The Connecticut Food Policy Council is pleased to announce

Food System Capacity Building Grants
September 15, 2022

Open to:
1. Local Food Policy Councils and/or food working groups
2. Agricultural producers, singularly or jointly, provided such producers are owners or tenants of existing agribusiness within the State of Connecticut
3. Food pantries
4. Farmers' markets
5. Community Gardens, including municipalities or organizations operating a community garden
6. Food retailers, such as grocery stores, corner stores, convenience stores, farmers' markets, mobile food markets, or retail food outlets operated by an emergency food program or food hub

FY 2022 Grant Application Guidelines
Application Deadline: November 15, 2022

Ned Lamont, Governor
Bryan P. Hurlburt Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Agriculture
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 703, Hartford, CT 06103
www.CTGrown.gov

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<u>Summary of Important Dates & Key Information</u>

1. There will be a webinar and question and answer session on **October 11, 2022**. Please register for the webinar <u>HERE</u> or by going to www.CTGrown.gov/grants and selecting Food System Capacity Building Grant (FSCB) This will be recorded and posted on the <u>FSCB Grant webpage.</u>

2. A step-by-step guide on how to submit your application on the grant submission portal is posted on the FSCB Grant Webpage.

3. Please review the "Application Process" section for additional information for requirements, documents and forms. All forms are required to be uploaded onto the grant system platform prior to the grant close date. Allot enough time to properly upload, view forms and become familiar with the system. No exceptions will be made for late submissions.

4. Applications must be received no later than **November 15, 2022**, at 4:00 p.m.

5. Applications will not be accepted after 4:00 p.m. If you are working on a grant on the portal after 4:00 p.m. on November 15, 2022, your grant will be ineligible for review, even if the system allows you to continue to work.

6. Questions can be directed to:

    Erin Windham, <u>Erin.Windham@ct.gov</u> or (860) 519-6083
    OR
    Cyrena Thibodeau, <u>Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov</u> or (860) 895-3094

Grant Description:

The Food System Capacity Building Grant provides funds to Connecticut organizations and groups involved in food system policy or creating innovative, localized, programming in their respective communities to increase food access and address food insecurity. The Connecticut Food Policy Council is encouraging community groups to apply for grants. Any proposal that seeks to improve the local food system and make food, particularly CT Grown farm products, more accessible to Connecticut residents will be considered.

Funding for the **Food System Capacity Building (FSCB) Grant** is provided through the Connecticut Food Policy Council under **C.G.S. Sec. 22-456**. The Food System Capacity Building Grant Program and any awards are subject to limitations of state funding.

The maximum amount awarded to any applicant through the Connecticut Food Policy Grant shall not exceed $10,000.00 for an 18-month grant period. There is no match requirement for this grant.

Grant Purpose:

The FSCB Grant is intended to support Connecticut communities, projects or programs that:

1. Increase the use of, awareness of, and access to healthy food.
2. Support stakeholders in collaborative work to address local food system issues.
3. Support the creation or continuation of local food policy councils, anti-hunger coalitions, and similar working groups or networks focused on food systems, food access, and/or community food security.
4. Support projects that include community-driven solutions to create a more just food system that empowers communities to grow, process, prepare, sell, and eat culturally preferred healthy foods.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this funding proposal request, the following definitions are used:

Food System: A complex web of activities involving the production, processing, transport, distribution, and consumption of food. Issues concerning the food system include the governance and economics of food production, the degree to which we waste food, how food production processing, and transportation impacts the environment: the policy and incentives that shape food options in our institutions, communities, and homes: and the nutritional and health outcomes as determined by our food environment. This definition is adapted from, *"What Is the Food System?" Future of Food, University of Oxford. Please view* https://www.futureoffood.ox.ac.uk/what-food-system *for more information.*

Food Insecurity: The disruption of food intake or eating patterns because of lack of money and other resources. This definition is adapted from research published by the USDA's *Household Food Security in the United States, 2005.* The Study can be accessed through this report link:

https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/45655/29206_err29_002.pdf?v=41334

