2022 Farmland Restoration Grant Writing Workshop



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Please introduce yourselves in the comments.

Feel free to include:

- Your Name
- Your Farm or Agricultural Cooperative Name
- The type of restoration work you are planning for your farm.

Today's Agenda

- Welcome
- Overview of the 2022 Farmland Restoration Grant
 - Grant Description
 - Eligible Applicants
 - Match Requirement, Expenses, & Payment
 - Project Duration & Post Award Requirements
 - Submission Process
 - Required attachments
 - Evaluation Criteria and Process
- Important Dates
- How to Apply
- Questions?

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. FLRG focuses on restoring and improving land with prime and important farmland soils, in accordance with a Farmland Restoration Grant Plan (FLRG Plan).
- The FLRG program and any awards are subject to limitations of state funding.
- Funding for the Farmland Restoration Grant is made possible by Public Act 11-1, codified in Chapter 422 of the Connecticut General Statutes. 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.

Eligible Applicants

- Agricultural producers, singularly or jointly, whether such producers are owners or tenants of existing agribusiness within the State of Connecticut with at least one year of production experience.
- Not for profits with a property being used for agricultural production.
- Municipalities and state agencies with farmland in use by a farmer with a lease no less than five years in duration, and a fiveyear option to renew in place.

Eligible Applicants (cont.)

Producers must be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State if established as a limited liability company or corporation and 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, all 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. To be considered eligible for this grant, non-profits must have three years of consecutive 990 forms on file with the IRS (from 2017-2020).

Eligible Applicants (cont.)

- Prior grantees may apply for a Farmland Restoration Grant.
- Open awards, past awards, project completion and outcomes of current awards will be considered in the evaluation of this award application.
- Applicants who have received two years of consecutive funding will be ineligible for an award for one year. Applicants can reapply for funding in the next grant cycle.

Farmland Restoration Grant Categories

- Two different grant categories are available.
 - Agricultural producers (individuals, companies and corporations) and Not For Profits
 - Municipalities or state agencies
- Applicants may select <u>one</u> category for which they think their project qualifies.
- DOAG reserves the right to alter the grant category selected by the applicant.

Agricultural Producers and Not For Profits Farmland Restoration Grant

- Agricultural producers must be the owner of an existing agribusiness with the State of Connecticut with at lease one year of production experience.
- Not for profits must have property that is being used for agricultural production.
- FLRG Grant:
 - Maximum award: \$20,000
 - Match requirement: 50% of project costs
- Past projects have included land clearing, stone & stump removal, drainage, irrigation wells and irrigation lines.

Municipalities or State Agencies

- Municipalities and state agencies with farmland in use by a farmer with a lease no less than five years in duration and a five-year option to renew in place.
 - Maximum award: \$20,000
 - Match requirement: 90% of project costs
- Past projects have included land clearing, farm roads and drainage.

Match Requirement, Expenses and Payment

- Projects on Publicly Owned Land: These are lands owned by a municipality or that are state-owned land – there is a 90/10 Match. 90% of project expenses may be grant funded, 10% of project expenses should be covered by the applicant as the match.
- Projects on Privately Owned Land: These reference land that is owned privately by a farmer or not for profit – there is a 50/50 Match. 50% of project expenses can be grant funded, 50% of project expenses are covered by the applicant as the match.
- The FLRG must be paid directly to the individual or business the agreement is made with.

Match Requirement, Expenses and Payment (continued)

- The following expenses <u>may not</u> 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 barters/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 (cars, trucks, boats, tractors, chainsaws, etc.)
 - Lobbying

Match Requirement, Expenses and Payment (continued)

- The following expenses are an acceptable match if they 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)

Match Requirement, Expenses and Payment (continued)

- The FLRG is a reimbursement grant. Incomplete projects cannot be fully reimbursed.
- Once awards are made no additional funds will be awarded, even if a project's expenses increase. Conversely, if project expenses are less than originally projected, for example the project only costs \$8,000 instead of \$10,000, a prorated amount will be paid for completed work.

Project Duration

 Projects must be completed within <u>18 months</u> of contract execution. Contract and project extensions are not allowed.

