The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board is pleased to announce:

Dairy Research Grants

For educational institutions, research organizations, extension agencies, and agricultural non-profit organizations for projects conducted in Connecticut for Connecticut Dairy Farmers.

2021 Request for Applications
Guidelines and Forms

Application Deadline:
May 21, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Ned Lamont, Governor

Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner

Distributed on behalf of the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board by:
The Connecticut Department of Agriculture
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 703, Hartford, CT 06103
https://ctdairy.org

Table of Contents

Connecticut Dairy

Important Dates:

==**Applications must be submitted between May 17, 2021 and May 21, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. Please review the "Submission Process" section of this document for additional details on submission requirements.**==

Applications must be received by:
May 21, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Applications will not be accepted after 3:00 p.m. on May 21, 2021.
A Cognito link will be opened on the Department's webpages starting May 17, 2021. All applications and supporting documents must be received prior to 3:00 p.m. on ==*May 21, 2021*==*. No late submissions will be accepted.*

Questions Should Be Directed To:

Name: Lindsay Raymond
Address: 450 Columbus Blvd. Suite 702, Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: 860-817-0193
E-Mail: Lindsay.Raymond@ct.gov

Funding Opportunity:

The Dairy Research Grant provides grant funding for universities, research organizations, extension agencies and agricultural non-profit organizations for in-state projects that directly impact and/or foster Connecticut's dairy industry and Connecticut dairy farmers. The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board, CT MPB, administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, was established in 2008. The Board consists of nine appointed members and is charged with developing, coordinating, and implementing promotional, research, and other programs designed to promote Connecticut dairy farms, and milk and dairy product consumption. The CT MPB 5 Year Target is to realize an increase in dairy consumption and purchases throughout the supply chain in CT. This program will contribute to that target goal.

Funding for the Dairy Research Grant is provided through Dairy Research and Promotion Program, also known as the Dairy Checkoff. CGS Sec. 22-137d authorizes the CT MPB to award grant funds from Connecticut's Dairy Checkoff funds. All projects should be conducted in accordance with the Dairy Research and Promotion Program, which can be found at: httpst//www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/research-promotion/dairy.

The Dairy Research Grant is a new funding opportunity for 2021.

The CT MPB has up to $500,000 available for programing in FY22. In coordination with this larger funding effort, the Board is anticipating awarding up to $150,000, as partial, or full awards for research projects that demonstrate the benefits of dairy in the diet and dairy farming to the environment. Funding will be allocated by the board at its discretion across its funding priorities and based on submissions received.

Applications shall be focused on research efforts surrounding dairy's contributions to a nutritious diet, environmental sustainability, and climate change mitigation solutions. Qualifying research projects should align with at least one of the following:

- Market research studies to increase the purchase and consumption of dairy as highly nutritious.
- Dairy farming animal care practices and enhancements
- How the dairy industry encourages land preservation.
- Benefits of agricultural practices on the dairy land-base
- Dairy's environmental impact and protection efforts
- Agricultural practices the dairy industry could implement to sequester carbon, manage nutrients, and enhance watershed protection.

Eligible Applicants:

The following entities are eligible to apply for Dairy Research Opportunities:

1. Universities, Community Colleges, Educational Institutions, Agricultural Science Schools
2. Research Organizations
3. Extension Agencies

4. Agricultural and Non-Profit Organizations
    - Please note, organizations do not have to be based in Connecticut to be awarded. However, all projects should be conducted in Connecticut. Exceptions to this will only be considered if there is some compelling reason preventing work in the State and if the research conducted will **directly benefit and impact** Connecticut dairy farmers.
5. <u>Further Information</u>:
    - If awarded a Dairy Research Grant, organizations will comply with State contracting and ethics requirements.
    - To qualify, a Nonprofit, Agricultural Science schools, or Non-University research organization shall provide a copy of the federal IRS exemption letter and have been in existence at least three years, prior to grant award.
    - Organizations not in good standing with the State of Connecticut, organizations that have defaulted on grants or contracts, or organizations that cannot contract with the State will be ineligible for awards.
    - Organizations shall be required to contract with the State upon award and the anticipated goal is to have contracts begin approximately on July 1. Organizations should be prepared in June, if awarded, to help expedite the contracting process. Therefore clear, concise, and direct proposals will be considered more favorably in the evaluation process. Explicit goals, tasks, and focused outcomes for what the grantee shall achieve through their research will help an applicant through the evaluation process. Applications that not well defined will receive lower marks. Reviewers may not understand the terminology used and it is recommended to be succinct, direct, and concise in writing.
    - If selected, Applicants, that have an open agreement and a project in progress with the Department of Agriculture, may be required to provide additional verifications as requested by contract staff.
    - If the contractor is also funded by other agriculture programs, including funding from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture or any national or regional agriculture or dairy partners doing work in Connecticut, that contractor may build off their work, but cannot duplicate it under this funding. Contracts for this grant cannot include items already paid for under a previous contract or used as matching funding contingent on other work to be completed.

