

# *Connecticut Department of Agriculture*

## Farmland Restoration Grant

### ***2023 Grant Application Guidelines and Forms***

***Application Deadline:  
December 9, 2022, at 4:00pm***

**Ned Lamont, Governor  
Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner**



Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 703  
Hartford, CT 06103  
[www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov)



## Table of Contents

Important Information .....	3
Grant Description .....	4
Eligible Applicants.....	4
Match Requirement, Expenses, & Payment.....	5
Project Duration & Post Award Requirements.....	7
Submission Process .....	8
Application Requirements.....	8
Evaluation Criteria and Process .....	9
Forms .....	10
Grant Narrative.....	13
Example Site Plan/Drawing.....	16
Example Prime and Statewide Important Soils Map.....	17
Instructions for how to create a soils map using <a href="#">Web Soil Survey</a> .....	22

## **Important Information**

**Applications must be received by: December 9, 2022, at 4:00pm on the Grant Platform.**

Applications ***will not*** be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on December 9, 2022

**Questions can be directed to:** Lance Shannon, [Lance.Shannon@ct.gov](mailto:Lance.Shannon@ct.gov) or Simon Levesque, [Simon.Levesque@ct.gov](mailto:Simon.Levesque@ct.gov)

On **Tuesday November 8, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.** a virtual webinar will be held for interested agricultural producers and cooperatives to learn about the Farmland Restoration Program application process. The webinar will be held utilizing Webex and the link to join via a video call or voice call is below.

Please visit [www.CTGrown.gov/grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/grants) to obtain the webinar link and recording.

## **Grant Description**

The Farmland Restoration Grant (FLRG) provides matching funds to Connecticut farmers, nonprofits and municipalities to increase food and fiber production in the state by restoring lands into active agricultural production. FLRP focuses on restoring and improving land with prime and important farmland soils, in accordance with a Farmland Restoration Program Plan and a Climate Smart Resiliency Plan (FLRP Plan).

Funding for the Farmland Restoration Grant is made possible by Connecticut General Statutes 22-6c. The Farmland Restoration Grant and any awards are subject to the requirements and provisions of state funding.

For the purposes of this grant, farmland restoration is the act of bringing land into agricultural production for human food, animal feed, or livestock grazing.

The maximum grant awarded is **\$20,000.00**. Applications of any amount up to the maximum possible award will be considered for funding. There are two opportunities for funding under the Farmland Restoration Program. The opportunities for funding are for projects on either **publicly owned land** or for projects that are on **privately owned land**. Applicants will choose the grant that best fits their property to apply.

## **Eligible Applicants**

The following entities are eligible to apply for the Farmland Restoration Grant:

1. Agricultural producers, who are owners or tenants of an existing agribusiness within the State of Connecticut with at least one year of production experience.
2. Not for profits owning or leasing a property in use for agricultural production.
3. Municipalities leasing farmland, currently in use by a farmer. The lease must be no less than five years in duration, with a five-year option to renew in the terms. .

Producers must be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State as a business in the State of Connecticut. If the producer is established as a limited liability company or corporation, the producer must obtain or be applying to obtain a Farmer's Tax Exemption Permit. Farms should be a business in good standing with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg), State, and Federal requirements. Not for profits must be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State, and provide a copy of the federal IRS exemption letter.

Prior grantees may apply for a Farmland Restoration Grant. Open awards, past awards, project completion and outcomes will be considered in the evaluation of the 2023 award application. Applicants who have received two years of consecutive funding are ineligible for an award for one year. Applicants may reapply for funding in the next grant cycle following the year's ineligibility. For example:

- 2020: Project awarded
- 2021: Project awarded
- 2022: Ineligible for an award

2023: Eligible for an award

### **Match Requirement, Expenses, & Payment**

All eligible expenses funded by any Farmland Restoration Grant program must advance farming and agriculture, as defined by [Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-1\(q\)](#).