Culturally- Relevant Foods: Culturally relevant foods (CRF) are food items that hold significance for a particular culture or subcultural group.
https://academic.oup.com/cdn/article/4/Supplement_2/525/5845626

Eligible Applicants:
The following entities are eligible to apply for the FSCB Grant:

1. Local Food Policy Councils and/or food working groups
2. Agricultural producers, singularly or jointly, provided such producers are owners or tenants of existing agribusiness within the State of Connecticut
3. Food pantries
4. Farmers' markets
5. Community Gardens, including municipalities or organizations operating a community garden
6. Food retailers, such as grocery stores, corner stores, convenience stores, farmers' markets, mobile food markets, or retail food outlets operated by an emergency food program or food hub

    *Requirements for food retailers:

    All applicants must be engaged in the sale of nutritious and culturally appropriate foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables. Applicants and grantees will be required to apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) authorization from the USDA to execute a project if not already offering SNAP acceptance. Submission of paid receipts to verify purchase of CT Grown farm products will be required to request additional funds.

All applicants shall be in good standing with the Department of Agriculture, and State and Federal tax requirements.

Grant Categories:
Applicants must select one of the grant categories to apply under. If your project incorporates multiple components, please apply under the category that best reflects the project's focus. Examples of eligible projects are provided for each category. Examples reflect the intent and purpose of the grant category. If you have any questions about project eligibility or corresponding categories, please contact Erin Windham at Erin.Windham@ct.gov or Cyrena Thibodeau at Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov.

1. **Creation Or Continuance of a Local Food Policy Council or Food Working Group**
    Purpose: This grant category provides financial resources to cover costs of development and/or implementation of food working groups or local food policy councils to address food insecurity in Connecticut municipalities.

Examples of eligible projects in this category:
- Building the framework for the creation or continuance of a local food policy council/food network, including training of staff.
- Conducting a community needs assessment.
- Increasing capacity to conduct community outreach, hold meetings and build community momentum.
- Developing a local food action plan and/ food policy agenda.

2. **Equipment**
   Purpose: This grant category provides financial resources to cover costs of equipment associated with projects that would create and/or further food access to underserved communities.

   Examples of eligible projects in this category:
   - Purchasing equipment that will enable the applicant to process and store CT Grown farm products during the height of the growing season to increase availability of CT Grown fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and other farm products in underserved neighborhoods.

3. **Pilot CT Grown Purchasing Program for Retailers**
   Purpose: This grant category provides funding for the purchase of whole and/or minimally processed CT Grown farm products and the development of a purchasing program with CT producers. Grant funds will cover 50% of the purchase price of CT Grown products, the remaining 50% must be covered by the applicant. Applications that include a letter of support from a producer(s) the applicant is sourcing products from will be prioritized.

   CT producers can be found at www.CTGrownMap.com or by contacting the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DOAG). CT DOAG encourages partnerships with producers that identify as small or medium sized farms, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), women-owned, LGBTQ+, veteran-owned, and/or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

4. **Farmers' Market Access**
   Purpose: To expand market participation by producers that identify as small or medium sized farms, with a focus on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), women-owned, LGBTQ+, veteran-owned, and/or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers and/or to increase consumer awareness and market attendance.

   Examples of eligible projects in this category:
   - Perform outreach to BIPOC farmers to participate in farmers' markets.
   - Purchase of SNAP processing infrastructure for producers and markets
   - Purchase tents, displays, and other materials for producer use at farmers' markets.
   - Development of programs and materials to increase accessibility and/ or education on the value of consuming fresh fruits and vegetables at markets.
   - Taste testing and hands on culinary and nutrition education using CT Grown products.

Under this category, a portion of the funds can be used for the purchase of CT Grown ingredients.
- Develop events and opportunities that encourage the use of SNAP, FMNP, and other food benefits programs at farmers' markets including outreach and promotion up to 15% of the total grant award.

