community served by the project. Describe how the project team reflects the community served and ensures that the values, cultures, and needs of the community are represented. Describe the strengths of the community that make this the right time and place for your project, such as prior experience planning and implementing farm to school initiatives (such as local procurement and agriculture education) that would demonstrate that your organization has the background necessary to successfully execute the proposed project.

- **Staffing, Partnerships, Management, and Quality Assurance (suggested length of 300 words or less):** Describe the management approach for staffing, procurement of contractors (as applicable), quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, and progress monitoring that will be used for the project. Describe your plan for coordination, data sharing, and reporting among members of the project team and stakeholder groups. Provide a clear description of staff or partners' relevant experience as it relates to the proposed project.

Attach resumes of key project staff and letters of commitment from key partners to your grant application within Grants.gov using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424 item #15. If a key position has not been filled, a job description no more than one page in length, which includes desired knowledge, skills, and education may be included in the application in lieu of a resume. Please note that there is a limit of three resumes and three letters of commitment per grant application. Please see [Section 4.1](#) and [Section 4.5](#) for more information.

- **Evaluation Plan (suggested length of 300 words or less):** Briefly describe your organization’s ability to monitor project activities and how the overall impact will be evaluated. Detail any relevant experience your organization or partner has conducting evaluations. Describe how the project will collect feedback from the participating community in conducting the evaluation.

Describe the evaluation activities you will conduct to measure your program against the required objective. Identify the indicator(s) that will be used for each activity. Indicate the date and frequency of the proposed activities. Lastly, identify a person or organization responsible for overseeing the evaluation plan. Depending on whether an activity addresses local procurement, agricultural education, or both, the Evaluation Plan section should reflect evaluation activities that measure related outcomes.

Please note that awardees will be required to report data indicating progress towards completing their proposed activities. For more information on evaluation resources, please see the Farm to School Applicant Resource webpage at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/resources-farm-school-grant-program-applicants>.

- **Sustainability (suggested length of 300 words or less):** Describe how the project will continue beyond the period of performance (without additional USDA Farm to School grant funds). Identify how farm to school initiatives will be integrated into your organization’s operations. Indicate which project components will require continued funding and identify potential sources of such funding (e.g. other grants, in-kind donations, volunteers, integration into organization’s long-term budget etc.). Discuss partners’ and staff’s roles in continuing farm to school efforts past the grant period.
- **Project Work Plan Narrative (suggested length of 1,000 words or less):** Provide a high-level overview of the proposed project and describe how your project will increase access to local foods in eligible schools and/or sites, how your project will generate procurement from local & regional producers, and how your project will increase access to agriculture education. Describe how the project has or will seek and consider feedback from the community being served in the design and delivery of the project. Ensure that any specific activities mentioned in this section are reflected in the Project Work Plan Table. Where dates are included, activities should not begin before July 1, 2023. If an applicant proposes to use grant funding to award sub-grants, the applicant must include a description of the process for making sub-grant awards and describe how equitable distribution of the sub-grants will be ensured.
- **Project Work Plan table (three-page limit, information on additional pages will not be considered):** Applicants must list the activities, start and completion dates, target audiences, and responsible parties. Applicants are required to develop a Project Work Plan Table that identifies specific activities that the grantee will pursue to complete the project proposed in the Project Work Plan Narrative. Activities should not begin before July 1, 2023. There is a three-page limit on content in the table. A suggested template will be provided on the related documents tab on grants.gov and the Resources for Grant Applicants webpage at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/resources-farm-school-grant-program-applicants>.

The Project Work Plan Table must contain the following seven columns, clearly labeled and in the following order: “Activity”; “Activity Category”; “Indicator”; “Anticipated Start Date (Month, Year)”; “Anticipated Completion Date (Month, Year)”; “Target Audience”; and “Responsible Party (Name, Title, Organization).” Additional columns will not be considered. Please note that activities and indicators must be aligned with the objective identified in [Section 1.5.1](#) and, if awarded, grantees will be required to report on **all** activities and indicators proposed in their application using the FNS-908 Performance Progress Report provided by FNS. Carefully considering proposed activities and indicators will prepare grantees for their progress reporting requirements if awarded. See [Section 6.5.2](#) and [Appendix F](#) for more information about reporting.

A sample table is provided below. Please note that the sample table includes examples of activities. Should an applicant copy and paste the table from this RFA into their application, all example activities must be removed before an application is submitted. Please include in the table any activities mentioned in the Project Work Plan Narrative section and ensure that the information in the table matches the information provided in the narrative. Formatting the table in landscape orientation rather than portrait orientation is acceptable, but the same three-page limit still applies.

In the “Activity Category” column, please indicate whether the Activity on the same row relates to local procurement, agricultural education, or both. **Please do not enter any additional information in the “Activity Category” cell. Please do not create any other activity categories.**

Project Work Plan Table

Objective: improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts.

Activity	Activity Category	Indicator	Anticipated Start Date (Month, Year)	Anticipated Completion Date (Month, Year)	Target Audience	Responsible Party (Name, Title, Organization)
Attend mandatory training meeting (Grantee Gathering) with USDA personnel	Required (this is the only required activity. Do not enter this for any other row)	Number Attended	September 2023	September 2023	N/A	Project Manager
Example: Recruit & convene a local foods student/staff advisory committee	Enter "Local Procurement," "Agricultural Education," or "Both." Example: Local Procurement	Example: Number attended	Example: October 2023	Example: June 2024	Example: High school students & teachers Cafeteria Staff Central office FNS staff	Example: Jessica Plum, Registered Dietitian, Food and Nutrition Service Department
Example: Deliver training to five farm to school teams, representing multiple States, in a regional farm to school institute.	Enter "Local Procurement," "Agricultural Education," or "Both." Example: Local Procurement	Example: Number trained	Example: June 2024	Example: July 2024	Example: Cafeteria staff School Nutrition Director Teachers	Example: Sam Cooke, Director, Example Nonprofit, Inc.
Example: Convene an education and school garden committee that identifies areas for potential curriculum integration, project goals, roles and responsibilities, timeline, budget, and funding strategy	Enter "Local Procurement," "Agricultural Education," or "Both." Example: Agricultural Education	Example: Number attended	Example: September 2023	Example: June 2024	Example: Cafeteria Manager Science Coordinator Parent Volunteer Custodial Staff Student President	Example: Mrs. Green, Elementary Science Coordinator, ABC School District

Example: Install ten raised beds to expand school garden	Enter "Local Procurement," "Agricultural Education," or "Both." Example: Agricultural Education	Example: Number completed	Example: March 2024	Example: April 2024	Example: Elementary Students	Example: Mr. Williams, Head Custodian, ABC Elementary
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- **Budget (no limit on section length):** Provide an itemized budget describing appropriate use of grant funds. **Include a narrative line-item description for every line-item expense, show how that expense supports the project goals, and include the calculation that shows how that expense was derived.** Briefly describe how the total amount for that line-item was determined. All budget line-item expenses must be allowable costs as defined in this RFA and 2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E>). If key partner(s) are receiving a portion of grant funds to provide essential services, justify the organizations' participation in the project by describing their experience, expertise, and specific services to be provided. Ensure that all budget line-items and partner services align with the activities described in the Project Work Plan Table above. Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to use the budget narrative template available in [Appendix D](#) when completing this section. If developing your budget narrative in a spreadsheet, please "print to PDF" to ensure that no formatting is lost and that it complies with page size and margin requirements.

Proposed costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives. Include a total project budget, the amount requested from USDA, and the match contributed to the project. Remember, USDA will contribute no more than 75 percent of the total project costs; applicants must include a funding match of at least 25 percent of the total project cost from non-federal sources. A sample budget template that applicants may complete is available in [Appendix D](#) and under "Application Materials" on the Resources for Grant Program Applicants webpage at: (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/resources-farm-school-grant-program-applicants>). Please also see [Section 2.4](#), [Section 4.4.1](#), and [Appendix B](#) for additional information.

All applicants must submit a budget narrative and SF-424A (see [Section 4.4](#) for more information). All funding requests must be in whole dollars only.

4.4 Application Content: Budget and Budget Narrative

Please note that the same budget format is used for all grant tracks. In addition to the submission of the "Budget Information and Instruction Form (SF-424A)" (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-individual-family.html>), an itemized budget narrative with justification/rationale must be submitted using the appropriate Project Narrative format.

NOTE: If a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, and budget or budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNS will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on SF-424. All funding requests must be in whole dollars only.

4.4.1 Budget (SF-424A)

Provide a proposed budget describing appropriate use of grant funds and justifying costs. Your budget must be submitted using the “Budget Information and Instruction Form” (SF-424A) (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-individual-family.html>). Proposed costs must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to carry out the project’s goals and objectives. Include a total project budget, the amount requested from USDA, and the match contributed to the project.