Matching project funds are required by the applicant. Matches may be provided through cash or in-kind services. The cash match requirement may be self-financed, bank-financed, or provided through other grants or sponsorships such as but not limited to federal, state, or foundation grants. If other grant funds provide the necessary match requirement, the applicant must disclose the grantor/funder, the grant name, and amount awarded. Please be aware per CGS 22-6c, no more than 90% of the total project cost may be covered by state and federal funds. Matches may not be from other DoAg funded grants.

#### *Match Requirements and Examples:*

Projects on **Publicly Owned Land: These projects are on lands owned by a municipality or that are state-owned land** – there is a **90/10 match requirement**. 90% of project expenses may be grant funded, 10% of total project expenses should be covered by the applicant as match funding to the award. *For example: With a \$10,000 project: Up to \$9,000 of the project may be covered by an award and at least \$1,000 of the total project costs must be covered by the farmer.*

Projects on **Privately Owned Land: These projects reference land that is owned privately by a farmer or not for profit**. On these lands, a **50/50 match is required**. 50% of project expenses may be grant funded and 50% of project expenses must be covered by the applicant as match funding to the award. *For example: With a \$10,000 project: Up to \$5,000 of the project may be covered by this award and at least \$5,000 of the total project costs must be covered by the farmer.*

For in-kind match requirements using volunteer hours for a component of the required match funds, please reference the [Independent Sectors](#) information on the volunteer cost per hour. These estimated hours must be accounted for with a monetary amount in the budget towards the match requirement.

#### *Expenses:*

The following expenses **may not be used as a match** and will **not be funded by this grant**:

- Any expense incurred prior to contract execution
- Land acquisition/mortgages
- Cost of borrowing (points and other fees)
- Any portion of expense for which the applicant barter/pays a contractor in merchandise or service in lieu of cash
- Routine business expenses (example: equipment maintenance)
- Disposable supplies (office, farm, otherwise) unrelated to the project
- Legal expenses related to litigation
- Indirect or contingency costs of any percentage
- Land remediation expenses

- Projects conducted on brownfields or contaminated lands
- Purchase of general-purpose equipment
- Lobbying

The following **expenses are an acceptable match** if these directly and meaningfully support the proposed project:

- Employee salaries/payroll paid to execute the project
- Attorneys' fees (not related to litigation)
- Consumable or disposable supplies (example: gas, oil)

Examples of **eligible expenses** for grant funded projects:

- State/local/federal permits related to the project
- Rental of equipment
- Hiring contractors
- Soil amendments
- Well digging
- Pond dredging
- Fence and fence installation
- Irrigation
- Pumphouses
- Stone and stump removal
- Land clearing/brush hogging
- Invasive removal
- Tree pruning/maintenance
- Field drainage

To be eligible for payment, Eligible Expenses (listed above) must be included in the signed contract and in the approved Farmland Restoration Plan ("Plan").

#### *Payment*

**This award is a reimbursement grant.** Funds shall not be paid to the awardee until the project is completed to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Agriculture. All project expenses have to be paid for and documentation has to be submitted to the Department for payment to be processed. The Farmland Restoration Grant may only be paid directly to the individual or organization who is the awardee and listed on the grant contract.

Incomplete projects will not be fully reimbursed.

Once awards are made no additional funds will be awarded, even if a project's costs increase. Only expenses in the budget and spent during the project period shall be reimbursed. If project expenses are less than originally budgeted, only the amount actually spent shall be reimbursed. For example, if a public land project costs \$8,000 at the time of completion instead of an original budget of \$10,000, a prorated amount of \$7,200 will be paid for the completed work (accounting for the 10% match of the project costs). The remaining \$2,800 will be returned to the grant pool for future awards. Using the

same example of a private land project completed under budget at \$8,000, only \$4,000 would be paid with a 50/50 match fund requirement. It is important to note that the match fund amount applies as indicated above, whether the project is completed on or under budget.