5. **Food Waste and Recovery**
Purpose: To support projects that reduce food loss and waste, recovery efforts, and recycling programs.

Examples of eligible projects in this category:
- Promote food waste recycling solutions
- Expand outreach through research and education efforts such as incorporating food waste and food security into curriculums and engaging students in and out of classroom settings
- Develop or expand composting programs.
- Aid in development of gleaning programs to recover unused foods from producers.

6. **Community Gardens**
Purpose: To support initiatives that create or improve community garden opportunities and encourage community engagement. Project narrative should demonstrate how the immediate community benefits from the project.

Examples of eligible projects in this category:
- Projects to begin or expand community gardens that serve SNAP eligible populations or food insecure communities.
- Materials and installation for a community garden. This could include, but is not limited to, materials for raised bed construction (CT Grown lumber and CT Grown compost preferred) or purchase of a greenhouse (if ineligible for NRCS funding), tools, planting materials, signage, water catchment systems, fencing, and irrigation supplies or systems.
- Providing trainings to producers and community members on topics such as organizing
- strategies and proven techniques to grow and improve gardens and/or garden plots and expanding markets.

Additional, relevant funding opportunities may be available through other organizations:
1. Funding for greenhouses/ high tunnels may be available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service. High Tunnel System Initiative | NRCS (usda.gov)
2. Funding for community gardens may also be available through the Urban Green and Community Gardens Program administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Urban Green and Community Garden Grant Program (ct.gov)
3. The CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection offers more information on current initiatives at their Composting and Organic Recycling website.
4. The CT Grown for CT Kids Grant through the Department of Agriculture is a potential source of funding to explore for producers, K-12, and early childcare providers for

equipment purchases with the purpose of increasing CT Grown farm product in schools.

5. EndHunger CT, may have funding available to support SNAP doubling programs at farmers markets in the state. Additionally,
6. The Farm Viability program through the Department of Agriculture is open to municipalities, regional planning organizations, associations of municipalities, and agricultural non-profits and may be an option for those pursuing work on benefits programs.

CT DOAG offers many grants to producers, non-profits, municipalities and agricultural cooperatives. Please visit the website at https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/Commissioner/Commissioner/Agency-Grants-and-Loans to learn more.

Awarding Priorities:

Applications that demonstrate these priorities during the evaluation process, may receive a higher score.

1) Projects that prioritize capacity building of groups who are working on systemic, holistic approaches to feeding people and working in sectors throughout the food system.
2) Projects that support organizations and groups that are led by marginalized communities including black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC), members of the LGBTQ+ community, and persons with disabilities.
3) If a project incorporates procurement, then projects who purchase CT Grown farm products may receive priority.

Application Requirements:

A complete application includes:

1. A complete Grant Narrative.
2. Excel Workbook with a complete Budget, Budget Narrative, and Timeline. Template should be downloaded from the CT DOAG Webpage and then uploaded to your application as an attachment.
3. If applicable, conceptual drawings, estimates/quotes, and other budget justification items can be added as an attachment on CT DOAG's grant portal.

Optional:
1. Up to three letters of support demonstrating community support and interest for the project. Template should be downloaded from the CT DOAG Webpage and then uploaded to your application as an attachment.
2. Any additional conceptual drawings, stories, videos the applicant would like to share related to the project uploaded to your application as an attachment.

Expenses & Payment:

The amount awarded to any applicant through the Food System Capacity Building Grant shall not exceed $10,000 for an 18-month award period. There is no match required for this grant.

Combined employee salary and fringe paid to execute and directly administer the project cannot exceed 25% of grant funds requested, or no more than $2,500 with the exception of projects which fall under the grant category of **"Creation or continuance of a local food policy council or food working group."** Projects in this category will have no limit for staffing a food policy council, anti-hunger coalition, or similar working group which is focused on food systems, food security, and/or food access.

This grant allows for advances throughout the project, contingent upon appropriate documentation. An awardee may request advances in accordance with CT DOAG's advancement policy for this funding. More information on this process will be available to awardees. Incomplete projects cannot be reimbursed.