When submitting the SF-424A, please separate federal and non-federal funds into two columns on the second page of the form (federal request in column 1 and match/non-federal in column 2). You can do this by typing in “Federal Request” in box 1(a) and “Non-Federal” in box 2(a) on the first page. Please note that when applying for a two-year grant, the SF-424A must include amounts for **both years** of the grant; however, when submitting the SF-424A, **do not break out your budget by year**. The SF-424a should show total requested Federal funding and match contribution amounts.

Reminder: USDA will contribute no more than 75 percent of the total project costs; applicants must include a funding match of at least a **25 percent** of the total project cost from non-federal sources. **Applicants failing to provide the match contribution documentation will be deemed ineligible and removed from further consideration.** Please see [Section 3.4](#) for more information about match requirements and cost sharing.

Sample Match:

Grant Request:	\$100,000
Match Amount:	\$35,000
Total Project Cost:	\$135,000
Match Percent:	26% (match ÷ total project cost)
USDA Percent:	74% (grant request ÷ total project cost)

Reminder: Allowable food costs may not constitute more than 10 percent of the federal funding portion of the grant and must be used for educational purposes only. See [Section 2.4](#) Allowable Costs for more information.

Required Activities: If awarded, all grantees must attend the Grantee Gathering, a mandatory grantee training meeting hosted by USDA in the first year of the grant period. USDA will host the meeting in-person in September 2023. To ensure that grantees reserve sufficient funding to attend an in-person meeting, grant applicants should:

- Use Atlanta, GA as the destination city for budgeting purposes, but understand that the final location is subject to change. The FY 2023 Grantee Gathering will be located in the Southeastern United States.
- Include \$500 for the registration fee in their budget. Note that the specific amount of the registration fee may change. If selected, awardees will be notified of the exact amount of the registration fee.
- Include travel costs for one project representative, preferably the project director, in their grant budget to attend this meeting.
- Estimate four full days of travel, including hotel, airfare, meals, etc. When budgeting for these costs, please assume that attendance will require air travel to a venue in the Atlanta, GA area. Travel costs should not exceed the Federal per diem rates found on the General Services Administration (GSA) website at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>.
- Include travel for this meeting in the first year of the grant only. Travel costs for the Grantee Gathering should be included in the Federal portion of the grant budget.

Indirect Cost Rate: A current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), negotiated with a Federal negotiating agency, should be used to charge indirect costs. Indirect costs may not exceed the negotiated rate. If a NICRA is used, the percentage and base should be indicated. If the applicant does not have, and has never been approved for, a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% *de minimis*. In this instance, the applicant must indicate they are requesting the *de minimis* rate. An applicant may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "none requested" should be stated in the budget narrative. For questions related to the indirect cost rate, please work with the Grant Officer as noted in [Section 7.0](#) of this RFA.

4.4.2 Budget Narrative (Included with Project Narrative)

In addition to the budget submitted via the "Budget Information and Instruction Form" (SF-424A) (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html>), all applicants must also submit a budget narrative. You must provide a narrative line-item description for every allowable cost and show how it supports the project goals as well as briefly describe how the total amount for that line item was determined. If key partner(s) are receiving a portion of grant funds to provide essential services, please justify the organizations' participation in the project. All budget narrative information is submitted in the Project Narrative for each grant track. A budget narrative template is available in [Appendix D](#), and applicants are **strongly encouraged** to use the provided template to ensure alignment between the project narrative, budget narrative, and SF-424A. **All funding requests must be submitted in whole dollars only.**

4.5 Application Content: Required Attachments

All applicants are required to include the following attachments:

- Project narrative;
- Line-item budget narrative;
- No more than three resumes, each no more than one page in length, for staff managing or implementing the project;
- If a key position has not been filled, a job description no more than one page in length, which includes required knowledge, skills, and education may be included in the application in lieu of a resume; and
- Signed letter(s) verifying matching funds for every cash and/or in-kind resource included in the budget. There is no limit on the number or length of match letters. **Applicants failing to provide the match contribution documentation will be deemed ineligible and removed from further consideration.**

Non-profit applicants: All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Proof of existing support: All applicants may submit up to three letters of commitment from key partners identified in the project plan or budget. Applicants may submit fewer than three letters of commitment, but applications which do not include any letters of commitment may be subject to a reduced score in the review process. No more than three letters of commitment will be considered.

Letters must include a description of the partner's:

- Overall support of the project's execution;
- Role and responsibility in achieving the proposed project; and
- Demonstrated experience or expertise with executing the assigned role/responsibility.

Letters of commitment must be attached to the Grants.gov application package using the "Add attachments" button under SF-424 item #15. Letters of commitment will not be accepted outside the Grants.gov web portal.

Please note that letters of commitment are a separate and distinct requirement from match letters, which are required for every source of matching funds. Please see [section 3.4](#) for more information on match letters.

Turnkey and Implementation grant applicants must show evidence of existing community support or partnerships with entities that will be involved in the execution of the project, including organizations that will receive funding from or provide a match for the project. Potential partners may include, but are not limited to: key food service personnel (e.g. school nutrition directors), school administration (e.g. superintendent, principal, etc.), teachers, producers, ranchers, fishers, distributors providing local food for the school nutrition programs or educational enrichment, or other key organizations (e.g. cooperative extensions, rural development centers, etc.).

If a Turnkey or Implementation applicant does not operate the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program, the applicant must include at least one letter of commitment from a school, child care institution, or summer institution operating the NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or School Breakfast Program, or from a State Agency administering NSLP, CACFP, SFSP, and/or the School Breakfast Program. This letter does count toward the three-letter limit.

State Agency grant applicants must show evidence of partnerships or current relationships with entities in their States that will be involved in the implementation of the project and can assist State agencies in reaching the target population. **Please note that applicants to the State Agency track that do not administer one or more CNP in the State are required to include a letter of commitment from the relevant CNP-administering State agency.** Potential partners may include, but are not limited to: State agencies, key food service personnel (e.g. school nutrition directors), school administration (e.g. superintendent, principal, etc.), teachers, producers, ranchers, fishers, distributors providing local food for the school nutrition programs or educational enrichment, or other key organizations (e.g. cooperative extensions, rural development centers, etc.).

4.6 Required Grant Application Forms

Please refer to the [Application Checklist](#) for a list of required grant forms. Required forms are included in the package on Grants.gov.

4.7 Submitting an Application

4.7.1 Submission Date

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to www.grants.gov by 11:59 PM EST on the due date listed on the cover page.

- Applications must be submitted via Grants.gov. Mailed, e-mailed or hand-delivered application packages will not be accepted. For further instructions, see [Section 4.7.2](#), [Section 4.7.3](#), and [Section 4.7.4](#).
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications unless they are submitted via Grants.gov by the deadline. No additions or revisions will be accepted after the deadline.
- If multiple application packages are submitted through Grants.gov by the same applicant in response to this solicitation, FNS will accept the latest application package successfully submitted. All other packages submitted by the applicant will be removed from this competition.

FNS strongly encourages applicants to begin the registration process at least **four weeks before** the due date and to submit applications to Grants.gov at least **one week** before the deadline to allow time to troubleshoot

any issues, should they arise. Please note that upon submission, Grants.gov may send multiple confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was **accepted**. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to Grants.gov should contact the Grant Officer noted in the [Agency Contacts \(Section 7.0\)](#) of this RFA. FNS will evaluate submission issues on a case-by-case basis.

4.7.2 Preparing for Electronic Application Submission through Grants.gov

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](#) and [Sam.gov](#) in order to submit an application to FNS via Grants.gov, as required. FNS strongly encourages applicants to begin the registration process at least **four weeks before the due date**.

In order to submit an application, you must:

1. Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
 - Existing entities can find their UEI by following the steps here: https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0041254. New entities can get their UEI at SAM.gov and, if required, complete an entity registration.
2. Register in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov)
 - SAM combines Federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system. For additional information regarding SAM.gov, see the following link: <https://sam.gov/content/home>
 - Access <https://www.sam.gov> and complete the online SAM registration process to obtain a UEI (SAM) or verify if your organization already has one. If your organization already has a UEI (SAM), go to Step 3
 - To register, you must have your organization's UEI, entity's Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name (as it appears on last tax return). **It may take up to 5-7 business days** or more to register and/or complete the migration of permissions and/or the renewal of an entity record.
 - Ensure you enter your EBiz POC name and EBiz POC email in SAM, and your organization/entity registration process is complete in SAM, this will allow you to register with [Grants.gov](#) (Step 3). Contact the Federal Support Help Desk at <https://www.fsd.gov/> for help with the UEI.
 - All applicants must have current SAM status at the time of application submission and throughout the duration of a Federal Award in accordance with 2 CFR Part [25](#).
 - We strongly encourage applicants to begin the process **at least 3 weeks** before the due date of the grant solicitation.
3. Create a Grants.gov Account:
 - The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's UEI to complete this process. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>.
4. Authorize Grants.gov Roles:
 - After creating an account on Grants.gov, the E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) receives an email notifying them of the registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will need to enter Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles. An approved Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must complete and submit the application online at Grants.gov. To learn more about the EBiz POC role and other profile roles, please visit <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>.

