

Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Viability Grant Program

Farm Transition Grant

For Connecticut Farmers and Agricultural Cooperatives

Grant Application Guidelines and Forms

**Application Deadline:
February 14, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.**



Ned Lamont, Governor

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 703
Hartford, CT 06103
860-713-2503 • CTGrown.gov

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Applications must be received via email by:
February 14, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

Applications must be submitted by email to Jaime Smith,
Jaime.Smith@ct.gov, between February 7, 2019 and February 14, 2019.

Applications will not be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on February 14, 2019.

Questions can be directed to:
Jaime Smith at Jaime.Smith@ct.gov
860-713-2503

Grant guidelines and forms can also be found online at
www.CTGrown.gov/Grants

A workshop on how to write the FTG project plan and develop a competitive application will be held. RSVPs including your name, email, and phone number are required 24 hours prior to the meeting date. At least five people are required to host a workshop.

RSVP to Jaime Smith, Jaime.Smith@ct.gov or 860-713-2559

Thursday, January 31, 1:30-3:30

(Snow Date: Friday, February 1, 1:30-3:30)

CT Farm Bureau Association
78 Beaver Road, Wethersfield

Saturday, February 2, 10:15 – 11 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. – 12 p.m.

At the 3rd Annual Agricultural Re\$ource Fair
4-H Education Center at Auerfarm
158 Auer Farm Rd, Bloomfield, CT

RSVP and more info: <https://newfarms.uconn.edu/solidground/3rd-annual-agricultural-reource-fair/>

Registered attendees will be notified if the meeting is cancelled for any reason no later than 9:00 a.m. the day of the meeting.

Grant Description

The Farm Transition Grant (FTG) provides matching funds to Connecticut farmers and agricultural cooperatives for the diversification of existing farm operations, transitioning to value-added agricultural production and sales, and developing farmers' markets and other venues in which a majority of products sold are grown in the state.

Funding for the Farm Transition Grant is provided through Public Act 05-228, An Act Concerning Farmland Preservation, Land Protection, Affordable Housing, and Historic Preservation.

The Farm Transition Grant Program and any awards are subject to limitations of state funding.

Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply for the Farm Transition Grant:

1. Agricultural producers, singularly or jointly, whether such producers are owners or tenants of existing agricultural production facilities located within the State of Connecticut. Tenants must include a written agreement between all necessary parties regarding the submitted project.
2. Agricultural cooperatives.

To qualify for the Farm Transition Grant the applicant must be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State (if established as a limited liability corporation or incorporated), possess a Farmer's Tax Exemption Permit, and have submitted a Schedule F, Form 1120S, Form 1065, or Schedule C for the previous three years.

Prior grantees may apply for a Farm Transition Grant. Past awards and corresponding project completion will be taken into consideration when evaluating applications.

Award Limits and Matching Requirements

The amount awarded to any applicant through the Farm Transition Grant will not exceed \$49,999.

Matching funds from the applicant must be *a minimum* of 50% of the total project budget. The match must be clearly outlined in the application and can only be cash contributions; in-kind matches are not allowed.

The cash match can be self-financed, provided by bank financing, or funded through another grant (federal, state, or otherwise). If a grant is providing the match, the applicant must disclose the grantor, the grant name, and amount awarded. The Farm Transition Grant must be paid directly to the applicant.

Please note: This is a reimbursement grant. Funds shall be reimbursed to the applicant only after the entire project is successfully completed and all necessary documentation is submitted. There are no cash advances.

Project Duration

Projects must be completed within one year of contract execution.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture's grant coordinator or any other agent of the Commissioner of Agriculture may make periodic visits to the project site during the contract duration.

Funding Priorities

Below are funding priorities of the Farm Transition Grant as they directly relate and respond to expanding and diversifying agriculture as defined by Connecticut General Statutes 1-1(q):

- On-farm improvements to comply with the Produce Safety Rule of the Food Safety Modernization Act
- Meeting food safety requirements for advanced positioning in the marketplace.
- Strengthening infrastructure to meet changing climate conditions.
- Projects that increase year-round availability of Connecticut Grown products while enhancing farm viability.
- Diversification of existing farm operations into new and emerging crops and/or product lines.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

All eligible expenses funded by the Farm Transition Grant must advance farming and agriculture as defined by [Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-1\(q\)](#).