Requirements, Expenses, & Payment:

- These are reimbursement grants. Incomplete projects cannot be fully reimbursed.
- Applicants shall provide documentation of expenses, reports as requested, time reporting, and invoices in order to receive the funds awarded.
- Employee salaries and fringe benefits to execute the project are allowable expenses. Consultant or subcontractor expenses directly related to the project are allowable expenses.

- General purpose equipment and equipment rental if it directly supports the project is allowable.
- The eligibility of general-purpose equipment will be reviewed based on the Question of Focus and project usage.

Project Duration & Post Award Requirements

Projects must be **completed by June 30, 2022**. Please plan accordingly to submit your project. If project will need multiple years to complete, please apply in planned phases and describe future potential opportunities and anticipated outgrowths of the work in a brief section in your submitted proposals.

Applicants of awarded projects will be responsible for the following:

1. Signing an agreement with the State of Connecticut
2. Completing the project within the contractual timeframe
3. Submitting a final project report in the required format per the executed contract
4. 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.
5. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract
6. The grant program and any awards are subject to the limitations and guidelines of state funding.
7. Proposal narratives are limited to **five (5) page maximum** to describe the project and how it will meet the objectives of this funding as listed in the program description. A Budget and justification summary will be submitted separately and does not count in the 5-page limit. Applicants may also submit a **one (1) page summary detailing their expertise and credentials** to do the project work. This will not count in the 5-page project proposal.
8. If Awarded, contracts must be returned quickly and carefully follow the timetables provided by the state to ensure the anticipated start date of July 1. Awardees must be prepared to start their projects in accordance with the start date.
9. Simple budgets in a simple table format are sufficient.
10. Questions will be answered solely at the discretion of the grant administrator and may be combined. Questions on the grant can be submitted up until May 14 and will be published as Frequently Asked Questions document, no later than one (1) week prior to submission.

Submission Process:

Only eligible educational institutions, research organizations, extension agencies and agricultural non-profit organizations in good business standing may apply for this funding opportunity.

All Documents and forms shall be in one email submission and if possible, one pdf. Submissions shall include:

- Applicants should visit either the CTDairy.org or portal.ct.gov/DOAG for the link to apply for this funding on May 17, 2021. The link will provide the applicant access to an online form.

It is strongly recommended to upload the application at one time. The department is not responsible for applications that are not saved in the portal and will not consider incomplete or unsubmitted applications for review.

- Applicants should be prepared to upload PDFs of their proposals on the grant submission site. The proposal shall be in a file named for the applicant and the project name. For example, a University of San Diego Dairy Consumption study would be named "UnivSanDiegoDairyStudy." Please be as specific as possible if multiple people apply from the same institution.

Application Requirements:
The Application is composed of the following:

Appendix A: Applicant Information- completion of the applicant information questions
Appendix B: Budget- simple table template outlining costs with a brief budget justification for each line item indicating relevance and need to project.
Appendix C: Grant Narrative- (if awarded, applicants will need to provide a Microsoft word document and pdf of their research proposal. This should be no more than five (5) pages to be reviewed. It will be used to build a scope of work for a grant contract).

Only complete applications that are submitted will be considered.