5. Track Role Status:

- To track your role request, please visit <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>.
- *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as an AOR; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

4.7.3 How to Submit an Application via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA) or RFA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the Center with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, please contact the Grant Officer noted in the Agency Contacts ([Section 7.0](#)) of this RFA.

4.7.4 Grants.gov Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 PM EST on the due date listed on the cover page, as detailed [here](#). Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When FNS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for FNS funding.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission could take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

4.7.5 Additional Information on Grants.gov and the Registration Process:

NOTICE: Special Characters and Naming Conventions

All applicants **MUST** follow Grants.gov guidance on file naming conventions. To avoid submission issues, please follow the guidance provided by Grants.gov (per the Grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

Are there restrictions on file names for any attachment I include with my application package?

File attachment names longer than approximately 50 characters can cause problems processing packages. Please limit file attachment names. Also, do not use any special characters (examples: & – * % / # ' -). This includes periods (.) and spacing followed by a dash in the file. To separate words in naming a file, use underscore, as in the following example: Attached_File.pdf.

Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application will be rejected. FNS will not accept any application rejected from the www.grants.gov portal due to incorrect naming conventions.

Additional information and applicant resources are available at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

4.8 Funding Restrictions

- No pre-award or pre-agreement costs incurred prior to the effective start date are allowed unless approved and stated on FNS' signed award document.
- Construction is not an allowable expense for the Farm to School Grant Program. FNS will not provide funding for construction expenses. Construction funds may not be used as a matching funds source. Applicants that include construction activities (such as pouring footings for a building or installing permanent wiring/plumbing) in their project and/or budget narratives may have their applications removed from consideration.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Evaluation of Grant Application Criteria

5.1 Review Criteria

FNS will pre-screen all applications to ensure the applicants are eligible entities and are in compliance with all Program regulations. FNS will not approve any waivers from Program regulations for any projects submitted in response to this solicitation.

Complete applications are those that meet the following requirements:

1. Submitted by eligible applicants (see [Sections 3.0-3.3](#));
2. Meet all other eligibility requirements ([see Sections 3.0-3.5](#)); and
3. Successfully submitted a complete application on or before the required deadline ([see Section 4.0: Application and Submission Information](#)).

FNS will only score each application based on the grant track. FNS will not move the application if the applicant submitted to an incorrect or ineligible category. Please ensure when submitting an application that you only complete the proposal narrative that corresponds to the track and, if applicable, Turnkey project type for which you intend to apply. Ensure that the track indicated on the Farm to School Coversheet matches the narrative format submitted.

5.2 Evaluation Factors and Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for this RFA.

Scoring for Turnkey Grant Applications

Background and Need (25 points)

- The applicant clearly establishes the need for the program, including clearly identifying the participant population.
- The applicant clearly describes how the participating community, including individuals historically underserved in the community, will lead, have a voice in, participate in, and/or benefit from the project.
- The applicant describes their experience planning and implementing farm to school initiatives (even if limited) that demonstrate the applicant organization has the background necessary to successfully execute the proposed project. The applicant explains how the chosen Turnkey project fits into or will result in a comprehensive farm to school plan.
- The applicant clearly describes how project activities will continue beyond the period of performance.
- Applicant provides up to three letters of commitment that demonstrate a demand for the project among the participants and/or within the community.

Project Work Plan (50 points)

- For each activity defined by FNS, the applicant identifies the specific tasks that will be deployed to complete the activity and identifies a responsible party to complete the tasks.
- The applicant does not add to, remove, or edit any activities defined by FNS.
- The applicant provides a realistic timeline for each activity. Activities do not begin earlier than July 1, 2023, and are completed within the period of performance defined for each track.
- Applicant included resumes of relevant key staff and the qualifications of the staff involved with the proposed project and/or organizational leadership reflects the expertise necessary to carry out the proposed project. If a key position has not been filled, a job description no more than one page in length, which includes required knowledge, skills, and education has been included in the application in lieu of a resume. No more than three resumes should be submitted.

Budget (25 points)

- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.
- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary, and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives.
- Budget narrative includes a line-item description for every allowable cost and shows how it supports the project goals. If applicable, justification is provided for key partners receiving a portion of grant funding to execute essential services.
- Budget calculations are itemized sufficiently to clearly show how the budget components were developed and costs estimated and derived.
- Budget narrative and project narrative align with one another; there should be no items in the budget narrative that are not discussed in the project narrative.

Scoring for Implementation and State Agency Grant Applications

Please note that the Implementation track and State Agency track are separate grant tracks, each with its own unique eligibility requirements, including eligible activities. Please ensure that you apply only to the track for which you are eligible. FNS will not move the application if the applicant submitted to an incorrect or ineligible category.

Farm to School Background and Readiness (10 points)

- Community being served is well-defined and the need for the project is clearly demonstrated. Applicant includes relevant data describing how the need was identified and the status of farm to school initiatives within the participant population and/or organization.
- Applicant includes leadership and members from the community being served and ensures that the values, cultures, and needs of the community are represented in the design and delivery of the project.
- Applicant clearly indicates the required objective ([Section 1.5.1](#)) and explains how it connects to the need of the target population.
- Evidence of previous experience with farm to school work exists that would support successful execution of proposed project. If the applicant has limited or no farm to school experience, the application describes conditions or resources in place to support the launch of farm to school activities.

Staffing, Partnerships, Management, and Quality Assurance (20 points)

- Applicant included resumes of relevant key staff and the qualifications of the staff involved with the proposed project and/or organizational leadership reflect the expertise necessary to carry out the proposed project. If a key position has not been filled, a job description no more than one page in length, which includes required knowledge, skills, and education has been included in the application in lieu of a resume. No more than three resumes should be submitted.
- The management approach (including staffing, procurement of contractors, quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, monitoring progress, etc.) indicates that the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the proposed project.
- The applicant describes a plan for coordination, data sharing, and reporting among members of the project team and stakeholder groups.
- The level of staff allocation is appropriate for program execution and program evaluation.
- Roles and responsibilities among staff are clearly outlined.
- Letters of commitment demonstrate appropriate involvement of partners.

Evaluation (15 points)

- The organization clearly describes its ability to monitor activities and conduct evaluations. They have detailed their experience conducting similar evaluations and described how feedback from the participating community will be included in the evaluation.
- The applicant identifies relevant indicators that will help measure progress. A clear plan is in place that describes how activities will be monitored, how progress will be measured and at what frequency activities will occur.
- Roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating activities are clearly outlined (e.g. contractors, designating a current staff member, etc.)
- Evaluation plan is linked to proposed objective, activities, and timeline. The applicant has a plan for collecting the data required to measure progress towards the required objective.

Sustainability (15 points)

- The applicant clearly describes how the program will continue beyond grant period of performance including future roles of staff and/or partners to continue key activities without this grant funding.
- Applicant identifies key activities that require additional sources of funding and discusses what those sources of funding (e.g., other grants, in-kind donations, volunteers, integration into organization's long-term budget) would be.

- The sustainability plan includes a variety of strategies to ensure long-term viability and discusses partners' and staff's roles in continuing farm to school efforts past the grant period.
- The sustainability plan describes how the applicant will build or strengthen community partnerships to promote farm to school as a priority for local stakeholders.

Project Work Plan Narrative (15 points)

- Applicant describes the overall project and how the project activities achieve the required objective. Applicant emphasizes how the project will increase access to local foods, increase procurement from local & regional producers, and increase access to agriculture education.
- Applicant describes how the project incorporates input from the community being served in the design and delivery of the project.
- Any specific activities mentioned in the narrative section are reflected in the Project Work Plan Table section.
- Activities are associated with relevant resources and assigned to appropriate parties. Where dates are provided, activities do not begin prior to July 1, 2023, and are completed within the period of performance defined for each grant track. Overall, the work plan outlines a realistic timeline.
- The Project Work Plan Narrative includes efforts that relate to both local procurement and agricultural education efforts.