The Connecticut Food Policy Council reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the award requested.

The **following expenses are ineligible** and will not be funded:
- Any expense incurred prior to contract execution
- Land acquisition/mortgages
- Cost of borrowing (points and other fees)
- Expenses related to establishing a new organization/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.)
- Legal expenses related to litigation
- Indirect or contingency costs of any percentage
- Any expense related to lobbying
- Any open agreement and/or project in progress already funded through a grant from CT DOAG

All eligible expenses funded by any FSCB Grant must address food systems issues in a Connecticut community supporting new and recently emerging projects or programs.

The FSCB Grant must be paid directly to the individual or business with whom the contract is made.

Submission Process:
All FSCB Grant applications are required to be submitted through CT DOAG's online grant portal. Applicants will need to create an account for the grant portal.

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

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

For additional information on the grant application submission process, we encourage attendance at the **grant writing workshop on October 11, 2022.**

Applicants should consider applying well in advance of the grant deadline, as CT DOAG will not review any 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 CT DOAG if there are accessibility or other concerns.

Evaluation Criteria and Process:

The FSCB Grant is a competitive grant. Only complete applications, as outlined above which are submitted on time, will be evaluated.   The evaluation will be weighted heavily on the project plan described in the Grant Narrative.

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

Applications will be scored as follows-

- **Introduction** (up to 15 points)- How clearly does the applicant explains how the project will contribute to the creation/furthering of a local food system network and/or increase food access in Connecticut and what will the project accomplish?
- **Project Explanation** (up to 20 points)- How well the applicant has identified quantifiable outcome(s) and potential impacts to underserved/underrepresented individuals/communities?
- **Project Timeline and Budget** (up to 20 points)- Are costs and deadlines reasonable and accurate?
- **Project Team and Community Support** (up to 20 points)- Who is the team that will be involved in completing this project and what is the level of community support?
- **Project Sustainability Plan** (up to 5 points)- How does this project contribute to building long-term resilience, equity, and sustainability in the local food system?
- **Application Prioritization** (up to 10 points)- How does the project meet priority considerations as identified earlier under Awarding Priorities on page 8 of this Request for applications?

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 January 15, 2023.**

Applicants of awarded projects will be responsible for the following:
2. Signing an agreement with the State of Connecticut
3. Providing a Certificate of Insurance holding the state harmless or listing the state as an

additionalinsured on the grantee's liability insurance policy
4. Completing the project within the 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. Copies of invoices and proof of paymentmust be submitted with the payment request at the conclusion of the project
7. Agreeing to a site inspection, if necessary, once the project is complete and prior to final payment being released
8. Attending at least one convening with other grantees and Council members during the duration of the project for networking and resource sharing. Virtual format or in person TBD.
9. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract. Grantees will have additional training on requirements once contracts are executed.

Upon receiving an award, awardees will receive guidance on necessary contract requirements from the CT DOAG program coordinator.

Grantees will have additional training on requirements once contracts are executed which will include being matched with CT food policy council member(s) to work with throughout the project's lifetime to receive support and technical assistance as needed.

Budget, Budget Narrative Justification & Project Timeline:

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 Food System Capacity Building Grant Program (ct.gov) and added as an attachment on DoAg's grant portal.

Directions: In the cells below itemize the project expenses for each category. The sum function will 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. **There is no match required for this grant**, though applicants can include additional funds that will go towards project completion.

In addition to the itemized budget below, please also include a budget narrative on the next worksheet.