Evaluation Criteria and Process:
- The Dairy Research Grant is a competitive grant. Only complete applications, as outlined above and are submitted on time, will be evaluated. The proposals will be evaluated by the CT MPB. They will use a simple 1-5 system for scoring, with 5 being the highest score. The evaluation will focus heavily on the project plan described in the proposal submitted and outlined in Appendix C. Creativity, Innovation, the ability to address one of the key issues outlined in the funding opportunity, clear concise well-defined language, and the feasibility of the proposed research project will factor into scoring the proposals. Overall, research proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:
  - Scientific merit: Are the hypotheses and objectives logical and achievable?
  - Did the investigator demonstrate awareness of the published literature and current research related to the proposed project?
  - Did the application address a priority research area as stated above?
  - Did the proposed study will not duplicate existing or ongoing research funded by dairy and non-dairy sources?
  - Did the proposed project address specific research gaps important to the dairy industry? Are related program support, facilities, and equipment adequate?
  - Are the credentials of the principal investigator and research team strong in the proposed research area?
  - Were the proposal application guidelines and format were followed?

As all information can be requested under a Freedom of Information Act request about this process, applicants should remember that the information contained in the proposals should not specifically indicate any proprietary or intellectual property information.

Appendix A: Applicant Information:
The application portal will look approximately like this:

Applicant Information:

Organization name, FEIN#, Address, Location of project, Contact Person: Name, Phone, Email;

Applicant Information			
Applicant Name:		**Division**	
Project Contact:			
Applicant Type:		☐ **Non-profit ☐ Research Org ☐ Univ or Exten ☐ Other**	
Full Mailing Address:			
Phone:		**Website:**	
Email:			
Organization Information			

Project Information	
Which grant priority area will your project address?	
Project Title: *Provide a title describing your project.*	

	Total Project Costs:	
	Grant Funds Requested: *Partial or Full Awards of any amount up to $150,000 will be considered for a single project.*	

Organization Information	
Non-profits/Research Orgs: Have you attached a copy of your federal IRS exemption letter?	**Yes/No**
Can this project be implemented in one year?	**Yes / No**
Are you applying in phases for this project?	**Yes / No**

Do you have an open grant contract with DoAg?	Yes / No

_____

Signature of Applicant   **Title**   **Date**

_____

Signature of Organization Representative   **Title**   **Date**

Typed name serves as signature.

Appendix B: Budget

The information provided below for Appendix B is for informational purposes only.

Budget Item	Justification	Grant Funds Requested	Total Cost

Appendix C: Grant Narrative

Answer the following questions regarding the project for which you are applying. Ensure that you have identified which priority your project addresses. Research proposals should be no longer than five pages in length.

1. **Project Explanation** – Explain in detail your project proposal and how it will address the chosen question of focus. (No more than five pages.) Please be specific to answer---What will the project accomplish and how will it be accomplished?
2. **Project Outcome or Impact** – Identify an outcome you strive to achieve as a result of completing this project. Identify the objectives necessary to meet the outcome(s) and the process in which you will determine if it was met. An _outcome_ is defined as a quantifiable result and usually accomplished after the project is done. _Example:_ as a result of this research, farmers will be able to save 5% more time on haying.
3. **Project Timeline** – Include all project milestones and related deadlines. Applicants must budget in the last 30 days of the project for the completion for all reporting and invoicing. This cannot extend past the contract termination date of June 30, 2022. All project work should be finalized with enough time for the grant administrator to approve the final reports. As a reminder no extensions will be given. No incomplete projects will be funded.

    The following template will need to be used to provide the project timeline:

Task	Anticipated Timeline

4. **Researcher Credentials or Expertise**--Please submit a one (1) page summary of key personnel involved and their relevant credentials. Applicants may also include a few brief comments on the organization and its history. Please be brief, succinct, and clear. Nonprofits or research agencies may choose to provide a brief overview of the history and mission of the non-profit including--How does agriculture fit into your overall mission? How does the project work towards your mission?

5. **Financial History** – Nonprofits and Research Organizations should submit their last current Form 990 filed with the IRS.
   a. The State reserves the right to request an applicant provide a three-year profit and loss statement with the current year to date profit and loss statement, if deemed necessary.
   b. Universities and extension agencies will not be required to submit institutional financials.

6. **Project Summary and Conclusions** – Summarize the key points of this project. Explain why the project should be supported and how the goals/outcomes respond to issues identified in the funding opportunity and create solutions to address an industry need? Please also identify if there are follow up areas and projects or additional phases of this research that could be considered for funding.

IMPORTANT DATES:

May 14   **All Questions Due * (by email to Lindsay.Raymond@ct.gov)**

May 17   **Submissions open on CT DoAG website***

(Portal will be open with a link on ctdairy.org and portal.ct.gov/DOAG. If you have problems during submission, instructions will be on website for assistance.)

May 21   **All Applications Due**