The following expenses are not funded by the Farm Transition Grant. They may however be considered an acceptable match if they directly and meaningfully support the proposed project:

- Employee salaries and fringe benefits paid to execute the project
- Permits
- Attorneys' fees, consultants' fees
- Consumable or disposable supplies

The following expenses cannot be used as a match and will not be funded by the grant:

- Any expense incurred prior to contract execution
- Land acquisition/mortgages
- Cost of borrowing (points and other fees)
- Expenses to fund the start-up of a new organization
- Any portion of expense for which the applicant pays a contractor in merchandise or service in lieu of cash
- Tuition/tuition reimbursement or career-related/scholarship funds

- Routine business expenses or disposable supplies unrelated to the project
- **NEW:** Indirect costs of any percentage.

Submission Process

Applications **are only accepted as Microsoft (MS) Word documents, with editable text**, submitted via email to Jaime Smith, Jaime.Smith@ct.gov, between February 7, 2019 and 4:00 p.m. on February 14, 2019.

Please keep in mind there is occasionally a delay with email and plan accordingly.

A confirmation email will be sent upon receipt. If you do not receive a confirmation with 24 hours of submission please first check the spelling of the email address, Jaime.Smith@ct.gov, then contact the agency.

Application Requirements

A complete application includes:

1. Application Cover Page (Appendix A), submitted as a MS Word document with editable text
2. Budget Form (Appendix B), submitted as a MS Word document with editable text, itemized for each category
3. A project plan (Appendix C), submitted as a MS Word document with editable text
4. Conceptual drawings, estimates/quotes, production information, etc. These can be submitted as .pdf documents

Word documents of the appendices mentioned above can be obtained at, www.CTGrown.gov/Grants.

Evaluation Criteria and Process

The Farm Transition Grant is a competitive grant. Only complete applications, submitted on time, will be evaluated. The evaluation will be weighted heavily on the project plan. See Appendix C, Required Format for Project Plan for more information.

The format of Appendix C and all elements noted in Appendix C must be included.

Other information, such as quotes, conceptual drawings, and other documentation justifying and supporting the budget and project, is strongly encouraged.

Award Requirements

Applicants of awarded projects will be responsible for the following:

1. A signed contract with the State of Connecticut
2. Insurance holding the state harmless or listing the state as an additional insured on the grantee's liability insurance policy
3. Agreeing to a site inspection once the project is complete and prior to final payment being released
4. Completing the project within the contractual timeframe
5. Submitting a final project report in the required format
6. 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
7. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract

Grantees will have additional training on requirements once contracts are executed.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture reserves the right to fund a project in part, add and delete expenses, and/or ask for clarification on any portion of the application. No contract will be executed until the Connecticut Department of Agriculture is satisfied with all project specifications.

Any grant award is dependent upon the availability of funds.

Editable Microsoft Word versions of the required appendices can be obtained at www.CTGrown.gov/Grants.

Applications must be submitted via email in Microsoft Word format with editable text no later than **4:00 p.m. on February 14, 2019.**

A confirmation email will be sent once the application is received.
If you do not receive a confirmation with 24 hours of submission, please first check the spelling of the email address, Jaime.Smith@ct.gov, then contact the agency.