BUDGET	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - GRANT FUNDS	GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - MATCH FUNDS	CASH MATCH BY APPLICANT	TOTAL COST
SALARIES. Combined employee salary and fringe paid to execute and directly administer the project cannot exceed 25% of grant funds requested, or no more than $2,500.00 with the exception of projects which fall under the category of Creation or continuance of a local food policy council or food working group.	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Salary 1:	N/A		$0.00		
FRINGE.	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Fringe 1:	N/A		$0.00		
EQUIPMENT. Equipment to be purchased per the project. Attaching estimates or quotes to justify the expense is required.	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Item 1:	$0.00		$0.00		
*RENTAL OF EQUIPMENT. Rented equipment required to complete the project if applicable	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Item 1:	$0.00		$0.00		
Item 2:	$0.00		$0.00		
*MATERIALS & SUPPLIES. A list of materials and supplies required for the project.	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Item 1:	$0.00		$0.00		
Item 2:	$0.00		$0.00		
Item 3:	$0.00		$0.00		
Item 4:	$0.00		$0.00		
Item 5:	$0.00		$0.00		
CONTRACTUAL/CONSULTANT. 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 estimates or quotes to justify the expense is required	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Contractor 1:	$0.00		$0.00		
Contractor 2:	$0.00		$0.00		
OTHER COSTS. A list, with descriptions, of each item listed as "Other Costs"	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$0.00
Other 1:	$0.00		$0.00		
Other 2:	$0.00		$0.00		
Other 3:	$0.00		$0.00		
Other 4:	$0.00		$0.00		
Other 5:	$0.00		$0.00		
PROJECT TOTALS	Leave blank	$0.00	Leave blank	$0.00	$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.

Grant Narrative:

The information provided below for the Grant Narrative is for informational purposes only. The Grant Narrative will be completed and submitted through CT DOAG's Grant portal.

Food System Capacity Building Grant 2022 Grant Narrative

The following questions will be asked on the FSCB Grant application on the grants portal. It is recommended that you type your answers using Microsoft Word and then copy and paste your final answers into the spaces provided in the application portal.

Please note there is 4,000-character maximum characters allowed per question.

Supporting materials, such as resumes and letters of support and/or commitment can be submitted as attachments.

For all application categories, applicants must answer the following questions:

1. Introduce the organization, council, or network to the reviewers, Include at least the following information:
   a) Describe the population that you serve overall and who will specifically benefit from this project.
   b) Please explain how your project will serve marginalized and/or low-income communities if applicable.
   c) Describe any past and current food system initiatives, if applicable, and why the applicant is ready and able to begin or further programming.

2. Explain in detail the project proposal and how it will contribute to the creation/furthering of a local food system network and/or increasing food access in Connecticut. Please include details of what the project will accomplish and how it will be accomplished.

3. Identify at least one outcome you strive to achieve as a result of completing this project. Identify the activities necessary to meet the outcome(s) and how you will evaluate if the project outcome(s) were met?

   Resources:
   Please click Here for a good resource developed by the CDFA on project outcomes. Please note these are not specific to this grant program.

   Outcomes: This is the intended impact of the project that can be evaluated. An outcome is measurable and observable, it can be quantitative or qualitative but must be impactful and specific.

   Ex. X number of community members will have monthly planned meetings on developing a local food policy plan.

   Activities: Actions or measurable steps taken to reach an outcome

   Ex. Outreach and marketing will be conducted to increase community awareness and attendance.

4. What other funding sources have you sought and/or received to support this project?

5. Explain who your project/program reaches and the potential impacts to individuals and communities (direct or intended). Include how your projects/programs will serve neighborhoods identified as focus areas and those that impact under-served/underrepresented communities in Connecticut.

   Describe what areas of Connecticut your project will serve, how your project is serving the area. (i.e., Project/ program is working within a specific community center, etc.),

how members of these communities have been engaged with the proposed project., and how you plan on engaging them.

6. Describe the team involved in completing this project and how you will work with any partners. Please also describe the community support that you have for this project from stakeholders relevant to the project and how they will be involved throughout its lifetime.

7. How will this project contribute to building long-term resilience, equity, and sustainability in the local food system? What steps will you take to ensure that the program continues beyond the timeline of this grant?

Questions can be directed to:

Erin Windham, Erin.Windham@ct.gov or (860) 519-6083 or
Cyrena Thibodeau, Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov or (860) 895-3094