Project Work Plan Table (15 points)

- Activities in the table clearly align with the required objective: "Improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts."
- Activities are associated with relevant resources and assigned to appropriate parties. Activities do not begin prior to July 1, 2023 and are completed within the period of performance defined for each grant track. Required activities are included. Overall, the work plan outlines a realistic timeline.
- The Project Work Plan Table aligns with the information in the Project Work Plan Narrative section. Specific activities described in the Project Work Plan Narrative section are included in the Table section. The Project Work Plan Table specifies both local procurement and agricultural education activities.
- The Table is formatted correctly, including seven (7) columns with the same headers in the same order as the instructions and example provided in [Section 4.3](#) and only one activity on each row. Overall, the table is readable.

Budget (10 points)

- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.
- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary, and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives.
- Budget narrative includes a line-item description for every allowable cost and shows how it supports the project goals. If applicable, justification is provided for key partners receiving a portion of grant funding to execute essential services.
- Applicant includes the calculation that shows how each line-item expense was derived. Budget calculations are itemized sufficiently to clearly show how the budget components were developed and costs estimated.
- Budget narrative and project narrative align with one another; there should be no items in the budget narrative that are not discussed in the project narrative.

5.3 Review and Selection Process

Following the initial screening process, FNS will assemble a panel to review and determine the technical merits of each application. The panel will evaluate the proposals based on how well they address the required application components and array the applications from highest to lowest score. The panel members will recommend applications for consideration for a grant award based on the evaluation scoring. The Selecting Official reserves the right to accept the panel's recommendation or to select an application for funding out of order to meet agency priorities, program balance, geographical representation, and/or project diversity. Other factors the Selection Official may take into account when selecting awards include projects that serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; projects that serve more than one school; the balance of projects from rural and urban areas; and representation of Indian Tribal Organizations and agricultural producers.

Please note that all applicants who meet the criteria for one or more priority areas **and** submit the optional Priority Group Declaration Checklist will receive ten (10) bonus points added to their total score, if it is determined that the criteria for one of the designated priority groups have been reached. **Applicants that do not complete the Priority Group Declaration Checklist will not be eligible for consideration for these bonus points.** FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants in the next fiscal year should additional funds be made available.

NOTE: If a discrepancy exists between the total funding request (submitted on SF-424, SF-424A, and budget or budget narrative) within the application package in response to this solicitation, FNS will only consider and evaluate the estimated funding request contained on the SF-424.

VI. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

6.1 Federal Award Notice

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. Unless an applicant receives a signed award document with terms and conditions, any contact from a FNS Grants or Program Officer should not be considered as a notice of a grant award. No pre-award or pre-agreement costs incurred prior to the effective start date are allowed unless approved and stated on FNS' signed award document (FNS-529). Only the recognized FNS authorized signature can bind the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to the expenditure of funds related to an award's approved budget.

6.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Confidentiality of an Application

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of FNS transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. Any application that does not result in an award will be not released to the public. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, or biometric records, and any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical,

educational, financial, and employment information (National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable information, April 2010).

Applicants submitting applications in response to this RFA must recognize that confidentiality of PII and other sensitive data is of paramount importance to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. All Federal and non-Federal employees (e.g., contractors, affiliates, or partners) working for or on behalf of FNS are required to acknowledge understanding of their responsibilities and accountability for using and protecting FNS PII in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974; Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-06-15, *Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information*; M-06-16, *Protection of Sensitive Agency Information*; M-07-16, *Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information*; and the NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-122, *Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information*.

By submitting an application in response to this RFA, applicants are assuring that all data exchanges conducted throughout the application submission and pre-award process (and during the performance of the grant, if awarded) will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable Federal laws. By submitting a grant application, applicants agree to take all necessary steps to protect such confidentiality, including the following: (1) ensuring that PII and sensitive data developed, obtained, or otherwise associated with USDA FNS funded grants is securely transmitted. Transmission of applications through Grants.gov is secure; (2) ensuring that PII is not transmitted to unauthorized users, and that PII and other sensitive data is not submitted via email; and (3) Data transmitted via approved file sharing services (WatchDox, ShareFile, etc.), CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, etc., must be encrypted.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality of the Review Process

The agency requires all panel reviewers to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality form to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect the application review and evaluation process. Names of applicants, including States and tribal governments, submitting an application will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of the reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

6.3 Administrative Regulations

Federal Tax Liabilities Restrictions

None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Felony Crime Conviction Restrictions

None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless a Federal agency has considered

suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Debarment and Suspension 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417

A recipient chosen for an award shall comply with the non-procurement debarment and suspension common rule implementing Executive Orders (E.O.) 12549 and 12669, “Debarment and Suspension,” codified at 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417. This common rule restricts sub-awards and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities. The approved grant recipient will be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules prior to approving a sub-grant award by checking the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://sam.gov/content/home>.

Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration 2 CFR Part 25

Effective April 4, 2022, all grant applicants must obtain a Unique Entity ID (SAM) as a universal identifier for Federal financial assistance. Active grant recipients and their direct sub-recipients of a sub-grant award also must obtain a UEI. To request a UEI number visit: <https://sam.gov/content/home>.

The grant recipient must also register its UEI number in SAM.gov. If you were registered in the CCR, your company’s information should be in SAM, and you will need to set up a SAM account. To register in SAM, you will need your entity’s UEI and your entity’s Tax ID Number (TIN) and taxpayer name (as it appears on your last tax return). Registration should take **3-5 days**. If you do not receive confirmation that your SAM registration is complete, please contact SAM.gov at https://www.fsd.gov/gsafsd_sp.

FNS may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with the requirements described in 2 CFR 25 to provide a valid UEI and maintain an active SAM registration with current information.

Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information 2 CFR Part 170

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (Public Law 109–282), as amended by Section 6202 of Public Law 110–252, requires primary grantees of Federal grants and cooperative agreements to report information on sub-grantee obligations and executive compensation. FFATA promotes open government by enhancing the Federal Government’s accountability for its stewardship of public resources. This is accomplished by making Government information, particularly information on Federal spending, accessible to the general public.

Primary grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates \$25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first- tier sub-grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). In order to access FSRS a current SAM registration is required. A primary grantee and first-tier sub-grantees must also report total compensation for each of its five most-highly compensated executives. Every primary and first-tier grantee must obtain a UEI prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award.

Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417

Section 872 of this Act requires the development and maintenance of a Federal Government information system that contains specific information on the integrity and performance of covered Federal agency contractors and grantees. The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) is designed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the

Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, information from SAM.gov, and suspension and debarment information from the SAM. FNS will review and consider any information about the applicant reflected in FAPIIS when making a judgment about whether an applicant is qualified to receive an award.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), [5 U.S.C. 552](#), provides individuals with a right to access records in the possession of the Federal Government. The Government may withhold information pursuant to the nine exemptions and the three exclusions contained in the Act.

Application packages submitted in response to this grant solicitation may be subject to FOIA by requests by interested parties. In response to these requests, FNS will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including departmental regulations.

FNS will forward a Business Submitter Notice to the requested applicant's point-of-contact. Applicants will need to review requested materials and submit any recommendations within 10 days from the date of FNS notification. FNS will redact Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

For additional information on the Freedom of Information (FOIA) process, please contact the FNS Freedom of Information Act officer at FOIA@usda.gov.

Privacy Policy

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service does not collect any personal identifiable information without explicit consent. To view the Agency's Privacy Policy, visit: <https://www.usda.gov/privacy-policy>.

6.4 Code of Federal Regulations and Other Government Requirements

This grant will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following regulations 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subtitle A, Chapter II. Any Federal laws, regulations, or USDA directives released after this RFA is posted will be implemented as instructed.

Government-wide Regulations

1. [2 CFR Part 25](#): "Universal Identifier and System for Award Management"
2. [2 CFR Part 170](#): "Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information"
3. [2 CFR Part 175](#): "Award Term for Trafficking in Persons"
4. [2 CFR Part 180](#): "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement)"
5. [2 CFR Part 200](#): "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
6. [2 CFR Part 400](#): USDA's implementing regulation of [2 CFR Part 200](#) "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"
7. [2 CFR Part 415](#): USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations"
8. [2 CFR Part 416](#): USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments"
9. [2 CFR Part 417](#): USDA "Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension"
10. [2 CFR Part 418](#): USDA "New Restrictions on Lobbying"
11. [2 CFR Part 421](#): USDA "Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"
 - [7 CFR Part 16](#): "Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations"
 - [41 U.S.C. Section 22](#) "Interest of Member of Congress"

- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the “Freedom of Information” regulation ([5 U.S.C. 552](#))

General Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) of FNS grant awards may be obtained electronically in advance of an award. For a copy of T&Cs, please contact the Grant Officer noted in the Agency Contacts ([Section 7.0](#)) of this RFA.

6.5 Reporting Requirements

6.5.1 Financial Reports

The award recipient will be required to enter the SF-425 (Financial Status Report) into the FNS Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) on a quarterly basis. In order to access FPRS, the grant recipient must obtain USDA e-authentication certification and access to FPRS. For additional information on FPRS, visit:

<https://fprs.fns.usda.gov/>.