### **Project Duration & Post Award Requirements**

Projects must be **completed within 18 months** of contract execution. Contract and project extensions are not allowed. **Applicants should be prepared for an anticipated contract start date of April 1, 2023.**

Upon the contract start date, DoAg will assign a soil scientist to work with the awardee to develop a Farmland Restoration and Climate Resiliency Plan (Plan). Awardees cannot begin work on their project until a Plan is completed and approved by DoAg. The Plan will also incorporate wetlands and NDDB reviews of the farmland to be restored. Further, all municipal, state and/or federal approvals required for the work must be obtained prior to the start of work and any fees associated with those approvals must be paid after the contract start date to be reimbursed.

Awardees should be prepared to begin work on their project within 6-8 weeks of the contract start date.

Applicants of awarded projects will be responsible for the following:

1. Signing an agreement with the State of Connecticut
2. Providing a Certificate of Insurance holding the state harmless or listing the state as an additional insured on the grantee's liability insurance policy
3. Executing the contract within the contractual time frame
4. Working with the assigned soil scientist to develop the Farmland Restoration and Climate Resiliency Plan
5. Meeting with the assigned soil scientist for a final walk through of the completed project area
6. Submitting a final project report in the required format per the executed contract
7. Submitting a final financial report itemizing actual expenses. Copies of invoices and proof of payment must be submitted with the payment request at the conclusion of the project
8. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract

Upon receiving an award, awardees will receive guidance on necessary contract requirements from the DoAg program coordinator. The contract process moves quickly, and applicants should be prepared to review agreements and complete all needed forms within the time frames provided by DoAg to ensure projects start timely.

By receiving the Farmland Restoration Grant, awarded applicants agree to use their best efforts to ensure that land improvements that result from this award shall be used for agricultural purposes for at least five (5) years or the duration of the lease (if a lease is applicable).

### **Submission Process**

All Farmland Restoration Grant applications are required to be submitted through DoAg's online grant portal. Applicants will need to create an account for the grant portal.

The grant portal may be accessed [here](#).

Instructions on how to apply for grants on the DoAg Grant Portal is located [here](#).

For additional information on the grant application submission process, we encourage attendance at the **grant writing workshop on November 8, 2022**.

Applicants should consider applying well in advance of the grant deadline, as DoAg will not accept applications submitted late, even if technical issues prevented the applicant from submitting on time. Applicants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the portal prior to submission and to communicate timely with DoAg if there are accessibility or other concerns.

### **Application Requirements**

A complete application includes:

1. Grant Narrative (please see page 13 of this guidance for more information).
2. Budget Form and Project Timeline Workbook
3. Aerial maps of the project area. Please include on this map a detailed sketch of the project, identifying what will be done to the land. *The aerial maps can be obtained from Google maps or USDA, (please see page 14 for an example map and sketch)*
4. Farmland Classification Soil(s) map of project area, showing prime, statewide important, and locally important soils *These can be obtained from NRCS or online at the [Web Soil Survey](#) (please see page 15 and 21 for an example Farmland Classification Soils Map [and an instruction guide for using Web Soil Survey](#))*
5. Pictures of the project area as it currently exists, prior to the project being completed.
6. Profit and Loss statements for up to the previous three years.
7. If applicable – an approval letter from the easement holder for approval of the project. *A template for the approval letter can be found on the Farmland Restoration Grant webpage at [www.CTGrown.gov/grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/grants).*
8. If applicable – A statement from the landowner for approval of the project for projects on rented or leased land. *A template for the approval letter can be found on the Farmland Restoration Grant webpage at [www.CTGrown.gov/grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/grants).*
9. If applicable – an approved copy of an NRCS Conservation Plan or Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan.

### **Evaluation Criteria and Process**

The Farmland Restoration Grant is a competitive grant. Only complete applications, as described above and submitted timely, will be evaluated.

The evaluation will be weighted heavily on the project plan described in the Grant Narrative.

Project applications should clearly present how the project will be accomplished and undertaken in a reasonable timeline.