 Project <u>cannot start</u> prior to the Contract start date even if executed before the Contract start date.

Application Requirements

- A complete application includes:
- 1. Grant Narrative (please see page 13 of the 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.*
- 4. Soil(s) map of project area. *These can be obtained from NRCS or online at the*Web Soil Survey
- 5. Assessor tax card and tax map for the property. These can be obtained from the municipal tax assessor's office or possibly online.
- 6. Map identifying the common land units for the property. This map may include field locations and names, crops grown, and acres per field. These can be obtained from a local USDA Service Center. These must be scanned as pdf files for the application process.

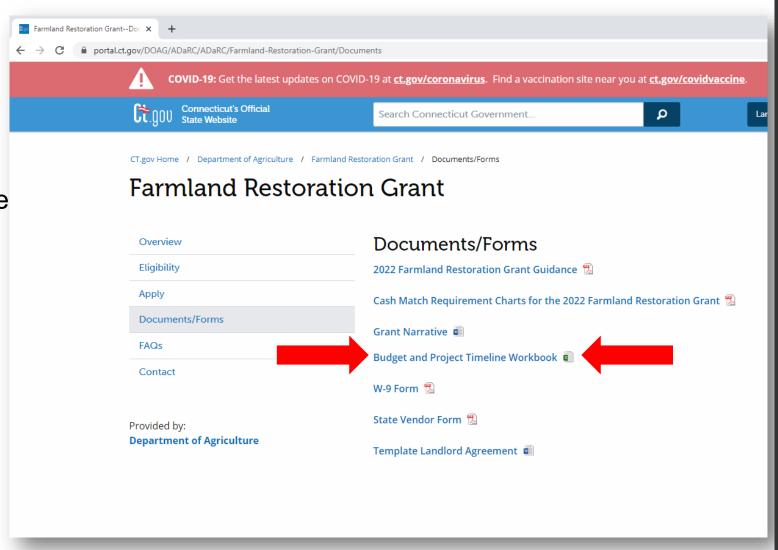
All required forms/documents can be found here: 2022 Farmland Restoration Grant (FTG)--Documents (ct.gov)

Application Requirements - continued

- 7. Pictures of the project area as it currently exists, prior to the project being completed.
- 8. Profit and Loss statements for up to the previous three years.
- 9. Valid Farmer's Tax Exemption Permit or application to obtain a Farmer's Tax Exemption Permit.
- 10. 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.
- 11. If applicable a copy of an executed lease and a statement from the owner 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.
- 12. If applicable an approved copy of an NRCS Conservation Plan or Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan.

Budget and Project Timeline Workbook

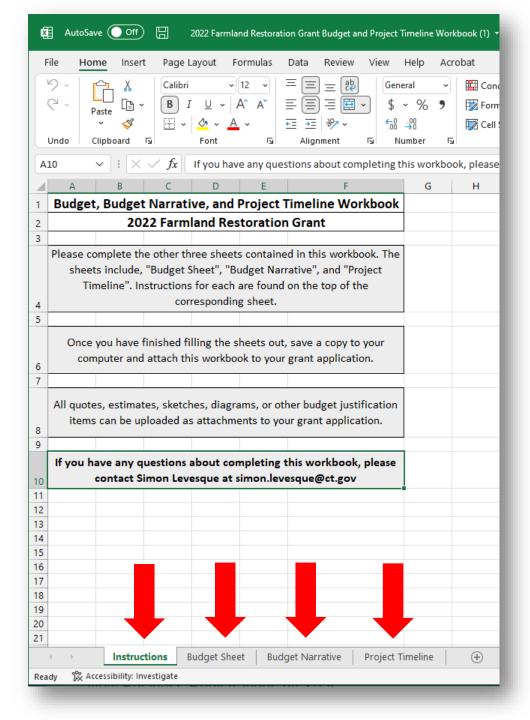
- Visit: <u>2022 Farmland</u>
 <u>Restoration Grant Program</u>
 (ct.gov)
- Download a blank copy of the form and save to your computer.



