

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

FARM TRANSITION GRANT

For Connecticut Farmers and Agricultural Cooperatives

2026 Grant Application Guidelines and Forms

***Application Deadline:
January 12, 2026, at 4:00:00pm***



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



**Connecticut Department of Agriculture
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Scan to visit the FTG website.

IMPORTANT DATES

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY:
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026, AT 4:00:00 P.M.
EASTERN STANDARD TIME (EST).**

Applications will not be accepted after 4:00:00 p.m. (EST) on January 12, 2026.

- CT DOAG will not accept late applications under any circumstance.
- Apply early so there is enough time to get familiar with the application system. It's best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
- CT DOAG is not responsible for any technical or logistical problems that result in a late submission. It is your responsibility to ensure we receive your application before the deadline.

Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated. Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments.

CT DOAG reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.

By submitting an application, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE FOR APPLICATION REVIEW, AWARDS, AND PROJECT START*:

- Applications accepted through Monday, January 12, 2026, at 4:00:00 p.m.
- Notification of awards by February 23, 2026.
- Anticipated Contract Start Date-
 - March 15, 2026, for awards of \$5,000 or less
 - April 1, 2026, for contracts \$5,001 and up.

*The anticipated timeline for application review, award notification, and project start is subject to change. Please check the [grant webpage](#) for the latest information.

FARM TRANSITION GRANT OVERVIEW WEBINAR

A virtual workshop will be held on **Thursday, November 20, 2025, from 11:00 am-12:30 pm, via Zoom**, for those interested in applying for the Farm Transition Grant. This workshop will provide an overview of the grant program, application components, and submission process.

[Click here to register for the virtual workshop.](#)

The Farm Transition Grant Overview webinar will be recorded and posted on the [Farm Transition Grant website](#) for those who cannot attend the live session. The [FAQs](#) available on the Farm Transition Grant website will be updated after the conclusion of each Open Office Hours.

OPEN OFFICE HOURS

There will be two virtual office hours opportunities for potential applicants to drop in and ask application, submission and project-specific questions.

1. **Thursday, December 11, 2025, from 11:00am-12:00pm via Zoom**

[Click here to join the office hours.](#)

2. **Tuesday, January 6, 2026, from 11:00am-12:00pm, via Zoom.**

[Click here to join the office hours.](#)

**QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WORKSHOP OR OFFICE HOURS CAN BE DIRECTED TO
ALISON GRABARZ AT ALISON.GRABARZ@CT.GOV**

GRANT SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The Farm Transition Grant (FTG) is administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DOAG) and 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 other venues in which a majority of products sold are grown in the state.

Funding for the Farm Transition Grant is provided through [C.G.S. Sec. 22-26k](#). The FTG Program and any awards are subject to limitations of state funding.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

CT DOAG expects to award approximately \$500,000 in this round using a competitive review process. Grant awards can range in size from \$500 to \$49,999.

An individual, farm, or agricultural cooperative may only receive one FTG in FY 2026.

Agreements may last between eighteen months to two years from the agreement start-date. CT DOAG anticipates most agreements to start in March or April 2026. Applicants should anticipate agreements will end by September 2027 or March 2028 and may not be extended.

If selected, grantees may only incur eligible expenditures after the grant agreement is fully executed, it is on or after the agreement effective date, and the grantee has been notified by the grant manager that they may begin work.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

This grant will specifically prioritize:

- Beginning farmers and farms owned or principally operated by beginning farmers. A beginning farmer is defined as someone who has farmed for 10 years or less.
- Historically underserved farmers.
- Veterans.
- Generational transitions.
- Livestock processing facilities.
- Equipment specific to climate smart, sustainable agricultural practices.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

THE FOLLOWING ENTITIES ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR ALL FARM TRANSITION GRANT CATEGORIES:

1. Agricultural producers, singularly or jointly, whether such producers are owners or tenants of existing agribusiness within the State of Connecticut.
2. Agricultural cooperatives.