6.5.2 Performance Progress Report (PPR)

Grantees will be required to submit progress reports to FNS 30 days following the end of each semi-annual period, using the FNS-908 PPR form that will be sent to grantees at the time of award. The reports should cover the preceding period of activity. A final report identifying the accomplishments and results of the project will be due 120 days after the end date of the award. For reference, a sample of the PPR form can be found in Appendix F. **Please note:** the FNS-908 PPR form specific to this opportunity will be sent to grantees at the time of award. Use of the FNS-908 PPR form for progress reports is required. Please ensure your organization has software capable of opening a PDF with fillable form fields.

As noted in [Section 4.0](#), if awarded, grantees will be required to report on all activities proposed in their application using the FNS-908, Performance Progress Report. All activities reported on the FNS-908 must align with the required objective from [Section 1.5.1](#). Carefully considering proposed activities and indicators will prepare grantees for their progress reporting requirements if awarded.

Grantees must submit progress reports, baseline reports, and final reports via electronic mail to the Farm to School Report mailbox at SM.FN.FarmSchRprt@usda.gov.

If awarded a grant, the recipient may be expected to submit information about the baseline conditions at the time of award. The recipient will be strongly encouraged to use templates provided by FNS for the baseline and final reports.

All Turnkey – Action Planning grantees will be required to submit a Farm to School Action Plan within 120 days of the end of the grant period of performance.

6.5.3 Evaluation and Impact

As per authorizing language, as a condition of receiving a grant, grant recipients shall agree to cooperate in an evaluation of the program carried out using grant funds. Upon selection of grant awardees, USDA will provide further guidance and direction regarding evaluation protocols and common indicators. Applicants should expect that evaluation protocols will include both process evaluations (qualitative and quantitative indicators of progress toward the objectives, accomplishment of activities) and outcome evaluations (to determine whether the objectives were met and what impact they had). Awarded applicants may be asked to share

feedback with USDA to evaluate the Agency’s customer service performance. In addition, awardees may be asked to participate in a third-party evaluation conducted by FNS’ Office of Policy Support.

VII. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact the Grant Officer at:

Jean Bingham
Grant Officer, Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
1320 Braddock Place, Suite 620
Alexandra, VA 22314
E-mail: jean.bingham@usda.gov

Please visit the [Farm to School Resources | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#) page for RFA supporting materials such as our FAQ document. For more general information about the Community Food Systems Division, please [visit our website](#).

All questions regarding Grants.gov technical assistance must be directed to Grants.gov’s Applicant Support (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>).

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 Debriefing Requests

Non-selected applicants may request a debriefing to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of submitted proposals. This information may be useful when preparing future grant proposals. Additional information on debriefing requests will be forwarded to non-selected applicants. FNS reserves the right to provide this debriefing orally or in written format.

APPENDIX A: URBAN/RURAL CLASSIFICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To determine urban/rural classification, please use the National Center for Education Statistics [online tool](#).

1. Go to the [search site](#).
2. Choose either “Public School Search” or “District Search” from the options at the top.
3. Enter search criteria (Tip: Use general search terms and then select from the results list. For example, to search for Medina City Schools in Medina, Ohio, enter Medina in the ‘district name’ field and Ohio in the ‘State’ field. Then you can choose Medina City Schools from the search results).
4. Click ‘Search’.
5. Choose the school/district from the search results.
6. Scroll down to ‘Locale’ and note the classification code (see screen shot).
7. Enter the two-digit classification code (e.g., 11, 12, 31) on the Coversheet.

Search for Public School Districts CCD Common Core of Data

NOTE: Due to late submission for 2021-22 school year data collection, school districts in Texas and Washington were not included in this locator tool. To search for public school districts in Texas and Washington, please download the archived 2020-21 school year data files ([Texas](#) and [Washington](#)).

District Directory Information (2021-2022 school year) [Search Results](#) [Modify Search](#) [Data Notes/Grant IDs](#) [Help](#)

District Name: Medina City SD schools for this district	NCES District ID: 3904438	State District ID: OH-044388
Mailing Address: 739 Weymouth Rd Medina, OH 44256-2037	Physical Address: 739 Weymouth Rd Medina, OH 44256-2037	Phone: (330)636-3031
Type: Local school district	Status: Open	Total Schools: 12
Supervisory Union #: N/A	Grade Span: (grades PK - 12) PK KG 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	
Website: http://www.medinabees.org/	District Demographics: School District Demographic Dashboard	

District Details (2020-2021 school year; Fiscal data from 2018-2019) [Show All](#)

County: Medina County	County ID: 39103
Locale: Suburb: Large (21)	Total Students: 6,140 Classroom Teachers (FTE): 368.38 Student/Teacher Ratio: 16.67

Urban Classifications

11 – City, Large
12 – City, Midsize
13 – City, Small

21 – Suburb, Large
22 – Suburb, Midsize
23 – Suburb, Small

31 – Town, Fringe
32 – Town, Distant
33 – Town, Remote

Rural Classifications

41 – Rural, Fringe
42 – Rural, Distant
43 – Rural, Remote

For complete definitions, visit the [National Center for Education Statistics website](#).

APPENDIX B: ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS

In order to accomplish Farm to School Grant Program goals, grantees must ensure that the best use of the available funding is achieved. Expenditures and purchases need to contribute to a sustainable program or activity. In approving grant or sub-grant requests, a positive answer should always be sought to the following questions:

1. Is the cost applicable to my grant and/or the sub-grant's objectives?
2. Is the cost allowable according to program cost principles?
3. Is the cost reasonable and appropriate?

Among other costs, budgets may include expenses related to personnel, contractors, equipment and supplies, meeting expenses, (other than meals) travel, and trainings.

All equipment over \$5,000 has additional reporting and disposition requirements. Please see the regulations found at 2 CFR §200.313 and confirm that you are willing and able to meet the additional requirements. The regulation can be found online at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/subject-group-ECFR8feb98c2e3e5ad2/section-200.313>.

Please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document under the "Related Documents" tab on Grants.gov for more information and examples of allowable and unallowable costs.

Allowable Costs for Farm to School Grants

Please refer to the general guidance of selected items under the Cost Principles found in 2 CFR 200, (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/part-200#part-200>).

AmeriCorps and FoodCorps

Because AmeriCorps and FoodCorps programs are federally funded programs, Farm to School Grant funds may not be used to pay for AmeriCorps/FoodCorps service member stipends or benefits, either directly or as matching funds. Additionally, service member time may not be used as match for a Farm to School Grant. Service site fees that do not support service member stipends or benefits, or project activities conducted by AmeriCorps/FoodCorps programs, sites, and/or service members may be allowable grant costs.

Construction

Construction is not an allowable cost for Farm to School Grants. Activities considered construction include pouring concrete to build a permanent structure (such as a permanent greenhouse), installing wiring or plumbing, and/or altering the footprint of an existing building. Installing fencing is generally not considered construction.

Evaluation

Farm to School Grant funds may be used to support costs associated with evaluation activities. The evaluation methods and measurement tools in the proposal must be appropriate for the grant objective.

Food Costs

Farm to School Grant funds may not be used to purchase food for consumption in school meal programs. Except for allowable travel related per-diem, Farm to School Grant funds may not be used to purchase a meal for anyone. Grant funds may be used to pay for food if the food is part of a specific grant/training activity. For example, conducting a student taste test of a new menu item or demonstrating preparation techniques during a training are reasonable requests. The use of the food must be related to training or directly related to an

activity that satisfies the objective of the chosen grant track. The total expenditure of food purchases may not exceed ten percent of the federal share of the total grant award. Additionally, the total expenditure of food purchases may not constitute more than ten percent of the non-federal match. For each sub-grant, the food expenditures may not exceed twenty percent of the funds awarded. For the purposes of this grant, seeds and livestock are considered supplies and do not fall under the category of food purchases.

Gift Cards

Gift cards are not an allowable expense under this grant opportunity. For the purposes of this grant opportunity, “gift cards” refers to any token, voucher, ticket, certificate, or other item with cash value that serves as a substitute for cash.

Medical Equipment

Farm to School Grant funds may not be used to purchase medical equipment or health services related to health assessments, such as obtaining clinical data on nutritional status, chronic disease, or chronic disease risk assessment. Please note that hospitals are not eligible as lead applicants for the FY 2023 Farm to School Grant.

Promotional Items

The purchase of promotional items is allowed if they are directly related to the grant proposal’s objective. Any cost associated with such promotions must be reasonable in comparison to the grant funding. A total expenditure of promotional items should not exceed 5 percent of a total sub-grant awarded.