Additional information, such as quotes, conceptual drawings, and other documentation justifying and supporting the budget and project, is required to present a competitive application. All prospective purchases for the completion of the project should be accompanied by a quote or estimate, when possible, for a stronger application. Projects that involve hiring a subcontractor should include recent quotes from the subcontractor for a stronger application. DoAg strongly recommends when seeking quotes to advise potential Contractors of the anticipated contract start date and need for soil scientist approval prior to start of work for the best estimate of costs.

Applications to the Farmland Restoration Grant shall be evaluated based on:

1. **The soil composition of the project area.** Does the project area contain prime, important, or locally important farmland soils?
2. **Existing conservation easement or application under consideration.** Does the land where the project is taking place have a conservation easement?
3. **What the land is going to be used for.** Is the land going to be used for the production of human food, animal feed, or livestock grazing?
4. **Farm business planning.** Does the farming operation(s) using the land have a current farm business plan?
5. **Annual gross farm sales.** How much revenue is being generated by the farming operation(s) using the land?
6. **Who owns the land?** Is it state-owned, a municipal property, or a farm with a charitable, community or educational component?
7. **The type of production practices used.** Are [USDA Climate Smart](#) practices and resources being used by the applicant?
8. **Who is farming the land?** Is the farmer of the project land a new farmer with one to three years of production experience? Is the farmer a limited resource or socially disadvantaged producer Is the farmer a veteran?
9. **Outcome and impact of the project.** Has the applicant identified an outcome and impact as a result of the project?

## Budget Form and Project Timeline Workbook

The information provided below for the Budget Form and Project Timeline Workbook is for informational purposes only. The three excel sheets within the workbook will need to be filled out and submitted with the appropriate MS Excel fillable form link available at [Farmland Restoration Grant Program \(ct.gov\)](http://Farmland Restoration Grant Program (ct.gov)) and added as an attachment on DoAg's grant portal.

### Budget Sheet:

Budget Application Form 2023 Farmland Restoration Grant							
Directions: In the cells below, itemize the project expenses for each category. The sum function will automatically total the itemized expenses in each of the gray category boxes. Rows can be added in each category if needed. Be sure to check the sum function of each category to ensure it includes the additional rows added.							
In addition to the itemized budget below, please also fill out the budget narrative (on the next sheet) that contains the following information: a. Where the match is coming from (cash, loan, other grant, etc.) b. Sufficient explanation and justification of the financial support requested and the need for a cash advance (for New Farmer Micro Grant)							
BUDGET	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - GRANT FUNDS	GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - MATCH FUNDS	IN-KIND MATCH BY APPLICANT	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - MATCH FUNDS	CASH MATCH BY APPLICANT	TOTAL COST
<b>SALARIES AND FRINGE.</b> Employee salary & fringe paid to execute the project is eligible. Salary is an eligible cash match as well.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Salary and Fringe 1:</b>	N/A		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>*RENTAL OF EQUIPMENT.</b> Rented equipment required to complete the project (rollers, heavy duty equipment)	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Item 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Item 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>*MATERIALS &amp; SUPPLIES.</b> A list of materials and supplies required for the project.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Item 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Item 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Item 3:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Item 4:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Item 5:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>CONTRACTUAL/CONSULTANT.</b> Expenses associated with procuring services performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant. If more than one, each contractor/consultant hired must be described separately. Attaching quotes to justify the expense is required.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Contractor 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Contractor 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>OTHER COSTS.</b> A list, with descriptions, of each item listed as "Other Costs"	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Other 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Other 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Other 3:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Other 4:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>Other 5:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00		
<b>PROJECT TOTALS</b>	Leave blank	#REF!	Leave blank	#REF!	Leave blank	#REF!	\$0.00

\*If you're hiring a contractor do not break up the contractor's estimate into the various budget categories. The contractor's full cost/estimate should be listed as one item in the *Consultant/Contractual* category.

**Budget Narrative Form**

**Budget Narrative**

**2023 Farmland Restoration Grant Application**

The budget narrative should contain evidence or justification for costs reported on the budget sheet. For example, to complete your project you plan on utilizing two of your employees. While the budget sheet shows that the cost for your employees to do that work is \$8,000, here is where you justify that cost with an explanation.