The Farm Transition Grant Program is for for-profit farm businesses in the State of Connecticut. Non-profit organizations should pursue CT DOAG's [Agricultural Enhancement Grant](#) for financial assistance.

Previous awardees to the FTG can reapply. Open awards, past awards, project completion and outcomes of previous awards will be considered in the evaluation of the current 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.

For example:

2024: Project awarded

2025: Project awarded

2026: Ineligible for an award

2027: Eligible for an award

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT CATEGORIES

To qualify for the **New Farmer Micro Grant**, eligible entities must meet the following criteria:

1. Be the farm owner and in production for at least a full year.
 - For example: the applicant must have been in production in growing season 2025 to qualify for the 2026 Transition Grant.
2. Be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State, if established as a business entity such as a limited liability company or corporation.
 - Sole proprietorships and DBA's (doing business as) are also eligible.

3. Apply for or possess a Farmers' Tax Exemption Permit through the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services.
 - [Click here for more information on how to apply for your exemption permit.](#)
 - Any questions on receiving your exemption permit, contact: DRS@ct.gov
4. Businesses farming on land that is leased or rented must include a [Landlord Consent Form](#) between all necessary parties regarding the submitted project.

To qualify for the **Infrastructure Investment category, Research and Development category, or Innovation and Diversification category** eligible entities must meet the following criteria:

1. Be the farm owner and in production for at least three (3) full years.
 - For example: the applicant must have been in production since growing season 2023 to qualify for the 2026 Transition Grant.
2. Be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State, if established as a business entity such as a limited liability company or corporation.
 - Sole proprietorships and DBA's (doing business as) are also eligible.
3. Three years of Farmer's Tax Exemption Certificates are required to be provided upon request by the Department.
 - To receive copies of your exemption permit, contact: DRS@ct.gov
4. Businesses farming on land that is leased or rented must include a [Landlord Consent Form](#) between all necessary parties regarding the submitted project.

All applicants should be in good standing with the Department of Agriculture, state, and federal requirements.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND EXPENSES

DEFINITION OF A PROJECT

A project is a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period of time and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.).

Projects are different from ongoing operations because, unlike operations, projects have a definitive beginning and end—they have a limited duration.

Only submissions that meet the definition of a project will be considered.

WHAT IS AN ELIGIBLE PROJECT?

Projects that expand, diversify, and transition a farm shall be considered. Projects which keep the farm at status quo or replace existing infrastructure and do not further enhance the farm business or increase agricultural production will be less competitive.

Applications should demonstrate clear projects that expand, diversify, and transition the farm into a new farm product, value-added product, or service, etc. Quantifiable project outcomes are requested in the application and essential to present a competitive application.

GRANT CATEGORIES

Four distinct grant categories are available. Applicants must select the category they feel best represents their project. **Each applicant may only submit one (1) project to be considered per grant cycle.** CT DOAG reserves the right to adjust the grant category selected by the applicant.

NEW FARMER MICRO GRANT: Supports new and beginning individuals or partnerships with *one full year to three years* of production history, seeking long-term careers in the CT agricultural industry.

Maximum award amount: \$5,000

Match requirement: 25% of total project costs

Projects looking to purchase/install a greenhouse or hoop house should contact your [local USDA NRCS office](#) for current funding opportunities.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT GRANT: Supports farms with *a minimum of three years* of production experience, with infrastructure to expand, diversify, and/or transition.

Maximum award amount: \$24,999

Match requirement: 50% of project costs

Projects looking to purchase/install a greenhouse or hoop house should contact your [local USDA NRCS office](#) for current funding opportunities.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT: Supports farms with a *minimum of three years* of production history to conduct market research and evaluate the viability of developing a new product, offering a new service, or reaching a new market.

Maximum award amount: \$24,999

Match requirement: 40% of project costs

INNOVATION AND DIVERSIFICATION GRANT: Supports farms with a *minimum of three years* of production history with the production of a new product or service for market or business expansion. An applicant should have a business plan and provide evidence of previously conducted research to determine if implementing the project is a viable investment for the business.