Staff Development and/or Substitute Pay

If adequate funding is available, Farm to School Grant funds may be used to hire a substitute food service staff person while school food service managers attend workshops and training. For accounting purposes, a record of who attended the session, how long it lasted, and the purpose of the session is required.

Stipends

Stipends are an allowable expense, but the applicant should describe how they will be used and how the amount was determined.

Sub-grants from State Agencies

State agencies that award sub-grants are expected to:

- Ensure that all sub-grant recipients are eligible and participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) as authorized under the Richard B. Russell School Lunch Act, or the School Breakfast Program established under section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (SBP).
- Provide oversight to these sub-grant recipients to ensure that expenditures authorized under the sub-grants are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
- Ensure that all expenditures are consistent with all local, State, and Federal policies, regulations, and procedures.
- Ensure that the expenditure does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under similar circumstances and would qualify as a sound business practice.
- Ensure that funds support the grant track objective.
- State agencies that apply for Farm to School Grant funds with a proposal to award sub-grants must describe in the project narrative their process for awarding sub-grants.

Travel

Reimbursement for local travel and hotel costs for school nutrition managers to attend trainings and activities is allowable. A clear oversight process must be in place to ensure the appropriate use of funds according to established travel allowances within the State. Travel costs should not exceed those listed on the General Services Administration (GSA) web site, at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>.

Vehicles

Purchasing a vehicle with grant funds is not an allowable cost. Applicants can consider leasing a vehicle or purchasing a trailer/attachment. Trailers and/or attachments are not permitted to be self-propelling (i.e., have an engine).

APPENDIX C: OPTIONAL PRIORITY GROUP DECLARATION CHECKLIST

If your project reaches one or more priority groups and you would like to be considered for bonus priority points, please fill out this checklist and include it with your application submission. **Applicants that do not submit the completed checklist with their application will not receive bonus points.**

Any applicant whose project meets one or more priority areas will receive ten (10) additional points added to their total score when their proposal is reviewed. Please note that applicants claiming priority consideration must indicate at least one priority area served by their project in order to receive points. Applicants may claim as many priority groups as they like, but no more than 10 points will be awarded for priority consideration.

If USDA is unable to verify that an applicant is eligible for any priority groups claimed below, the applicant may not be permitted to qualify for priority consideration. Please see Section 1.6 “Funding Priorities” of the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Request for Applications (RFA) for more details.

Please check at least one priority group that your project will serve and that you would like to identify for priority consideration:

- ☐ At least 40% of children served are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
- ☐ Applicant is a small- to medium-sized agricultural producer or group of small- to medium-sized agricultural producers.
- ☐ Applicant is an Indian Tribal Organization (ITO), or an entity led and/or staffed by Native Americans and serving Native American communities.
- ☐ Applicant is an organization led and/or staffed by Black/African Americans and serving Black/African American communities.
- ☐ Applicant is an organization led and/or staffed by people of color and serving communities of color (defined as Black/African American, American Indian, Alaskan native, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and/or Pacific Islander).
- ☐ Project is located in and serving eligible schools/sites in a rural area.

APPENDIX D: BUDGET NARRATIVE TEMPLATE AND CHECKLIST

Budget Narrative Template

1. PERSONNEL	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN-KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
1a. Title				Hrly wage x # hour
1b. Title				Annual salary x FTE x # yrs
1c. Title				
Personnel Total				
2. FRINGE BENEFITS	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN-KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
2a. PERSONNEL 1a.				Total salary x fringe % rate
2b. PERSONNEL 1b.				
2c. PERSONNEL 1c.				
Fringe Benefits Total				
3. TRAVEL	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN-KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
Airfare, RT name of Airport to/from name of Airport, XXX Airline, XXX Fare as of date, # people @ \$XXX / person (\$XXX base fare + \$XX tax and fees)				
Airline checked baggage fee: # bags @ \$XX / bag				
Travel agent: describe fee and cost basis (if applicable)				
Mileage, RT place of business to/from Airport, type of transportation, # mi. x # people @ \$0.XXX / mi.				
Airport parking: # days x # people @ \$XX/day				
Ground transportation: # days x # people @ est. \$XX/day				
Lodging: in-state/out-of-state rate, date, # days x # people @ \$XXX / day				
Lodging tax: in-state/out-of-state rate, XX% / day, # days x # people @ \$XX.XX / day				
Per diem (M&IE): in-state/out-of-state rate, full day, # days x # people @ \$XX.XX / day				
Per diem (M&IE): in-state/out-of-state rate, first & last days of travel, # days x # people @ \$XX.XX / day				

Travel Total				
4. SUPPLIES (Less than or equal to a unit cost of \$4,000. NOTE: Allowable costs are located at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E)	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN- KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
4a. XXX				
4b. XXX				
4c. Office supplies				
4d. Professional development materials				
4e. Computer(s)				
4f. Computer workstation(s)				
4g. Software				
Supplies Total				
5. EQUIPMENT	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN- KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
5a. XXX				
5b. XXX				
Equipment Total				
6. CONTRACTUAL	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN- KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
6a. Type/Name of contractor, service to provide, # hrs. / yr. @ \$XXX / hr.				
6b. Type/Name of contractor, service to provide, # hrs. / yr. @ \$XXX / hr.				
Contractual Total				
7. OTHER	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN- KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
7c. Operating Costs per person				
7d. Professional Development				
7e. Software Licenses				
7f. Postage, Shipping/Handling				
7g. Fees				
Other Total				
8. TOTAL COSTS	FEDERAL REQUEST	MATCH/IN- KIND	TOTAL	NARRATIVE EXPLANATION
8a. Total Direct Costs				[You will not need to write anything in this column]
8b. Total Indirect Costs [or maximum Administrative Costs % allowed]				calculation = total Direct costs x IDC rate
Total costs (Budget categories 8a + 8b)				[You will not need to write anything in this column]

RFA Budget Narrative Checklist

FOR GRANT APPLICANT USE ONLY. DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM WITH THE APPLICATION.

This checklist will assist you in completing the budget narrative portion of the application. Please review the checklist to ensure the items below are addressed in the budget narrative.

NOTE: The budget and budget narrative, as well as forms SF-424 and SF-424A must be in line with the proposal project description (statement of work) bona fide need. FNS reserves the right to request information not clearly addressed. All funding requests must be in whole dollars.

ITEM	YES	NO
Personnel		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant's organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect percentage of time the Project Director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents (FTE)?		
Fringe Benefits		
Did you include your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		
Travel		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example, origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Did you include \$500 for the registration fee to attend the mandatory one-time training meeting with USDA personnel in the first year of the grant?		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		
Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example, include excerpt from travel regulations.		
Did you confirm that travel costs do not exceed the Federal per diem rates found on the General Services Administration (GSA) website at https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates ?		
Equipment		

ITEM	YES	NO
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
Supplies		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
Contractual: (FNS reserves the right to request information on all contractual awards and associated costs after the contract is awarded.)		
Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost for a contract or sub-grant expense(s) shown on the budget?		
A justification for all Sole-source contracts must be provided in the budget narrative prior to approving this identified cost.		
Other		
Consultant Services – Has the bona fide need been clearly identified in the project description to justify the cost shown on the budget? The following information must be provided in the justification: description of service, the consultant’s name and an itemized list of all direct cost and fees, number of personnel including the position title (specialty and specialized qualifications as appropriate to the costs), number of estimated hours and hourly wages per hour, and all expenses and fees directly related to the proposed services to be rendered to the project.		
For all other line-items listed under the “Other” heading – List all items to be covered within “Other” along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		
Indirect Costs		
Has the applicant obtained a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from an Federal Agency? If yes, a copy of the most recent and signed negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application.		
2 CFR 200 allows any non-Federal entity (NFE) that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate to charge a de Minimis rate of 10% of modified total		

ITEM	YES	NO
direct costs (MTDC), which the NFE may use indefinitely as a Federally-negotiated rate.		

APPENDIX E: GRANT PROGRAM ACCOUNTING SYSTEM AND FINANCIAL CAPABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose

Recipients of Federal funds must maintain adequate accounting systems that meet the criteria outlined in 2 CFR §200.302 [Standards for Financial and Program Management](#). The responses to this questionnaire are used to assist in the Food and Nutrition Service Agency's (FNS) evaluation of your accounting system to ensure the adequate, appropriate, and transparent use of Federal funds. Failure to comply with the criteria outlined in the regulations above may preclude your organization from receiving an award. This form applies to FNS' competitive and noncompetitive grant programs. Please submit this questionnaire along with your application package.