Budget and Project Timeline Workbook

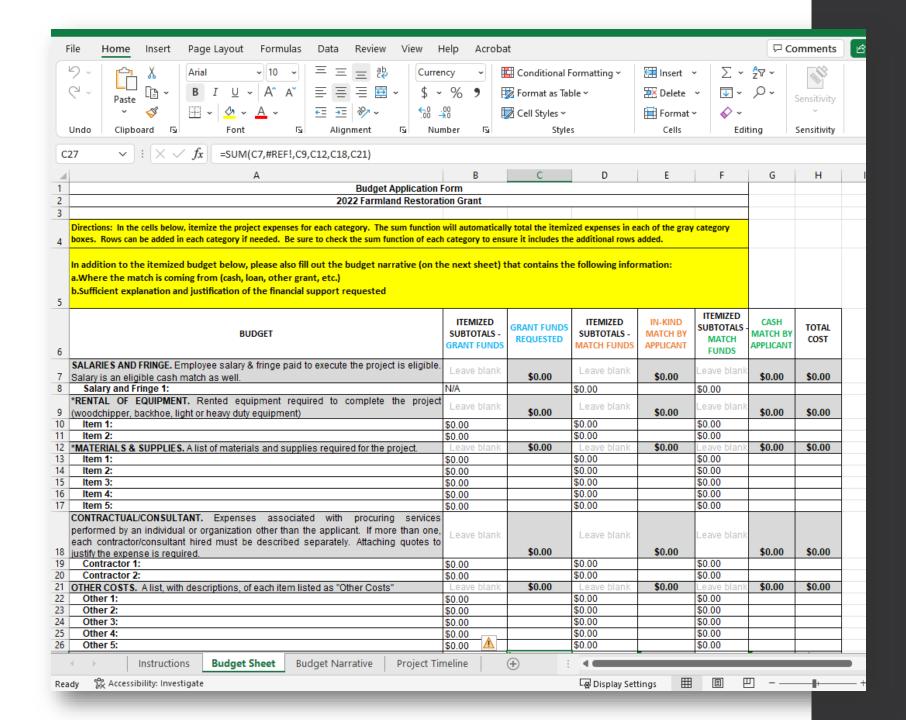
There are three sheets included in this workbook:

- 1. Instructions *you do not need to fill anything out on this sheet.*
- 2. Budget Sheet
- 3. Budget Narrative
- 4. Project Timeline



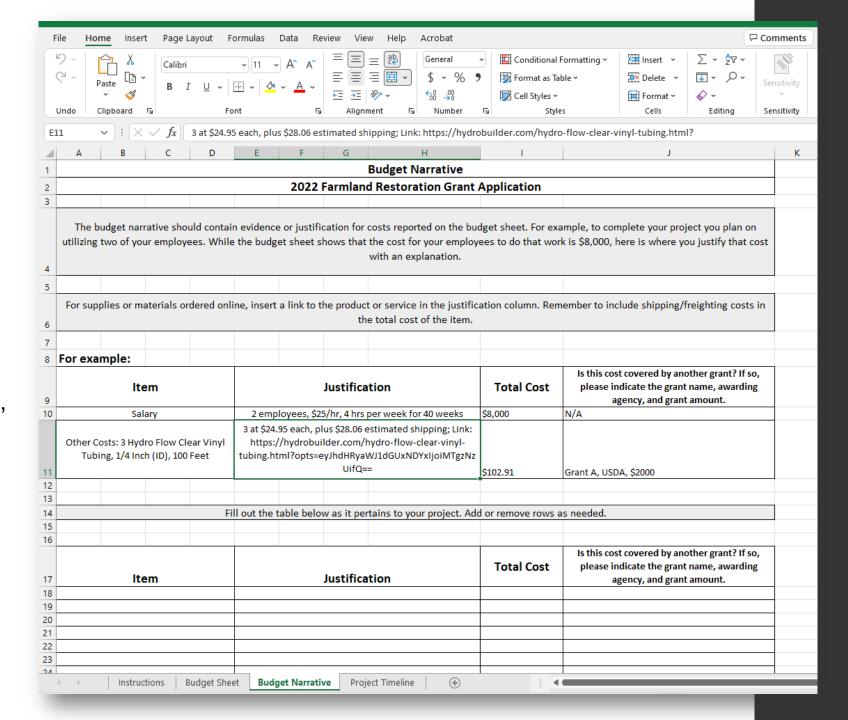
Budget Sheet

- Your budget must contain the following itemized categories.
- Projects involving hiring a subcontractor should include quotes from that subcontractor.
- In-kind expenses must include breakdowns of hours worked, rates per hour and work performed.