Maximum award amount: \$49,999

Match requirement: 25% of project costs

Applicants do not need to complete a Research and Development Grant through the FTG to be eligible to apply for an Innovation and Diversification Grant.

ALL ELIGIBLE EXPENSES FUNDED BY ANY FARM TRANSITION GRANT CATEGORY MUST ADVANCE FARMING AND AGRICULTURE AS DEFINED BY CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SECTION 1-1(Q).

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- On-farm production or processing equipment directly related to agriculture
- Barn remodeling/expansion or new construction to increase capacity or enable the farm to offer a new product/service.
- Irrigation systems for increased production.
- Livestock/pasture fencing to increase herd size or enable crop/grazing rotation.
- Watering systems for livestock on pasture.
- Equipment for livestock housing, confinement, feeding, and waste management.
- Feed storage and handling equipment.
- Ag equipment related to increasing production.
- Marketing expenses including establishing a farm website, logo, branding, packaging design.
- Tractor attachments which implement climate smart ag practices or enable the farm to offer a new product/service.

- Additional or expanded cold-storage equipment to extend shelf-life and harvest capabilities.
- Wash-and-pack stations to incorporate [FSMA or CGAP compliance](#).
- Resources needed to support farm field trips or other on-farm education resources/infrastructure.
- Milking parlors, robotic equipment, milk storage and cooling facilities.
- Computer hardware, software, and other associated equipment used to monitor livestock productivity, feed, food traceability or point of sale.
- Manure pumping and storage facilities.

If you do not see a similar potential project expense in the list above, contact Alison.Grabarz@ct.gov for a determination of its eligibility.

MATCH REQUIREMENT, INELIGIBLE EXPENSES, & PAYMENT

All grant categories have a unique and specific cash match requirement. The cash match requirement for each program can be self-financed, bank-financed, or provided through another grant (federal or private). If a grant is providing the match, the applicant must disclose the grantor, the grant name, and amount awarded. You cannot use another state grant to provide the match for this grant program.

If you are unsure how to determine your required cash match, please reference the “Cash Match Charts” on page 16.

ACCEPTABLE MATCH EXPENSES

THE FOLLOWING EXPENSES ARE AN ACCEPTABLE MATCH IF THEY DIRECTLY AND MEANINGFULLY SUPPORT THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

- Employee salaries and fringe benefits paid to execute the project
- State/local/federal permits associated with the project
- Attorneys’ fees associated with project execution (not related to litigation or retainers)
- Consumable or disposable supplies directly related to the project

The Farm Transition Grant does not accept in-kind donations towards the match requirement. The match requirement must consist entirely of cash expenses.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

THE FOLLOWING EXPENSES CANNOT BE USED AS A MATCH AND WILL NOT BE FUNDED BY ANY GRANT CATEGORY:

- Any expense incurred prior to contract execution.
- Land acquisition/mortgages.
- Cost of borrowing (points and other fees).
- Expenses related to establishing a new organization or business.
- 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 (utilities, office supplies, etc.).
- Disposable supplies (office, farm, otherwise) unrelated to the project.
- Legal expenses related to litigation or retainers.
- Indirect or contingency costs of any percentage.
- Purchasing one's own product or service.
- In-kind donations.
- General purpose equipment (vehicles of any kind, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), skid steer loaders, or tractors).
- General purpose buildings (equipment storage building, workshop).
- Animal feed or crop seed.
- Livestock.
- Plant starters, tree grafts, fruit bushes, or other started or mature plants, bushes, or trees.
- Parking lots.
- Bathrooms.

Grant funds cannot be requested for projects that have already been completed or items that have already been purchased. Expenses and match incurred prior to or after the Contract timeline are ineligible.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Farm Transition Grant award must be paid directly to the business identified on the grant agreement.

A 50% advance of the grant award can be provided to all awardees. The remaining 50% of the award shall be reimbursed upon project completion and submission of the final reporting documents.