Appendix A: Application Cover Page 2019 Farm Transition Grant

Applicant Information			
Applicant/Farm Name:			
Contact:			
Full Mailing Address:			
Phone:		Website:	
Email:			
Do you meet the USDA's criteria for the following categories	Beginning Farmer <i>(farming for fewer than 10 years)</i> Yes/No Veteran Farmer Yes/No If yes, branch and dates of services: _____ Socially Disadvantaged Farmer <i>(American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asians, African Americans, Native Hawaiians/other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics)</i> Yes/No		
Project Information			
Project Title: <i>Provide a title describing your project.</i>			
		Total Project Costs:	
		Cash Expenses Covered by Applicant: <i>At least 50% of expenses must be covered by applicant</i>	
		Farm Transition Grant Funds Requested: <i>Not to exceed \$49,999</i>	
Farm Information			
Owner(s) of Record <i>(if different from Project Contact)</i>			
Property Address <i>(where project will take place if different from mailing address)</i>			
Phone of Owner(s): <i>(if different from Project Contact)</i>		Email of Owner(s): <i>(if different from Project Contact)</i>	
Acres in production agriculture			Do you farm: Full Time / Part Time
Describe in detail the production agriculture carried out on the farm. Give acreage and quantities of the crops grown, the number and kinds of livestock, forest products, value added products, greenhouses, etc.			
Is any of the land in production or land associated with this project in the Farmland Preservation Program or under any other conservation restrictions?			Yes / No

If yes to above, please state under what program/what the restrictions are:			
Have you submitted an Application to Construct if land is protected through a conservation easement?	Yes / No		
Have you received other Connecticut Department of Agriculture Grants in the last five years?	Yes / No	If yes state the grant program, year received, and amount for each award.	
Have you developed a written business plan?	Yes / No	If yes state the year the business plan was last updated.	
Do you currently have an open grant contract with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture?			Yes / No

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

Signature of Owner of Record **Title** **Date**

Typed name serves as signature.

Appendix B: Budget Application Form 2019 Farm Transition Grant

BUDGET DEFINITIONS

Equipment. Itemize equipment to be purchased and its intended use.

Rental of equipment. Rented equipment that is required to complete the project (cement mixers, rollers, other heavy duty equipment) is allowed and must be described.

****NOTE:** 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.

Materials and Supplies. Provide an itemized list of projected material and supply expenditures.

****NOTE:** 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 entry in the *Consultant/Contractual* category.

Contractual/Consultant. These are expenses associated with procuring services performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant. Each contractor/consultant (if more than one) must be described separately. Provide a short description of contractual services.

Other Costs. Provide itemized, detailed descriptions of other costs not included in the previous categories.

Additional page(s) itemizing the budget are required.

Additional documentation supporting your expenses will increase the competitiveness of your submission and are the only items which can be provided as PDF documents.

Applicant Name: _____

Category	Grant Funds Requested	Cash Match by Applicant	Total Cost
Salaries	N/A		
Fringe	N/A		
Equipment			
Rental of Equipment			
Materials and Supplies			
Contractual/Consultant			
Other Costs			
Project Total			

Appendix C: Required Format for Project Plan 2019 Farm Transition Grant

Use the following section headings when writing the project plan. Be thorough in each section addressing all questions/statements below.

1. **Cover Sheet** – Name of business and contact information.

2. **Introduction** – Use this as an opportunity to introduce your business to the reviewers. Include information such as:
 - a. How long have you been in business?
 - b. What do you produce and how many acres are in production? How/why has that changed over the years?
 - c. What are your future project and business plans?

3. **Project Explanation** – Explain in detail what your project is and what it's going to accomplish.

Explain how the project will improve your agribusiness. Explain business operations before and after project is complete.

4. **Funding Requirements and Proposals** – Summarize the budget. Include information such as:
 - a. Where the match is coming from (cash, loan, other grant, etc.)
 - b. Sufficient explanation and justification of the financial support requested

5. **Project Timeline** – Include all project milestones and related deadlines. Include information such as:
- When you need to begin the project
 - When necessary activities/tasks to complete the project will occur
 - When the project will be completed

Below is an example of how to present this information:

Task	Task Completion Date	Person Responsible for Completing Task
Notified of grant award	_____ days from final contract signing	DoAg
Contractors hired	_____ week(s) from final contract signing	Farm Owner
Retail store construction completed	_____ month(s) from final contract signing	Contractor
Electrical work completed		Electrician
Retail display items purchased		Farm Owner
Plumbing completed	_____ days from final contract signing	Plumber
Retail display items installed	_____ week(s) from final contract signing	Farm Owner
Etc.	_____ month(s) from final contract signing	
Stand open for retail business	No later than (<i>Month, Day, Year</i>)	Farm Owner

6. **Target Markets** – What expanded, additional, or new market(s) will your project allow you to serve or reach? Include information such as:
- The number or volume of people, markets, products, etc.
 - How will you change your marketing?
7. **Business Goals and Objectives** – Identify three to five goals for the next five and 10 years? How does the proposed project contribute to those goals?