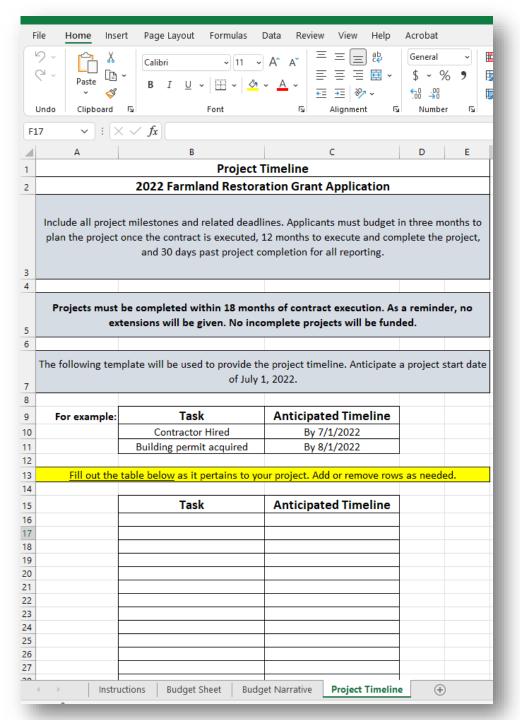
Budget Narrative

- 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.



Project Timeline

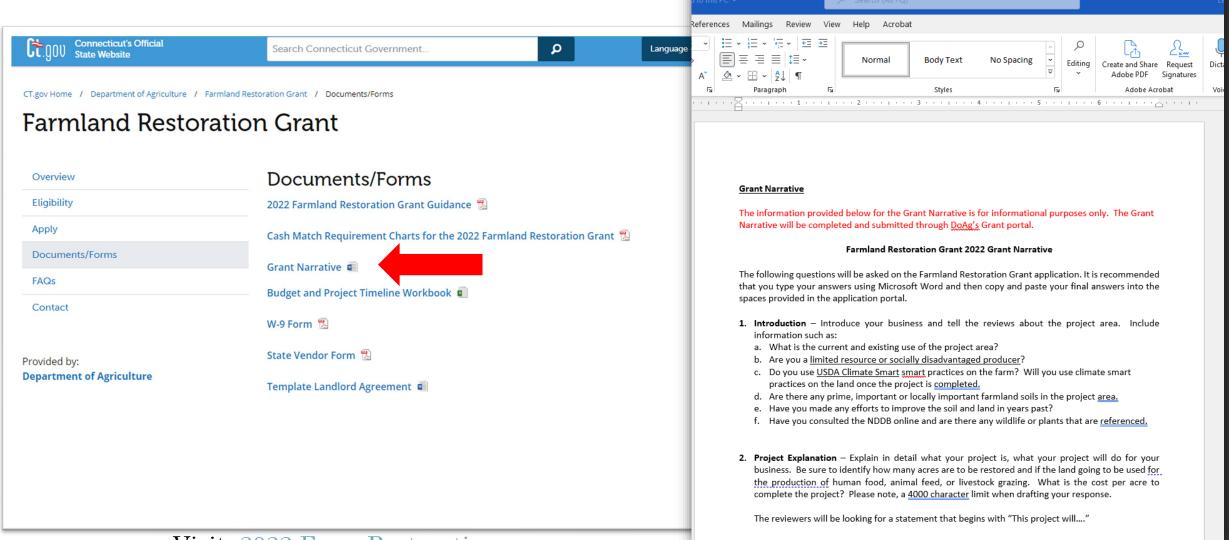
- Include all project milestones and related deadlines.
- Projects must be completed within 18 months of contract execution.
- Anticipate a project start date of July 1, 2022



Grant Narrative

- **There are two versions of the Grant Narrative Questions**
 - One for privately owned land
 - One for municipally owned or state owned land
- These questions will be asked within the grant application itself. We recommend downloading the questions to your computer and typing your answers on Word or other word processing application.
- Then, when you fill out your application, simply Copy and Paste your answers into the corresponding spaces.