Incomplete projects will not be reimbursed and will be prorated accordingly. Funds advanced for incomplete projects must be returned.

Grant funds cannot be requested for projects that have already been completed or items that have already been purchased. Expenses and match incurred prior to or after the agreement effective dates are not eligible expenses for reimbursement.

PROJECT DURATION & POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Projects must be **completed within 18-24 months** of contract execution. Agreements for awards less than \$25,000 shall be allowed up to 18 months. Agreements for awards of \$25,000 or more shall be allowed for up to 24 months to complete the project. Contract and project extensions are not allowed.

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 listing the state as an additional insured on the grantee's liability insurance policy.
3. Attending a Contract Training Workshop.
4. Completing the project within the 18-24-month contractual timeframe.
5. Submitting a final project report in the required format per the executed contract.
6. Submitting a final financial report itemizing actual expenses.
7. Agreeing to a site inspection once the project is complete and prior to final payment being released.
8. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract.

9. Applicants of awarded projects who do not possess a current business plan will be required to develop one with the [CT Small Business Development Center](#) (CT SBDC).

If awarded, failure to provide necessary information by the deadline provided or failure to sign and return a grant contract by the deadline provided may result in rescinding of the award and the reallocation of funds to the Farm Transition Grant program. The awardee may reapply for future funding opportunities, but there is no guarantee of future awarding if an award is rescinded for any reason.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

The 2026 Farm Transition Grant application shall be submitted through the online platform, Cognito. No ID or password is required, and application progress can be completed all at one time or saved, completed and submitted at a later time.

Links to the application are on the DOAG Farm Transition Grant website page [here](#).

To receive high scores from a review panel, the application should fully answer the questions asked clearly and directly. Applications should present how the project will be accomplished and undertaken within a reasonable timeline. The budget must be justified and supported with outside documentation, and the project outcomes should be positively impactful to the farm, measurable, and a direct result of completing the proposed project.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Completion of the Grant Application Form.
2. Attachment of conceptual drawings, estimates/quotes, product information, and other budget justification items.
 - a. Quotes, conceptual drawings, and other documentation justifying and supporting the proposed budget are required to present a complete application. All prospective purchases for the completion of the project should be accompanied by a quote or estimate.

3. Attachment of letters of support from project partners, community stakeholders, potential new markets, potential new customers, existing customers, or other project beneficiaries.
4. Attachment of a landlord consent form, if applicable.
 - a. Required if the project is taking place on leased or rented land.
5. Attachment of a State Vendor Form and W9, if applicable.
 - a. Required for businesses who have not received a CT DOAG grant within the last 5 years.

LANDLORD CONSENT FORM

If your project will be taking place on land that is leased or rented, you need to submit a consent form from your landlord regarding the project. A template consent form is available for download [here](#).

W9 AND STATE VENDOR FORM

If the applicant has not previously received funds from CT DOAG, or has not received a grant within the last 5 years, an updated W9 form and State Vendor form will be required with your application. The forms are available for download [here](#).

SCORING RUBRIC

Applications will be reviewed by a review panel comprised of representatives from CT DOAG, other ag-service providers, and members of the CT agriculture community. Each application will be scored by a confidential review panel using the same rubric by a minimum of three (3) independent reviewers to determine an overall average score. Applications recommended by the review panels are presented to the Commissioner of Agriculture who has the final decision.