What objectives will be accomplished to reach each goal?

Goal vs. Objective

A *goal* is defined as a broad-based result.

Example: A new farm store will be open for business by June 2018.

An *objective* is defined as a step taken towards achieving a goal. There are often multiple objectives that must be completed in order to measure progress and reach the goal/outcome.

Example: Objectives to meet the goal of opening a farm store by June 2018:

- Hire an architect to design the building
- Go out to bid and select a contractor to build the building
- Bring in stone and level for parking area
- Hire an electrician to install electrical

5. Purchase and identify delivery date(s) for display cases and shelving
6. Move produce and other materials from current sales location to new retail store
7. Promote the opening of the new store
8. Open store in June 2018

Hiring a contractor is an objective, not a goal. Goals are broad-based results of objectives.

8. **Outcome** – Identify an outcome you strive to achieve as a result of completing this project.

An *outcome* is defined as a quantifiable result.

Example: There will be a 7% increase in sales in 2018 as a result of the new retail farm store.

9. **Financial History** – Provide copies of IRS Schedule F, Schedule C, or Form 1120S for the last three years starting with the most recently filed.
10. **Project Summary and Conclusions** – Summarize the project, explaining why the project will succeed and how it relates to your business goals for the next five to ten years. How does the project help to sustain and promote Connecticut agriculture? What are the long-term benefits to the applicant and target markets as a result of this project?

Appendix D: Project Ideas and Checklist for Projects Related to the Produce Safety Rule

Before submitting a project which addresses areas for compliance with the Produce Safety Rule, a portion of the Food Safety Modernization Act, please consider the following information.

The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is the most sweeping reform of United States food safety laws in more than 70 years. It was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama on January 4, 2011. It aims to ensure a safe U.S. food supply by shifting the focus from a reactive to a preventative approach.

FSMA is comprised of several different rules. The rules most likely to impact Connecticut farms are:

- Produce Safety Rule (PSR), the first of its kind regarding the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of fruit and vegetables for human consumption
- Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule
- Preventive Controls for Animal Food Rule
- Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food Rule

Below are some aspects of the PSR Connecticut farms may now be subject to comply with. Projects submitted which address these areas and improve the farm operation are considered eligible projects under the Farm Transition Grant.

Projects submitted which address areas of FSMA are not guaranteed an award.

FSMA and PSR References

- FDA website for FSMA:
<https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/default.htm>
- Are You Covered? FSMA-PSR Coverage Flowchart:
<https://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/UCM472499.pdf>
- UConn Extension Food Safety Website and FSMA Training Manual:
<http://www.foodsafety.uconn.edu/>
- Questions regarding accredited training should be directed to UConn Extension (contact information in link above)

- Assistance with writing a Farm Transition Grant for projects related to the PSR can be directed to Joan Nichols at Connecticut Farm Bureau, JoanN@cfba.org
- Questions regarding the Farm Transition Grant can be directed to Jaime Smith, Jaime.Smith@ct.gov or Mark Hood, Mark.Hood@ct.gov or by phone at 860-713-2503

Examples of Eligible Projects to Address FSMA and PSR Compliance

Worker Health and Hygiene

- Hand washing
- Sanitation units
- Training materials - Courses and/or purchased training materials

Soil Amendments

- Dedicated equipment to minimize risks of cross contamination
- Composting facilities
- Tools/equipment needed to verify treatment practices

Wildlife, Domestic Animals and Land Use

- Items that will reduce wildlife, domestic animals, and the public from entering areas of covered activities
Examples: Fencing, signage, deterrents

