

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Grant

For Connecticut local and regional boards of education, regional education centers, cooperative arrangements, childcare centers, group childcare homes and family childcare homes, or any organization or entity administering or assisting in the development of a farm-to-school program.

FY 2022 Grant Application Guidelines

Application Deadline:
December 20, 2021 at
4:00pm



Ned Lamont, Governor
Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner



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Important Dates:

There will be a webinar and question and answer session on Tuesday November 9, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. This will be recorded and posted on CTGrown.gov/grants.

A video recording walking through how to submit your application via Salesforce will also be posted.

The deadline for final submissions is December 20, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. Please review the “Submission Process” section for additional information.

**Final Applications must be received by:
December 20, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

Applications will not be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on December 20, 2021

Questions can be directed to Cyrena Thibodeau, Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov or 860-895-3094

Grant Description:

The Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Grant Program, hereafter referred to as CTG4CTK Grant, provides funds to Connecticut local or regional boards of education, regional educational service centers, cooperative arrangements pursuant to section [10-158a of the general statutes](#), child care centers, group child care homes and family child care homes, as such terms are described in section [19a-77 of the general statutes](#), or any organization or entity administering or assisting in the development of a farm-to-school program.

The CTG4CTK Grant Program, established in 2021 in Connecticut General Statutes § 10 with funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act, [P.A. 21-0002, S. 364](#) of the Connecticut Acts of the 2021 Special Session.

The amount awarded to any applicant through the CTG4CTK Grant shall not exceed \$24,999. There is no match required for this grant.

Grant Purpose:

The CTG4CTK Grant shall, “assist schools, school districts, childcare centers & homes, and organizations to develop farm-to-school programs that will increase the availability of local foods in child nutrition programs, allow educators to use hands-on educational techniques to teach students about nutrition and farm-to-school connections, sustain relationships with local farmers and producers, enrich the educational experience of students, improve the health of children in the state and enhance the state's economy.”

These funds are meant to provide a combination of resources to support projects that will help build capacity for long-term Farm to School Programs.

What is farm to school?

Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites.

Students gain access to healthy, local foods as well as education opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons, and farm field trips. Farm to school empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities.

Awarding Priorities:

- 1) To fund applicants located in alliance districts, as defined in section [10-262u of the general statutes](#), as amended by this act, or who are providers of school readiness programs, as defined in section [10-16p of the general statutes](#)
- 2) To fund applicants who demonstrate a broad commitment from school administrators, school nutrition professionals, educators, and community stakeholders.
 - If the applicant is not a school/district or early childcare provider, then a partnership agreement from an authorized representative from the school or early childcare provider the applicant proposes to work with must be submitted. A template is provided for this on the grant webpage.
 - In the grant narrative, applicants are requested to describe both the support that they have for the project and detail how input was gathered to formulate the idea. Additionally, applicants are allowed to submit up to three letters of support, a template is provided on the grant webpage.

Eligible Applicants:

The following entities are eligible to apply:

1. Local or regional board of education
2. Regional educational service centers
3. A cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-158a of the general statutes
4. Childcare centers, group childcare homes and family childcare homes as such terms are described in section 19a-77 of the general statutes
5. Any organization or entity administering or assisting in the development of a farm-to-school program

CT DoAg encourages school districts with pre-school programs to include those programs in their project.

Expenses & Payment:

The amount awarded to any applicant through the CTG4CTK Grant shall not exceed \$24,999.

Combined employee salary and fringe paid to execute and directly administer the project cannot exceed 25% of grant funds requested, or no more than \$6,250.

A 50% cash advance upon contract execution can be requested. The balance is paid, and expenses are reimbursed, upon project completion and submission of final report with documentation. Incomplete projects cannot be reimbursed.

CT DoAg 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

Grant Categories

Applicants must select one of the grant categories below. If your project incorporates multiple components, please apply under the category that reflects the project's priority focus. If you have any questions about a project qualifying for these funds or which category to apply under, please contact Cyrena Thibodeau at CT Department of Agriculture.

The maximum duration for project completion and reporting requirements is 18 months.

(1) Infrastructure

Purpose: This grant category provides financial resources to cover infrastructure costs associated with projects that would create and/or further a long-term farm to school program. Multiple pieces of infrastructure can be included in a proposal.

Examples of Projects in this category:

- Purchasing equipment that will enable the applicant to process and store produce during the height of the growing season for use during the school year such as a blast chiller, industrial chest freezer, vegetable slicing equipment, etc.
- Materials and installation for a school garden. This could include, but is not limited to, materials for raised bed construction (CT Grown lumber and CT Grown compost preferred), purchase of a greenhouse (if ineligible for [NRCS funding](#)), or tower gardens for multiple classrooms.

(2) Experiential Learning Opportunities

Purpose: This grant category provides financial resources to cover costs of development and/or implementation of farm to school learning opportunities which can be for students, educators, and food service staff among others as outlined in the statute.

Examples of Projects in this category:

- Curriculum design and/or implementation of lessons to integrate a school garden into classroom learning. For examples of lesson plans, please see the [Green Village Initiative](#) in conjunction with Sacred Heart University, for Bridgeport Public Schools.
- Hands on culinary and nutrition education and taste testing with CT Grown products. Under this category, a portion of the funds can be used for purchase of CT Grown ingredients with the goal of helping to foster relationships between a school and producer(s).
- Agricultural education and experiences such as farm field trips, gleaning on farms, stipends to bring a farmer to the classroom.
- Professional development and skills training for food service staff in how to process and prepare fresh food. 25% of grant funds could go towards paying staff for attendance at trainings.