REVIEWER SCORING CRITERIA

Project Proposal (50 points)

Thorough workplan detailing how the project will be completed.	10 points
Describes how the completion of their project will impact the farm business or agricultural cooperative in the long and short-term to move them beyond their current status quo.	15 points

Provides at least one measurable outcome as a result of the project related to farm production and operation. The outcome provides amounts at current production levels and predicted increases or decreases upon project completion.	10 points
Provides a timeline demonstrating the project can be completed within the allowed 18-24 months.	5 points
Demonstrates their project is well-aligned with the goals of the FTG, funding priorities (if applicable), and provides supporting details.	5 points
Supplementary materials such as diagrams, sketches, equipment manuals, or conceptual drawings to illustrate the proposed project and increase reviewer understanding of the project are provided.	5 points

Target Markets and Community (25 points)

Details the expanded, additional, or new markets to be reached upon completion of the project.	10 points
Includes letters of support from their community, project partners, potential new markets, potential new customers, existing customers, or other project beneficiaries to demonstrate the project need and anticipated impact.	10 points
Explanation of how the project will have a positive impact on the business and/or the CT agricultural industry.	5 points

Budget (25 points)

Provides an itemized budget containing all project expenses.	10 points
Includes at least the minimum required cash match.	5 points
Provides supplementary materials to support their proposed budget including quotes, estimates, screenshots of websites, etc.	10 points

The maximum score to be achieved by an FTG proposal is 100 points.

CASH MATCH CHARTS

EACH CATEGORY OF THE FARM TRANSITION GRANT HAS A UNIQUE MAXIMUM AWARD AND MATCH REQUIREMENT. THESE ARE LISTED BELOW.

To find your required cash match, determine the category you are applying for.

Next, calculate the total cost for your project. The cash match required is found by multiplying your total project cost by the match requirement percentage.

NEW FARMER MICRO GRANT:

- Maximum award amount: \$5,000
- Match requirement: At least 25% of total project costs

Total Project Costs	Grant Funds Available	Cash Match Required
\$1,000	\$750	\$250
\$2,000	\$1,500	\$500
\$2,500	\$1,875	\$625
\$3,000	\$2,250	\$750
\$4,000	\$3,000	\$1,000
\$5,000	\$3,750	\$1,250
\$6,000	\$4,500	\$1,500
\$6,666.67*	\$5,000	\$1,666.67
\$8,000	\$5,000	\$3,000

*The maximum grant amount is reached when the total project costs equal \$6,666.67.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT GRANT:

- Maximum award amount: \$24,999
- Match requirement: At least 50% of total project costs

Total Project Costs	Grant Funds Available	Cash Match Required
\$5,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
\$15,000	\$7,500	\$7,500
\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
\$30,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
\$40,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
\$49,998*	\$24,999	\$24,999
\$100,000	\$25,000	\$75,000

*The maximum grant amount is reached when the total project costs equal \$49,998.00.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT:

- Maximum award amount: \$24,999
- Match requirement: At least 40% of total project costs

Total Project Costs	Grant Funds Available	Cash Match Required
\$5,000	\$3,000	\$2,000
\$10,000	\$6,000	\$4,000
\$15,000	\$9,000	\$6,000
\$20,000	\$12,000	\$8,000
\$25,000	\$15,000	\$10,000
\$30,000	\$18,000	\$12,000
\$35,000	\$21,000	\$14,000
\$40,000	\$24,000	\$16,000
\$41,665	\$24,999	\$16,666
\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
\$75,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
\$100,000	\$25,000	\$75,000

*The maximum grant amount is reached when the total project costs equal \$41,665.00.

INNOVATION AND DIVERSIFICATION GRANT:

- Maximum award amount: \$49,999
- Match requirement: At least 25% of total project costs

Total Project Costs	Grant Funds Available	Cash Match Required
\$5,000	\$3,750	\$1,250
\$10,000	\$7,500	\$2,500
\$20,000	\$15,000	\$5,000
\$30,000	\$22,500	\$7,500
\$40,000	\$30,000	\$10,000
\$50,000	\$37,500	\$12,500
\$60,000	\$45,000	\$15,000
\$66,665.34*	\$49,999	\$16,666.34
\$70,000	\$49,999	\$20,001
\$80,000	\$49,999	\$30,001
\$90,000	\$49,999	\$40,001
\$100,000	\$49,999	\$50,001
\$150,000	\$49,999	\$100,001

*The maximum grant amount is reached when the total project costs equal \$66,665.34.