Organization Information

Legal Organization Name:

Unique Entity ID (SAM):

Financial Stability and Quality of Management Systems

Requirement	Yes	No
1. Has your organization received a Federal award within the past 3 years?	☐	☐
2. Does your organization utilize accounting software to manage your financial records?	☐	☐
3. Does your accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of program funds separately for each grant?	☐	☐
4. Does your organization have a dedicated individual responsible for monitoring organizational funds, such as an accountant or a finance manager?	☐	☐

5. Does your organization separate the duties for staff handling the approval of transactions and the recording and payment of funds?	☐	☐
6. Does your organization have the ability to specifically identify and allocate employee effort to an applicable program?	☐	☐
7. Does your organization have a property /inventory management system in place to track location and value of equipment purchased under the award?	☐	☐

Audit Reports and Findings

Requirement	Yes	No
1. Has your organization been audited within the last 5 fiscal years? <i>(If the answer is “Yes” and this report was issued under the Single Audit Act please note this in the box below marked “Additional Information” and if not issued under the “Single Audit Act”, please attach a copy or provide a link to the audit report in the Hyperlink space below).</i>	☐	☐
2. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a “Qualified Opinion” or an “Adverse Opinion”?	☐	☐
3. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a “Material Weakness” disclosed?	☐	☐
4. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a “Significant Deficiency” disclosed?	☐	☐
Hyperlink (if available):		
Additional information including expanding on responses in previous sections:		

Applicant Certification

I certify that the above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

Name of Authorized
Representative:

Phone Number:

Email:

APPENDIX F: PROGRESS REPORTING REQUIRED FORM

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR) – For Reference Only

The following pages contain screenshots of the PPR form that grantees are required to use for progress reports submitted to FNS. Upon award, a PPR form (Adobe PDF), customized for the specific FNS program, will be included in award packages.

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR) – For Reference Only

Print	Submit by Email	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Food and Nutrition Service	OMB Number: 0584-0512 Expiration Date: 7/31/2022
PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT			Management Settings
Recommended File Name: FNS908_{Organization Name}_{Type of Report}_{Reporting Fiscal Year}_{Period}_{Original Revision}.pdf <i>Copy value then paste in Save As dialog when saving</i>			
The public burden statement: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0512. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314, ATTN: PRA (0584-0512*). Do not return the completed form to this address.			
1. Recipient Organization			
a. Organization Name: 		2. Program Information:	
b. Street Address: 		Program Area:	
City: State: Zip:		Federal Fiscal Year of Award:	
		Program:	
		Tag:	
3. Primary POC:			
a. First Name: Last Name:		b. Title:	
c. Telephone (Area Code & Number):		d. Email Address:	
4. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN):			
5. Type of Report (Select One):			
☒ Quarterly ☐ Semi-Annual ☐ Final			
Reporting Fiscal Year: Period:			
Original/Revision:			
6. Federal Grant Agreement Number:			
7. Additional POC (Optional)			
a. First Name: Last Name:		b. Title:	
c. Telephone (Area Code & Number):		d. Email Address:	
8. Report Submitted By:			
a. First Name: Last Name:		b. Title:	
9. Certification		☐ I certify by checking this box that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this report is correct and complete for performance of activities set forth in the award documents.	
10. Date Report Submitted:			

Form FNS-908
Version Number: 1.3 06-20

SBU

Electronic Form Version Designed in Adobe AEM 6.4 Version

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR) – For Reference Only (Continued)

Program Management Information

1. Progress Summary

Provide summary of progress this reporting period, highlighting your greatest achievements and challenges to date in this reporting period. For challenges, how did you resolve or overcome them? (Max 2000 characters):

2. Personnel Information

a. Number of FTEs:

b. Were there any changes in key personnel? ☒ Yes ☐ No

c. If yes, please describe the changes in key personnel, including the individual leaving/joining the project as well as the name and contact information (email address, phone number, and name of organization) of the individual. Note: This information does not serve as a formal request to approve the change in key personnel. This request must be forwarded to the Grants Officer in a separate request (Max 2000 Characters):

3. Projected Amendments (Cost and No-Cost)

a. Number of amendments projected this upcoming quarter?

b. Do the projected amendment(s) require FNS approval? ☒ Yes ☐ No

c. Please describe the type of amendment(s) projected and justification for each. Note: This information does not serve as a formal request to approve amendments. This request must be forwarded to the Grants Officer in a separate request (Max 2000 characters):

4. Expenditures/Purchases:

a. Were there any significant expenditures or purchases, including any contracts entered during this reporting period? ☒ Yes ☐ No

b. If so, please describe (Max 2000 Characters):

5. Deviations (Changes this quarter outside of the agreed upon budget, timeline, or scope):

a. Have there been any deviations? ☒ Yes ☐ No

b. Type: ☐ Budget ☐ Timeline ☐ Scope ☐ Other

c. Describe any deviation(s), including a justification and impacts to budget/timeline (Max 2000 characters):

d. Please describe proposed activities to mitigate the impact of the deviation(s) (Max 2000 characters):

FNS-908 Performance Progress Report (PPR) – For Reference Only (Continued)

Program Management Information (Continued)

6. Upcoming Activities and Anticipated Changes

a. Please describe activities planned for next quarter (Max 2000 Characters):

b. Do you anticipate any changes in your project timeline, activities or cost? ☒ Yes ☐ No

c. If yes, please explain the anticipated changes (Max 2000 Characters):

7. Final Reporting Summary (Final Reporting Period Only)

a. Are all goals and objectives completed at this time? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. If no to answer 7a, briefly describe the goals and objectives that were not completed and why they were not completed (Max 2000 Characters):

c. Was the project budget sufficient for meeting the project goals? ☐ Yes ☐ No

d. If no to answer 7c, briefly describe why the budget was insufficient for meeting the project goals (Max 2000 Characters):

8. Additional Comments (Max 2000 Characters)

Page 3

Instructions: Complete this section by adding all Activities and Indicators as listed on your submitted proposal for each listed objective. For each reporting period, update these Activities/Indicators with the most up to date information. **Note:** Objectives will be added by FNS and should not be altered. Additionally, note that indicator values vary by Indicator Type selected.

Program Activities

Objective 1								
-	1	Activity	Type	Anticipated Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Optional		
						Location	Beneficiaries/Audience	Topic (if training)
		Indicator Description	Indicator Type	Target	Actual (Cumulative)	Comments		

Add Objective
Remove Objective

Page 4

APPENDIX G: BASELINE AND FINAL REPORTS

Baseline Report – For Reference Only

The following pages contain screenshots of the Baseline Report that grantees will use for the baseline report submitted to FNS at the beginning of the period of performance. A fillable Baseline Report will be provided in PDF format for all grantees once awarded.

Baseline Report – For Reference Only

Submit by Email

Congratulations on receiving a USDA Farm to School Grant Program award. At this early stage of your grant, USDA would like to collect some initial baseline data about your project. This is intended to help us (and you) document your starting point. You will be asked to complete a similar report at the end of the grant period to document changes. All fields are required, and at least one selection is required for all checkbox responses. If an entry is not applicable, please populate 'N/A' as appropriate.

Recommended file name: Baseline Report_{Organization Name}.pdf
Copy value then paste in Save As dialog when saving

USDA Farm to School Program Grant Recipient Baseline Report

Name of Organization:

Section 1: Project Network

1. Please identify your most important partner(s) in farm to school activities in the most recent school year. If you did not partner with any organizations on farm to school activities, please enter "NA."

2. Please identify any of the following organization types with whom you partnered to deliver farm to school programming in the most recent school year (please select all that apply).

- ☐ Eligible school
- ☐ Nongovernmental organization
- ☐ Community-based organization
- ☐ Agricultural producer/producer group
- ☐ Other community or school partner
- ☐ State agency
- ☐ Indian Tribe Organizations (ITO)
- ☐ None of the above

Section 2: Project Activities

This section contains questions regarding farm to school activities prior to receiving your grant award.

3. With how many total schools and total students did you collaborate on farm to school activities in the most recent school year?

For the purposes of this form,

- Early Childhood Education = age 0 through pre-k,
- Primary = K-5,
- Secondary = grades 6-12.

If schools include multiple grade levels, count them in the section that represents the highest-grade level in the school.

		Early Childhood Education	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Total
1	Total Schools				0
2	Total Collaborating Schools				0
3	Total Students				0
4	Total Collaborating Students				0

Procurement

The following questions ask about how much money the schools and/or school districts working with this project spent on all food and local food during the most recent school year. Please aggregate data from all schools and/or districts involved for which procurement data can be provided and give your best approximation.

4. What was the **total food budget** for all schools participating in farm to school activities in the most recent school year? Please round your response to the nearest dollar.

5. For the most recent school year, approximately how much did the schools or school districts identified above spend on locally sourced foods? (Please add as many rows as needed. If unsure of the total amount, a rough estimate is perfectly acceptable. Please round to the nearest dollar.)

Minority Owned Business A business that is third party certified as Minority or Indigenous owned, or self identifies as such (at the discretion of the institution).