(3) Farm to School Planning

Purpose: This grant category provides funding for applicants to undertake a farm to school planning process incorporating components of classroom education, CT Grown procurement, and engagement with the community for input. Applicants must demonstrate clearly how they will involve stakeholders such as students, school administration, educators, school nutrition professionals, parents, etc. in their process and create a plan with actionable steps. Funding requests should be proportional to the scope of your plan, depth of community engagement, and size of population served.

Examples of Projects in this category:

- [Example of a simple action plan](#)
- [Example of a detailed action plan](#)

(4) Pilot CT Grown Purchasing Program

Purpose: This grant category provides funding for the purchase of whole and/or minimally processed CT Grown products and the development of a purchasing program with CT producers. Grant funds will cover 50% of purchase price of CT Grown products, the remaining 50% must be covered by the applicant. Applications in this category that are submitted with support of a producer(s) that the school will source from will be prioritized.

- CT producers can be found at [Put Local on your Tray Farm Directory](#) and the [CT NOFA Farm and Food Guide](#). Additionally, please reach out for support in identifying and connecting with producers.
- Funds can be used for CT Grown product in meals, snacks, a la carte items, school community dinners, and for purchase of CSA shares.
- 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.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate engaging educational and marketing activities to educate students where the products came from. Many resources can be found on the [Put Local on your Tray website](#).

Project Duration & Post Award Requirements

Projects must be **completed within 18 months** of contract execution. 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 holding the state harmless or listing the state as an additional insured on the grantee's liability insurance policy,
3. Completing the project within the contractual timeframe,
4. Submitting a final project report including a sustainability plan in the required format per the executed contract,
5. 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,
6. Agreeing to a site inspection once the project is complete and prior to final payment being released (if applicable,)
7. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract.

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

- Being matched with an advisory board member(s) to work with throughout the project's lifetime to receive support and technical assistance as needed.
- Attending **at least one convening with other grantees during the duration of the project for networking and resource sharing**. Virtual format or in person TBD.

Submission Process:

All CTG4CTK Grant applications and attachments are required to be submitted through the Salesforce grant application portal. Training will be provided on how to create an account and submit applications through this portal. For any technical questions, please contact Cyrena Thibodeau at CT DoAg.

Application Requirements:

A complete application on Salesforce includes:

Required:

1. Excel Workbook with completed Budget, Budget Narrative, and Timeline. Template should be downloaded from the DoAg Webpage and then uploaded to your application as an attachment.
2. Partnership agreement letter from an authorized representative of the school/early childcare provider where the project will take place if the applicant is not the school or early childcare provider. Template should be downloaded from the DoAg Webpage and then uploaded to your application as an attachment.
3. **For early childhood providers:** Licensed providers need to provide a copy of the license or other proof of being an active licensed provider. License exempt providers need to provide a letter from their school board stating the provider is in good operating standing.
4. If applicable, estimates/quotes for services and infrastructure uploaded to your application as attachments.

Optional:

1. Up to three letters of support demonstrating that there is support for this effort from applicable stakeholders such as school administration, school nutrition professionals, educators, producers, and community stakeholders. Template should be downloaded from the 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.

Evaluation Criteria and Process:

The CTG4CTK 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 impact and work plan described in the grant narrative. Applications will be evaluated by an appointed advisory team after an administrative review by DoAg.

Budget & Budget Narrative Justification

The Budget and the Budget Narrative Explanation will need to be filled out in the Excel fillable form. Link available at www.CTGrown.gov/Grants and must be added as an attachment on the Salesforce application.

Grant Narrative

The information provided below is for informational purposes only. The narrative will need to be filled out and submitted through the grant portal.

For all application categories, applicants must answer the following questions

1. **Introduction-** Introduce the school/entity/organization 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 if different.
 - b. Describe any past and current farm to school initiatives, if applicable, and why the applicant is ready and able to begin or further programming.
2. **Project Explanation-** Explain in detail the project proposal and how it will contribute to the creation/furthering of a Farm-to-School program.
 - Please include details of what the project will accomplish and how it will be accomplished.
3. **Project Impact-** 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? [Here](#) is a good resource developed by [CDFA](#) on what project outcomes are, 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 students will have monthly planned activities centered on the school garden.

Activities: Actions or measurable steps taken to reach an outcome
Ex. A school garden will be built to be utilized in both classroom based lessons and in taste testing.
4. **Project Workplan** – Include all project milestones and related deadlines. Applicants must budget in three months to plan the project once the contract is executed, 18 months to execute and complete the project, and 30 days past project completion for all reporting. As a reminder no extensions will be given. No incomplete projects will be funded.

The following template will need to be used to provide the project workplan. This template is on the third page of the Budget/Budget Narrative/Project Timeline excel worksheet which can be found on CTGrown.gov/grants

Activity	Anticipated Timeline

5. **Project Team and Stakeholder Support**

- 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 it's lifetime (such as school/program administrators, students, educators, parents, etc).
6. **Sustainability Plan-** How will this project contribute to the longevity of a farm to school program? What steps will you take to ensure that the program continues beyond the timeline of this grant?