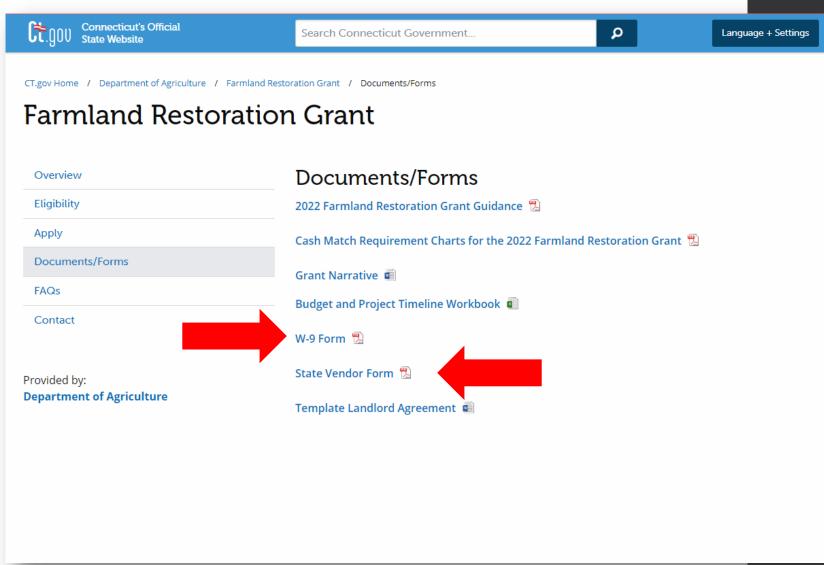
Agricultural Producers and Not For Profits Grant Narrative



Visit: <u>2022 Farm Restoration</u> Grant (FRLG)--Documents

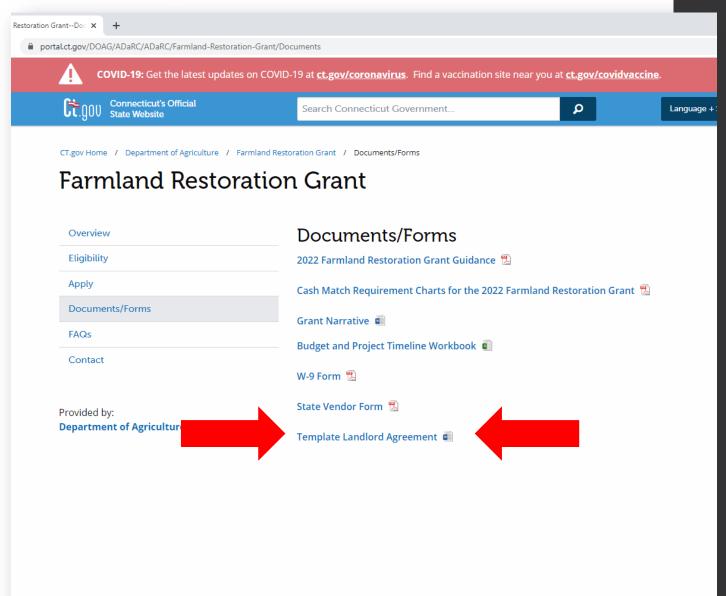
Other Important Forms: W-9 and State Vendor Form

- The DOAG Grants portal will prompt you to fill out and save a copy of your W-9 Form and State Vendor Form.
- Copies of these forms
 MUST be attached to your
 grant application.



Other Important Forms: Template Landlord Agreement

- If your project will be taking place on land that is leased or rented, you will need to attach a Landlord Agreement to your application.
- A template agreement can be found in the Documents/Forms section of the DOAG FLRG website.