Women Owned Business A business that is third party certified to be Women Owned, or self identifies as such (at the discretion of the institution).

Product Type	Market Channel... option below	Ownership	Frequency of Service in Meals	Dollar Amount	
					Reset Table

Activities

6. Please indicate which of the following activities occurred during the most recent school year (please select all that apply):

- ☐ Procuring, serving or promoting local food products in meals and snacks, including foods produced in school gardens
- ☐ Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of locally produced foods or products from school/community- based gardens or school/community-based farms in the cafeteria
- ☐ Conducting agricultural education in classroom, incorporating into educational curriculum (math, science, language arts, etc.) or other school-related setting
- ☐ Conducting edible gardening activities as part of curriculum, after school program, or other community events
- ☐ Conducting student field trips to farms, farmers markets, or local food processing facilities
- ☐ Having farmer(s) visit the cafeteria, classroom or other school/community-related setting
- ☐ Providing training to school food service staff on farm to school or school/community gardens
- ☐ Working with local food producers to make local food products available on the menu of an eligible school or schools
- ☐ Implementing farm to school activities as part of overall school activities
- ☐ Evaluating the impact of changes in student acceptance and food waste as a result of implementing farm to school activities
- ☐ Planning for statewide farm to school activities
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None of the above

7. Please specify how many school gardens, aquaponics/hydroponic gardens or greenhouses the SFAs currently involved in your project have. Please provide a numeric answer and enter "0" if the type does not apply.

Type	Number
In ground/container gardens	
Aquaponics/hydroponic gardens	
Greenhouses	
Other	

Policies

8. How were the activities from the most recent school year funded? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ USDA Farm to School Grant
- ☐ Other Federal Grants (Specify: _____)
- ☐ Local or State government grants
- ☐ Private foundation grants (national or local) (Specify: _____)
- ☐ Corporate partnerships and donations
- ☐ School/District funding, such as PTA/PTO or school/district foundation
- ☐ Individual donations
- ☐ In-kind contribution
- ☐ From the non-profit food-service account
- ☐ Other

9. From the list below, please select any of the following policies that are currently in place at your SFA to support farm to school. (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Wellness policies that support farm to school
- ☐ Procurement policies that support the purchasing of local foods
- ☐ Policies that support fundraising for farm to school activities
- ☐ Budget allocations dedicated to farm to school activities
- ☐ Other
- ☐ No policies are in place to support farm to school activities at this time, but we have an objective that will be completed as part of this grant
- ☐ No policies are in place to support farm to school activities

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Leads or email
SM.fn.FarmSchRprt@usda.gov

Thank you for completing this report.
We greatly appreciate your efforts and look forward to working with you!

Final Report – For Reference Only

The following pages contain screenshots of the Final Report that grantees will use for the final report submitted to FNS within 120 days of the end of the period of performance. A fillable Final Report will be provided in PDF format for all grantees on the Farm to School website.

Submit by Email

It's now time to complete your final report for the USDA Farm to School Program. This report will allow USDA to document changes that occurred as a result of your grant project.

Recommended file name: Final Report_(Organization Name).pdf

Copy value then paste in Save As dialog when saving

USDA Farm to School Program Grant Recipient Final Report

Name of Organization:

Section 1: Project Management

1. The Office of Community Food Systems is interested in the successes you experienced during your project, as well as any challenges you encountered. Your experience may help us assist future grantees, and can inform the growth of farm to school activities across the country. Please use the table below, modified from the Request for Applications, to provide a final status update on all project goals and activities included in the approved project work plan table and share any successes and/or challenges associated with these activities. You will also have an additional opportunity at the end of the report to provide more specific feedback regarding your biggest lessons learned and best practices.

Activity	Activity Category	Indicator	Please briefly summarize any successes	Please briefly summarize any barriers	Target Audience	Will these activities continue after the project ends?

-
+

Section 2: Project Network

2. Please identify your most important partner(s) in farm to school activities in the most recent school year. If you did not partner with any organizations on farm to school activities, please enter "NA."

-
+

3. Please identify any of the following organization types with whom you partnered to deliver farm to school programming in the most recent school year (please select all that apply).

- ☐ Eligible school
- ☐ Nongovernmental organization
- ☐ Community-based organization
- ☐ Agricultural producer/producer group
- ☐ Other community or school partner
- ☐ State agency
- ☐ Indian Tribe Organizations (ITO)
- ☐ None of the above

Section 3: Project Activities

4. With how many total schools and total students did you collaborate on farm to school activities at the end of your project?

For the purposes of this form,

- Early Childhood Education = age 0 through pre-k,
- Primary = K-5,
- Secondary = grades 6-12.

If schools include multiple grade levels, count them in the section that represents the highest-grade level in the school.

		Early Childhood Education	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Total
1	Total Schools				0
2	Total Collaborating Schools				0
3	Total Students				0
4	Total Collaborating Students				0

Procurement

The following questions ask about how much money the schools and/or school districts working with this project spent on local food during the most recent school year before the end of the project. Please aggregate data from all of the schools and/or districts involved for which procurement data can be provided and give your best approximation. Please report on THE SAME schools and districts covered in your baseline report.

5. What was the **total food budget** for all schools participating in farm to school activities in the most recent school year? Please round your response to the nearest dollar.

6. For the most recent school year, approximately how much did the schools or school districts identified above spend on locally sourced foods? (Please add as many rows as needed. If unsure of the total amount, a rough estimate is perfectly acceptable. Please round to the nearest dollar.)

Minority Owned Business A business that is third party certified as Minority or Indigenous owned, or self identifies as such (at the discretion of the institution).

Women Owned Business A business that is third party certified to be Women Owned, or self identifies as such (at the discretion of the institution).

Product Type	Market Channel... option below	Ownership	Frequency of Service in Meals	Dollar Amount
				Reset Table

Activities

7. Please indicate which of the following activities occurred during the most recent school year (please select all that apply):

- ☐ Procuring, serving or promoting local food products in meals and snacks, including foods produced in school gardens
- ☐ Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of locally produced foods or products from school/community- based gardens or school/community-based farms in the cafeteria
- ☐ Conducting agricultural education in classroom, incorporating into educational curriculum (math, science, language arts, etc.) or other school-related setting
- ☐ Conducting edible gardening activities as part of curriculum, after school program, or other community events
- ☐ Conducting student field trips to farms, farmers markets, or local food processing facilities
- ☐ Having farmer(s) visit the cafeteria, classroom or other school/community-related setting
- ☐ Providing training to school food service staff on farm to school or school/community gardens
- ☐ Working with local food producers to make local food products available on the menu of an eligible school or schools
- ☐ Implementing farm to school activities as part of overall school activities
- ☐ Evaluating the impact of changes in student acceptance and food waste as a result of implementing farm to school activities
- ☐ Planning for statewide farm to school activities
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None of the above

8. Please specify how many school gardens, aquaponics/hydroponic gardens or greenhouses the SFAs currently involved in your project have. Please provide a numeric answer and enter "0" if the type does not apply.

Type	Number
In ground/container gardens	
Aquaponics/hydroponic gardens	
Greenhouses	
Other	

Policies

9. How were the activities from the most recent school year funded? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ USDA Farm to School Grant
- ☐ Other Federal Grants (Specify: _____)
- ☐ Local or State government grants
- ☐ Private foundation grants (national or local) (Specify: _____)
- ☐ Corporate partnerships and donations
- ☐ School/District funding, such as PTA/PTO or school/district foundation
- ☐ Individual donations
- ☐ In-kind contribution
- ☐ From the non-profit food-service account
- ☐ Other

10. From the list below, please select any of the following policies that are currently in place at your SFA to support farm to school. (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Wellness policies that support farm to school
- ☐ Procurement policies that support the purchasing of local foods
- ☐ Policies that support fundraising for farm to school activities
- ☐ Budget allocations dedicated to farm to school activities
- ☐ Other
- ☐ No policies are in place to support farm to school activities

11. In the event you reported in the baseline form that no policies were in place to support farm to school activities,

- ☐ This _____ policy was implemented to support farm to school activities as part of this grant:
- ☐ N/A

Section 4: Evaluation Findings

12. Please describe your top three lessons learned from this project and up to three best practices that you would give other schools, districts or support service providers implementing farm to school initiatives (400 characters or less for each response).

Lesson Learned:		- +
Best Practice:		- +

13. Please provide additional context for any of the items above and/or any additional information relevant to the grant. (800 characters or less)

This form will attach automatically to an email if you click the 'Submit by Email' button in the form. Please remember to also upload key materials developed during your project, including evaluation materials before sending the email.

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Leads or email
SM.fn.FarmSchRprt@usda.gov

Thank you for completing this report and for all your work as a USDA Farm to School Program grant recipient.