Handling & Sanitation - Post-Harvest

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrooms/sanitation facilities, hand wash stations • Sanitary packing house equipment – cleanable, stainless steel, protection of packing line • Remodeling of packing houses, storage spaces – enclose, impervious surfaces for cleaning, washable walls, ceilings, covered lights, self-closing doors, etc • Plastic/washable harvest containers/bins • Storage packing containers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected lights • Rodent deterrent devices/traps • Upgrades to cooling devices • New roof(s) • Sanitary dump tanks • Signage • Covered/protected staging area • Traceability/label machine • See also: <i>Ag. Water – Post Harvest</i> |
|---|---|

Ag. Water - Pre-harvest

- Enhancements to further protect surface water from containment
- Equipment used for irrigation/fertigation that leads to a reduced risk of microbial contamination

Examples:

- Well
- Drip irrigation
- Water tanks
- Backflow valves
- Filters
- Chemical injectors
- Pipes/lines
- Fixtures
- Sampling equipment
- UV light, ozonator units
- Record keeping tools

Ag. Water – Post Harvest

Examples:

- Well
- Water tanks
- Backflow valves
- Filters
- Chemical injector systems
- Pipes/lines
- Fixtures
- Sampling equipment
- UV light
- Record keeping tools
- Sanitizer/chemical meter
- pH meter, ORP sensor
- Temperature recording device
- Water temperature maintenance equipment
- Water disposal system

Please be aware that this is not an exhaustive list of eligible projects. Applicants should refer to accredited training materials for a complete list.

Checklist for FSMA Related Projects

Does the Project Plan include the following information?

- ☐ Is the farm required to comply with the PSR? *(This information should be included in the Introduction section of the Project Plan)*
 - a. If Yes:
 - ☐ What covered produce is being grown?
 - ☐ What are the average yearly food sales? This includes all human food and animal feed sold from the business.
 - ☐ What are the average yearly produce sales?
 - ☐ What percentage of food sales are sold to a qualified end user?
 - b. If No:
 - ☐ Are there other areas of FSMA the farm is required to comply with? Example: Preventative Controls (PC) for Animal Feed, Human Food, or Sanitary Transportation?
- ☐ Someone from the farm should have attended one of the following accredited training courses below. Have you provided the date of the training and trainer name? *(Acknowledgment of training and information should be included in the Introduction section of the Project Plan)*
 - a. Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Course
 - b. PC for Human Food
 - c. PC for Animal Feed
 - d. Other
- ☐ Have you attached a copy of the certificate from the accredited training course? *(This can be a .pdf/.jpg attachment to the application)*
- ☐ Have you described the specific areas of the PSR the farm is addressing through completion of this project? *(This information should be included in the Project Explanation of the Project Plan)*
- ☐ Have you explained to the reviewers that you have an understanding about the processes required to comply with the PSR and FSMA expectations? *(This should be included in the Project Explanation section of the Project Plan)*
- ☐ Have you explained the what, why, and how of the proposed project which enables the farm to comply with areas of FSMA. *(This information should be included throughout the Project Plan and reiterated in the Project Summary and Conclusions)*

Application Submission Checklist

ALL of the following must be included for an application to be complete and eligible for review. Any application submitted with missing components will be considered incomplete.

- ☐ Application Cover Page, Appendix A, completed in its entirety without any blanks and with an electronic signature. Submitted as a MS Word document with editable text.
- ☐ A Budget Form, Appendix B, with itemized information. Submitted as a MS Word document with editable text.
- ☐ A project plan that reflects each of the sections noted in Appendix C (and D if applicable.) Submitted as a MS Word document with editable text.

**The application must be received by email between
February 7, 2019 and 4:00 p.m. on February 14, 2019.**

Applications must be sent to Jaime Smith at Jaime.Smith@ct.gov.

A confirmation email will be sent once the application is received.

If you do not receive a confirmation with 24 hours of submission, please first check the spelling of the email address, Jaime.Smith@ct.gov, then contact the agency.

This checklist does not need to be submitted with your application. It is for your reference only.