For supplies or materials ordered online, insert a link to the product or service in the justification column. Remember to include shipping/freighting costs in the total cost of the item.

**For example:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Is this cost covered by another grant? If so, please indicate the grant name, awarding agency, and grant amount.</b>
Salary	2 employees, \$25/hr, 4 hrs per week for 40 weeks	\$8,000	N/A
Other Costs: 3 Hydro Flow Clear Vinyl Tubing, 1/4 Inch (ID), 100 Feet	3 at \$24.95 each, plus \$28.06 estimated shipping; Link: <a href="https://hydrobuilder.com/hydro-flow-clear-vinyl-tubing.html?opts=eyJhdHRyaWJ1dGUxNDYxIjoiMTgzNzUifQ==">https://hydrobuilder.com/hydro-flow-clear-vinyl-tubing.html?opts=eyJhdHRyaWJ1dGUxNDYxIjoiMTgzNzUifQ==</a>	\$102.91	Grant A, USDA, \$2000

Fill out the table below as it pertains to your project. Add or remove rows as needed.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Is this cost covered by another grant? If so, please indicate the grant name, awarding agency, and grant amount.</b>

**Project Timeline**

**Project Timeline**

**2023 Farmland Restoration Grant Application**

Include all project milestones and related deadlines. Applicants must budget in three months to plan the project once the contract is executed, 12 months to execute and complete the project, and 30 days past project completion for all reporting.

**Projects must be completed within 18 months of contract execution. As a reminder, no extensions will be given. No incomplete projects will be funded.**

The following template will be used to provide the project timeline. Anticipate a project start date of April 1, 2023.

<b>For example:</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Anticipated Timeline</b>
	Contractor Hired	By 6/1/2023
	Building permit acquired	By 5/1/2023

Fill out the table below as it pertains to your project. Add or remove rows as needed.

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Anticipated Timeline</b>

## Grant Narrative

The information provided below for the Grant Narrative is for informational purposes only. Please download and complete Supplemental Application and Grant Narrative, [found here](#), then upload it along with the other required documents.

### Farmland Restoration Grant 2023 Grant Narrative

Please answer the following questions within your Grant Narrative:

1. **Introduction** – Introduce your business and tell the reviewers about the project area. Include information:
  - a. Briefly describe your farm business and current production on your farm including total acres and production types.
  - b. What is the current and existing use of the proposed project area?
  - c. Are you a limited resource or socially disadvantaged producer? Are you a veteran?
  - d. Do you use USDA Climate Smart practices on the farm? Will you use climate smart practices on the land once the project is complete?
  - e. Are there any prime, important or locally important farmland soils in the project area? Web Soil Survey
  - f. Have you made any efforts to improve the soil and land in years past?
  - g. Are there any wildlife or plants that are referenced for the project area on the NDDB?
  
2. **Project Explanation** – Explain in detail what your project is, what your project will do for your business. Be sure to identify how many acres are to be restored and if the land going to be used for the production of human food, animal feed, or livestock grazing. What is the cost per acre to complete the project?

The reviewers will be looking for a statement that begins with “This project will....”

3. **Goals and Tasks** - Describe in detail the goals and tasks needed to complete your project. Your answer here should reflect the tasks outlined in the Project Timeline from the Budget and Project Timeline Workbook. We want to understand exactly what you will accomplish and how.

*For example:*

Goal 1: Clear four (4) acres of land.

Tasks to Complete Goal 1:

1. Rent necessary equipment.
2. Identify employee (or subcontractor) to run equipment and clear land.

- 4. Project Outcome or Impact** – How do you predict the completion of this project will impact your business for the next three to five (or more) years? Please identify at least one outcome you strive to achieve after completing the project.

An *outcome* is a quantifiable result and is usually accomplished after the project is done.

*Example:* 5 additional acres will be put into production and will allow the farm to produce 15% more of its total feed therefore reducing the amount of feed the farm has to purchase.