

Connecticut Milk Promotion Board is pleased to announce:

# Dairy Farmer Engagement Grants

*For non-profit organizations, businesses, and extension agencies for projects conducted in Connecticut for Connecticut Dairy Farmers.*

Amended Version February 14, 2023

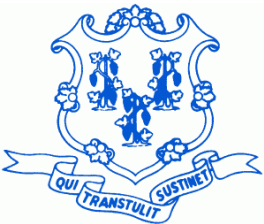
## **2023 Request for Applications Guidelines and Forms**

**Application Deadline:  
February 21, 2023,  
At 4:00 p.m.**

*Distributed on behalf of the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board by:  
Connecticut Department of Agriculture*

*450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 703, Hartford, CT 06103*

<https://CTDairy.org>



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



# Table of Contents

Amended Version February 14, 2023

Important Information .....	3
Funding Opportunity Description .....	4
Eligible Applicants.....	5
Requirements, Expenses, & Payment:.....	5
Contract Duration & Post Award Requirements .....	6
Submission Process .....	6
Application Requirements .....	7
Evaluation Criteria and Process .....	7
Appendix A: Budget Form and Contract Timeline Workbook .....	8

## **Important Information**

Applications must be received by **February 21, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. via the provided Cognito link.**

Applications ***will not*** be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on February 21, 2023.

Questions can be directed to: Ally Hughes, [Allison.Hughes@ct.gov](mailto:Allison.Hughes@ct.gov).

Questions will be answered solely at the discretion of the grant administrator. Questions can be submitted **until February 6, 2023**, and will be published as a Frequently Asked Questions document, **no later than one (1) week prior to submission.**

## **Funding Opportunity**

The Dairy Farmer Engagement Grant provides grant funding for businesses, extension agencies, and agricultural non-profit organizations to conduct projects that directly impact and/or foster Connecticut's dairy industry.

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board (CTMPB) administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg), was established in 2008. The board consists of nine appointed members and is charged with developing, coordinating, and implementing promotional, research, and other programs designed to promote Connecticut dairy farms, milk, and dairy product consumption. The CTMPB five year target is to realize an increase in dairy consumption and purchases throughout the supply chain in CT. This program will contribute to that target goal.

Funding for Farmer Engagement is provided through Dairy Research and Promotion Program, also known as the Dairy Checkoff. CGS Sec. 22-137d authorizes the CTMPB to award grant funds from Connecticut's Dairy Checkoff funds. All projects should be conducted in accordance with the Dairy Research and Promotion Program, which can be found at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/research-promotion/dairy>.

The Dairy Farmer Engagement Grant was first awarded in 2021.

The CTMPB is anticipating awarding up to **\$140,000** as partial or full awards for projects that increase engagement and communication channels with state dairy farmers on the utilization of Connecticut's Dairy Checkoff funds.

## **Areas of Focus**

Applications should focus on increasing engagement and communication channels with state dairy farmers. Successful projects should focus on building strong relationships to engage dairy farmers in Connecticut and deliver tools for dairy farms to interact with each other, the public, and the CTMPB. All projects should be conducted in accordance with the Dairy Research and Promotion Program, which can be found at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/research-promotion/dairy>.

Applications should align with at least one of the **Areas of Focus** and propose a project that:

1. provide dairy farmers with tools to amplify and align the efforts of the CT Milk Promotion Board including the CTMPB's social media work, toolkit for farmers, messaging webinars, and crisis management resources.
2. develop a menu of messaging and resources for dairy farmers to utilize and share their stories through social media.
3. facilitate outreach for idea generation and grassroots promotions.
4. increase promotion and awareness of regular CTMPB meetings and public comment opportunities.
5. create and distribute a web-based annual report on CTMPB's website summarizing the dairy checkoff program activities in the state, potentially including national and regional programs.

### **Eligible Applicants**

The following entities are eligible to apply for Dairy Farmer Engagement Grant:

1. Businesses
2. Extension Agencies
3. Agricultural Non-Profit Organizations

Please note, organizations do not have to be based in Connecticut to be awarded. However, all projects should be conducted in Connecticut. All work must directly benefit and impact Connecticut dairy farmers.