Evaluation Criteria and Process

- The FLRG is a competitive grant.
- Only complete applications, as outlined on the website here:
 2022 Farmland Restoration Grant (FLRG)--Apply (ct.gov),
 submitted on time, will be evaluated.
- The evaluation will be weighted heavily on the project plan described in the Grant Narrative.

Evaluation Criteria and Process (continued)

- The Grant Narrative should fully answer the questions clearly and directly.
- Project applications should clearly present how the project will be accomplished within 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.

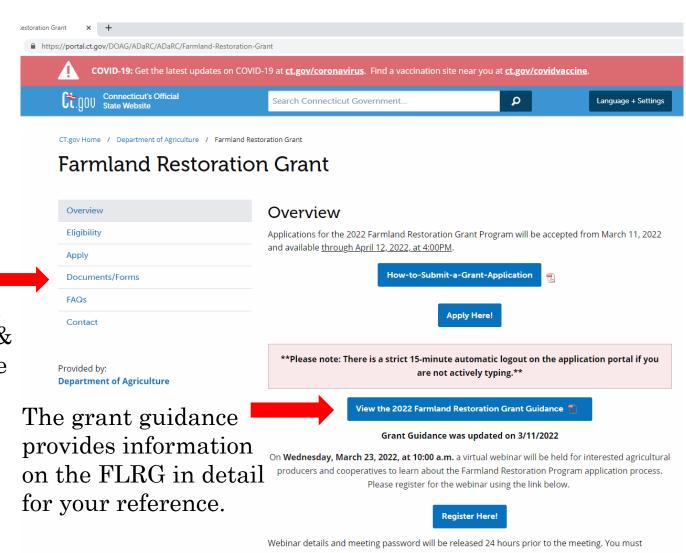
Important Dates

- Application Period:
 - Friday, March 11, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
- Application Deadline:
 - •Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
- Project Start Date (anticipated):
 - July 1, 2022

Where can I find more information on the 2022 Farmland Restoration Grant?

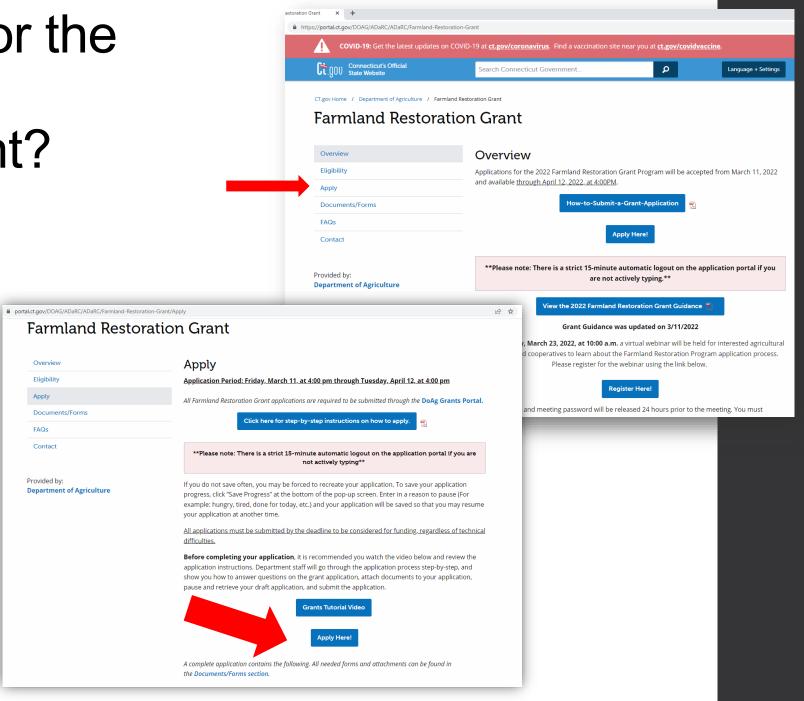
- Check out the FLRG page on DOAG's website for all information on the Farmland Restoration Grant.
 - The page is found here:
 2022 Farmland Restoration
 Grant (ct.gov)

All required documents & forms can be found here.