Organizations must be in good fiscal standing with the State. The State may request documentation as needed for the contracting process to verify standing.

Non-profits must be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State. Copies of 990 forms are not required to be submitted.

Organizations not in good standing with the State of Connecticut, organizations that have defaulted on grants or contracts, or organizations that cannot contract with the State, will be ineligible for awards.

### **Expenses & Payments**

The following expenses will **not be funded by this grant**:

- Any expense incurred prior to contract execution
- Any project that uses grant funds for lobbying purposes
- A project that promotes a specific dairy product brand or dairy farm
- A project that promotes non-bovine dairy products such a goat, sheep, etc.

Examples of **eligible expenses for grant funds** to cover:

- Employee salaries and fringe benefits to execute the Contract
- Consultant or subcontractor expenses directly related to the Contract
- General purpose equipment and equipment rental if it directly supports the project

The eligibility of general-purpose equipment will be reviewed based on the Area of Focus and project usage.

If the Contractor is also funded by other agriculture programs, including funding from the CTMPB, DoAg, or any national or regional agriculture or dairy partners doing work in Connecticut, that contractor may build off their work, but cannot duplicate it under this funding. Contracts for this grant cannot include items already paid for under a previous contract.

**This award is a reimbursement grant.** Funds are paid out only as reimbursements for grant activities conducted within the scope of the work. The CTMPB Farmer Engagement Grant may only be paid directly to the individual or organization that is the awardee and listed on the grant contract.

Incomplete Contracts will not be fully reimbursed.

Applicants shall be required to provide documentation of expenses, reports as requested, time reporting, and invoices to receive payment.

### **Contract Duration & Post Award Requirements**

Contracts must be **completed by June 30, 2025**. Contract extensions are not allowed. **Applicants should be prepared for an anticipated contract start date of July 1, 2023.**

Applicants of awarded Contracts will be responsible for the following:

1. Signing an agreement with the State of Connecticut. Agreements must be returned quickly and follow the timetables provided by DoAg to ensure the anticipated start date of July 1. Awardees must be prepared to start their Contracts in accordance with the start date.
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 all Contract work within the contractual deadlines.
4. Submitting a final project report as required by the 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 Contract.
6. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut Contract.

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

All Contract work should be finalized with enough time for the grant administrator to approve the final reports. No extensions will be given. No incomplete Contracts will be funded.

### **Submission Process**

All Dairy Farmer Engagement Grant applications are required to be submitted through the Cognito link below.

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

Applicants should consider applying well in advance of the grant deadline, as the Department 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 submission process prior to submission and to communicate timely with DoAg if there are accessibility or other concerns.

## **Application Requirements**

A complete application includes:

1. Budget Form and Contract Timeline Workbook added as an attachment to the provided Cognito link.
2. Completion of the Grant Narrative.
3. Estimates/quotes, sample creative, and other budget justification items can be added as an attachment to the provided Cognito link.

## **Evaluation Criteria and Process:**

The Dairy Farmer Engagement 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.

Creativity, innovation, the ability to address one of the key issues outlined in the funding opportunity, clear concise well-defined language, and the feasibility of the proposed project will factor into scoring the proposals. The proposals will be evaluated by the CTMPB. They will use a simple 1-5 system for scoring, with 5 being the highest. They will evaluate the proposal and the scope of work for the following criteria:

1. Concise, clear messaging: a direct, succinct, and easy to understand proposal and scope that is not jargony (or contains clear definitions for the reader) but is thorough.
2. How does your experience, skills, and expertise, as well as your proposed plan help you support CT Dairy Farmers?
3. How well does your proposal grasp the objective and lay out how you will accomplish the activities outlined in your scope?
4. How well does your proposal support a “comprehensive” plan that reflects the complex problems of the industry and our farmers?
5. Projects that demonstrate innovative and creative plans to achieve the desired outcome.
6. Are related program support, facilities, and equipment adequate?
7. Were the proposal application guidelines and format followed?

**Budget Form and Contract Timeline Workbook**

The information provided below for the Budget Form and Contract 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 and added as an attachment on DoAg’s Cognito link.