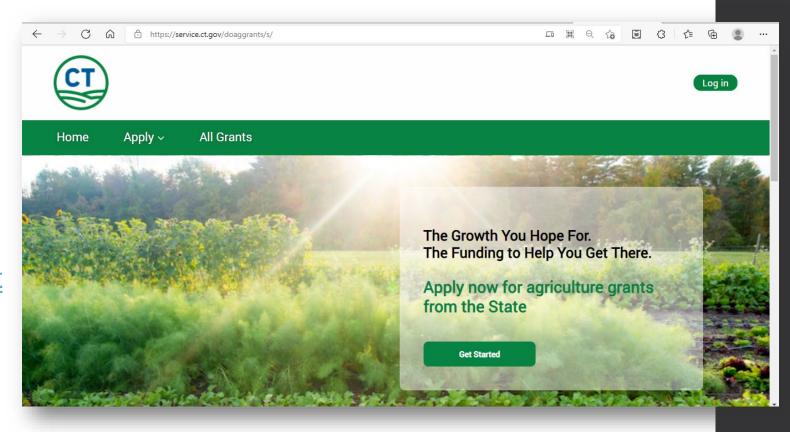
How do I apply for the 2022 Farmland Restoration Grant?

- Visit DOAG's FLRG page here:
 2022 Farmland Restoration
 Grant (ct.gov)
- From the menu on the left, choose "Apply"
- Once on the Apply page, click the blue button that says "Apply Here!"
- This will bring you to the DOAG Grants Portal.



Submission Process

- NEW FOR 2022: All Farmland Restoration Grant applications are required to be submitted through the DOAG grant portal.
- <u>All</u> grant funding opportunities can be found here: https://service.ct.gov/doaggrants/s/s/
- Step-by-step instructions on creating an account, and applying for grants can be found here: <u>Application-</u> <u>Instructions.pdf</u>

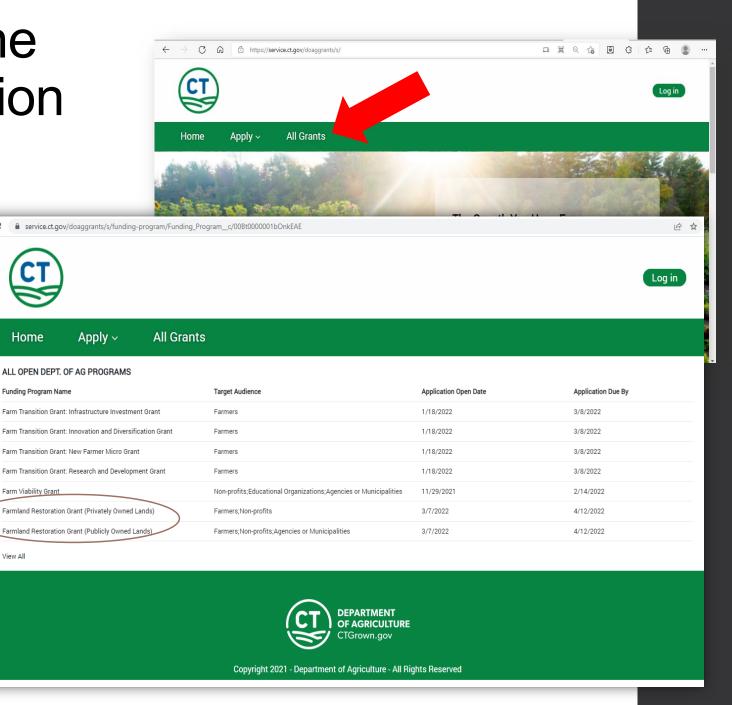


How do I apply for the 2022 Farm Restoration Grant?

Home

Funding Program Name

- Once on DOAG's Grant Portal, click on "All Grants" and choose the category of the FLRG you are applying for.
- Private landowner?
 - Click Farmland Restoration **Grant (Privately Owned Lands)**
- Leasing from a municipality?
 - Choose Farmland Restoration **Grant (Publicly Owned Lands)**

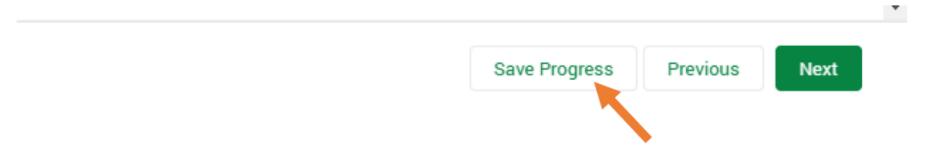


Please Note

- There is a strict 15-minute automatic logout on the online application portal if you are not actively typing.
- Save your application often by clicking "Save Progress" at the bottom of the pop-up screen.
- Do not leave an unfinished application on your computer without saving and entering a "Pause reason"
- If you do not save often, you maybe forced to recreate your application.
- All applications must be submitted by the deadline in order to be considered for funding regardless of technical difficulties.
- We recommend answering the Grant Narrative questions in the Word document, and then copying and pasting your answers into the space provided on the grant portal.

How to save your application progress.

Step 8: Save your application and learn to return to it. We suggest you save as this point to confirm your application has been created before continuing. To do so, click on Save Progress at the very bottom of the screen.



The system will prompt you to put in a reason why you are pausing. You can enter anything in here.

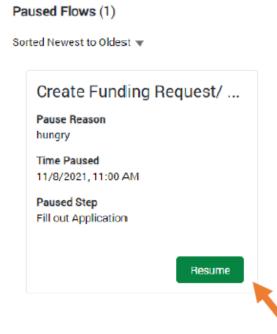
Pause Reason	
hungry	

How to resume your application:

To return to your saved application, click on My Grants in the top green menu bar.

Home Apply - All Grants My Grants

Once you are in My Grants, you will see your application listed as below. Click on Resume.



Want Step-by-Step Instructions on how to apply for a grant through the DOAG Grant

Portal?

- Go to the Apply section of the FLRG website found here:
 2022 Farmland Restoration Grant (FLRG)--Apply (ct.gov)
- Click on "Click here for stepby-step instructions on how to apply"

Farmland Restoration Grant--App × + portal.ct.gov/DOAG/ADaRC/ADaRC/Farmland-Restoration-Grant/Apply CT.gov Home / Department of Agriculture / Farmland Restoration Grant / Apply Farmland Restoration Grant Overview Apply Eligibility Application Period: Friday, March 11, at 4:00 pm through Tuesday, April Apply All Farmland Restoration Grant applications are required to be submi igh the DoAg Grants Portal. Click here for step-by-step instructions on how to apply. Documents/Forms FAQs **Please note: There is a strict 15-minute automatic logout on the application portal if you are not actively typing** Contact If you do not save often, you may be forced to recreate your application. To save your application progress, click "Save Progress" at the bottom of the pop-up screen. Enter in a reason to pause (For Provided by: example: hungry, tired, done for today, etc.) and your application will be saved so that you may resume **Department of Agriculture** your application at another time. All applications must be submitted by the deadline to be considered for funding, regardless of technical difficulties. Before completing your application, it is recommended you watch the video below and review the application instructions. Department staff will go through the application process step-by-step, and show you how to answer questions on the grant application, attach documents to your application, pause and retrieve your draft application, and submit the application. **Grants Tutorial Video** A complete application contains the following, All needed forms and attachments can be found in

the Documents/Forms section.

Quick Recap

- Grant Deadline: Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at 4:00pm
- Applicants choose ONE category of the Farmland Restoration Grant to apply for
- Maximum grant award: \$20,000
- Cash or In-kind Match Required:
 - Property owned by agricultural producers (individuals, companies and/or corporations) and Not For Profits – 50%
 - Property owned by municipalities and state agencies 10%
- Applicants should attach the Budget and Project Timeline Workbook and quotes/estimates/budget justification items to their application.
- The grant narrative questions will be answered within the application.
- Template landlord agreement available on DOAG website.

Contact Information:

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Simon Levesque Ag Development and Resource Conservation Connecticut Department of Agriculture

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Please feel free to email us with any questions regarding the Farmland Restoration Grant. While we cannot help you write your application, we are here to assist you through this process. In case we are working from home, please send emails and we will get back to you ASAP.

Thank you for attending.

Questions