*Budget Sheet*

Budget Application Form 2023 CTMPB Farmer Engagement Grant				
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.				
In addition to the itemized budget below, please also fill out the budget narrative (on the next sheet).				
BUDGET	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - GRANT FUNDS	GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED	ITEMIZED SUBTOTALS - MATCH FUNDS	TOTAL COST
<b>SALARIES AND FRINGE.</b> Employee salary & fringe paid to execute the project is eligible. Salary is an eligible cash match as well.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00
<b>Salary and Fringe 1:</b>	N/A		\$0.00	
<b>EQUIPMENT.</b> Equipment to be purchased per the project. Attaching quotes to justify the expense is required.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00
<b>Item 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>*RENTAL OF EQUIPMENT.</b> Rented equipment required to complete the project (rollers, heavy duty equipment)	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00
<b>Item 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Item 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>*MATERIALS &amp; SUPPLIES.</b> A list of materials and supplies required for the project.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00
<b>Item 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Item 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Item 3:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Item 4:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Item 5:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>CONTRACTUAL/CONSULTANT.</b> 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 quotes to justify the expense is required.	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00
<b>Contractor 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Contractor 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>OTHER COSTS.</b> A list, with descriptions, of each item listed as "Other Costs"	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$0.00
<b>Other 1:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Other 2:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Other 3:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Other 4:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>Other 5:</b>	\$0.00		\$0.00	
<b>PROJECT TOTALS</b>	Leave blank	\$0.00	Leave blank	\$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.



## Budget Narrative

Budget Narrative			
2023 CTMPB Farmer Engagement Grant			
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.			
<b>For example:</b>			
Item	Justification	Total Cost	Is this cost covered by another grant? If so, please indicate the grant name, awarding agency, and grant amount.
Salary	2 employees, \$25/hr, 4 hrs per week for 40 weeks	\$8,000	N/A
Other Costs: 3 Hydro Flow Clear Vinyl Tubing, 1/4 Inch (ID), 100 Feet	3 at \$24.95 each, plus \$28.06 estimated shipping; <a href="https://hydrobuilder.com/hydro-flow-clear-vinyl-tubing.html?opts=eyJhdHRyaWwJ1dGUxNDYxIjoiaMTgzNzUifQ=">https://hydrobuilder.com/hydro-flow-clear-vinyl-tubing.html?opts=eyJhdHRyaWwJ1dGUxNDYxIjoiaMTgzNzUifQ=</a>	\$102.91	Grant A, USDA, \$2000
Fill out the table below as it pertains to your project. Add or remove rows as needed.			
Item	Justification	Total Cost	Is this cost covered by another grant? If so, please indicate the grant name, awarding agency, and grant amount.



## **Grant Narrative**

The information provided below for the Grant Narrative is for informational purposes only. The Grant Narrative will be completed and submitted through the grant's [Cognito link](#).

### **Dairy Farmer Engagement 2023 Grant Narrative**

The following questions will be asked on the Dairy Farmer Engagement Grant application. The questions should be answered in a separate document and attached and uploaded as a single file via the provided [Cognito link](#).

Please answer the following questions regarding the project for which you are applying. Ensure that you have identified which priority your project addresses. Please do not exceed 5 pages for the grant narrative, this excludes appendices for the budget and estimates, quotes, and, creative samples outlined above.

#### **1. Project Explanation**

Explain in detail your project and how it will address the chosen question of focus. What will the project accomplish and how will it be accomplished?

#### **2. Project Outcome or Impact**

Identify an outcome you strive to achieve as a result of completing this project. Identify the objectives necessary to meet the outcome(s) and the process in which you will determine if it was met. An *outcome* is defined as a quantifiable result and usually accomplished after the project is done. Example: as a result of this project, farmers will have the ability to respond to social media feedback in a productive way.

#### **3. Project Staff & Organizational Credentials or Expertise**

Please draw up a one (1) page summary of key personnel involved and their brief relevant credentials. Applicants may also include a few brief comments on the organization and its history. Nonprofits or businesses may choose to provide a brief overview of the history and mission of the organization including: How does agriculture fit into your overall mission? How does the project work towards your mission?

#### **4. Project Summary and Conclusions**

Summarize the key points of this project. Explain why the project should be supported and how the goals/outcomes respond to issues identified in the funding opportunity and create solutions to address an industry need?