

# *Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Viability Grant Program*

## Farm Transition Grant

*For Connecticut Farmers and Agricultural Cooperatives*

### **Grant Application Guidelines and Forms**

**Application Deadline:**  
~~February 17, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.~~

**EXTENDED TO:**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.**



**Ned Lamont, Governor**  
**Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner**  
Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 703  
Hartford, CT 06103  
860-713-2503 • CTGrown.gov

# Table of Contents

Grant Description	4
Eligible Applicants	4
Award Limits and Matching Requirements	4
Project Duration	5
Funding Priorities	5
Eligible and Ineligible Expenses	6
Submission Process	6
Application Requirements	7
Evaluation Criteria and Process	7
Award Requirements	7
Appendices	
A: Application Cover Page	9
B: Budget	11
C: Required Format for Project Plan	12
D: Project Ideas and Checklist for Projects Related to the Produce Safety Rule	15
Submission Checklist	19

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Applications must be submitted by email to Jaime Smith, [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov) AND Mark Hood, [Mark.Hood@ct.gov](mailto:Mark.Hood@ct.gov) between February 10, 2020 and ~~February 17, 2020~~ **February 25, 2020**

Applications will not be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on ~~February 17, 2020.~~  
**February 25, 2020**

Questions can be directed to:

- Jaime Smith: [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov)
- Mark Hood: [Mark.Hood@ct.gov](mailto:Mark.Hood@ct.gov)
- Phone: 860-713-2503

Grant guidelines and forms can also be found online at  
[www.CTGrown.gov/Grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/Grants)

**All questions regarding the application and content must be submitted via email no later than Thursday, February 13, 2020 to Jaime Smith at [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov)**

## **GRANT DESCRIPTION**

The Farm Transition Grant (FTG) 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 developing farmers' markets and other venues in which a majority of products sold are grown in the state.

Funding for the Farm Transition Grant is provided through Public Act 05-228, An Act Concerning Farmland Preservation, Land Protection, Affordable Housing, and Historic Preservation.

The Farm Transition Grant Program and any awards are subject to limitations of state funding.

## **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

The following entities are eligible to apply for the Farm Transition Grant:

1. Agricultural producers, singularly or jointly, whether such producers are owners or tenants of existing agricultural production facilities located within the State of Connecticut. Tenants must include a written agreement between all necessary parties regarding the submitted project.
2. Agricultural cooperatives.

Eligible entities applying must meet the following to qualify for the Farm Transition Grant:

- be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of State if established as a limited liability corporation or incorporation
- possess a Farmer's Tax Exemption Permit
- have submitted a Schedule F, Form 1120S, Form 1065, or Schedule C for the previous three years.

Prior grantees may apply for a Farm Transition Grant. Past awards and corresponding project completion will be taken into consideration when evaluating applications.

## **AWARD LIMITS AND MATCHING REQUIREMENTS**

The minimum amount awarded to any applicant through the Farm Transition Grant shall be \$3,500.

The maximum amount awarded to any applicant through the Farm Transition Grant shall not exceed \$49,999.

Matching funds from the applicant must be a *minimum* of 50% of the total project budget. The match must be clearly outlined in the application and can only be cash contributions; in-kind matches are not allowed.

The cash match can be self-financed, provided by bank financing, or funded through another grant (federal, state, or otherwise). If a grant is providing the match, the applicant must disclose the grantor, the grant name, and amount awarded. The Farm Transition Grant must be paid directly to the applicant.

**Please note: This is a reimbursement grant. Funds shall be reimbursed to the applicant only after the entire project is successfully completed and all necessary documentation is submitted. There are no cash advances.**

## PROJECT DURATION

Projects must be completed within one year of contract execution. Contracts will be in effect for two years.

Project extensions are allowable only with prior approval. Contract extensions are unallowable.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture's grant coordinator or any other agent of the Commissioner of Agriculture may make periodic visits to the project site during the contract duration.

## FUNDING PRIORITIES

Below are funding priorities of the Farm Transition Grant as they directly relate and respond to expanding, diversifying, and transitioning agriculture as defined by Connecticut General Statutes 1-1(q):

- Diversification of existing farm operations into new and emerging crops and/or product lines.
- Strengthening infrastructure to meet changing climate conditions.
- On-farm improvements to comply with the Produce Safety Rule of the Food Safety Modernization Act
- Meeting food safety requirements for advanced positioning in the marketplace.
- Improving food security and food systems in urban areas to increase access to Connecticut Grown products
- Increasing year-round availability of Connecticut Grown products while enhancing farm viability.

## ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

All eligible expenses funded by the Farm Transition Grant must advance farming and agriculture as defined by [Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-1\(g\)](#).

The following expenses are not funded by the Farm Transition Grant. They may however be considered an acceptable match if they directly and meaningfully support the proposed project:

- Employee salaries and fringe benefits paid to execute the project
- Permits
- Attorneys' fees, consultants' fees
- Consumable or disposable supplies

The following expenses cannot be used as a match and will not be funded by the grant:

- Any expense incurred prior to contract execution
- Land acquisition/mortgages
- Cost of borrowing (points and other fees)
- Expenses to fund the start-up of a new organization
- 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 or disposable supplies unrelated to the project
- Indirect costs of any percentage.

## SUBMISSION PROCESS

Applications **are only accepted as Microsoft (MS) documents, with editable text**, submitted via email to Jaime Smith, [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov) AND Mark Hood, [Mark.Hood@ct.gov](mailto:Mark.Hood@ct.gov) between February 10, 2020 and 4:00 p.m. on ~~February 17, 2020~~ **February 25, 2020**

*Please keep in mind there is occasionally a delay with email and plan accordingly.  
A confirmation email will be sent upon receipt. If you do not receive a confirmation with 24 hours of submission please first check the spelling of the email address, [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov), then contact the agency.*

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

A complete application includes:

1. Application Cover Page (Appendix A), submitted as a MS Word document with editable text
2. Budget Form (Appendix B), submitted as a MS document with editable text, itemized for each category
3. A project plan (Appendix C), submitted as a MS Word document with editable text. The format of Appendix C and all elements noted in Appendix C must be included.
4. Conceptual drawings, estimates/quotes, production information, etc. These can be submitted as .pdf documents

Editable documents of the appendices mentioned above can be obtained at, [www.CTGrown.gov/Grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/Grants).

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS**

The Farm Transition 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. See Appendix C, Required Format for Project Plan for more information.

Additional information, such as quotes, conceptual drawings, and other documentation justifying and supporting the budget and project, is strongly encouraged to present a competitive application.

## **AWARD REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants of awarded projects will be responsible for the following:

1. Signing a contract 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. Agreeing to a site inspection once the project is complete and prior to final payment being released
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 payment must be submitted with the payment request at the conclusion of the project
7. Other requirements as outlined in the State of Connecticut contract

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

Editable versions of the required appendices can be obtained at [www.CTGrown.gov/Grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/Grants).

Applications must be submitted via email in Microsoft Word format with editable text no later than **4:00 p.m. on ~~February 17, 2020~~. February 25, 2020**

A confirmation email will be sent once the application is received.  
*If you do not receive a confirmation with 24 hours of submission, please first check the spelling of the email address, [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov), then contact the agency.*

*The Connecticut Department of Agriculture reserves the right to fund a project in part, add and delete expenses, and/or ask for clarification on any portion of the application. No contract will be executed until the Connecticut Department of Agriculture is satisfied with all project specifications.*

*Any grant award is dependent upon the availability of funds.*



## Appendix A: Application Cover Page 2020 Farm Transition Grant

Applicant Information			
<b>Applicant/Farm Name:</b>			
<b>Contact:</b>			
<b>Full Mailing Address:</b>			
<b>Phone:</b>		<b>Website:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>			
<b>Do you meet the USDA's criteria for the following categories</b>	Beginning Farmer ( <i>farming for fewer than 10 years</i> ) <b>Yes/No</b> Veteran Farmer <b>Yes/No</b> If yes, branch and dates of services: _____ Socially Disadvantaged Farmer ( <i>American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asians, African Americans, Native Hawaiians/other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics</i> ) <b>Yes/No</b>		
Project Information			
<b>Project Title:</b> <i>Provide a title describing your project.</i>			
		<b>Total Project Costs:</b>	
		<b>Cash Expenses Covered by Applicant:</b> <i>At least 50% of expenses must be covered by applicant</i>	
		<b>Farm Transition Grant Funds Requested:</b> <i>Not to exceed \$49,999</i>	
Farm Information			
<b>Owner(s) of Record</b> ( <i>if different from Project Contact</i> )			
<b>Property Address</b> ( <i>where project will take place if different from mailing address</i> )			
<b>Phone of Owner(s):</b> ( <i>if different from Project Contact</i> )		<b>Email of Owner(s):</b> ( <i>if different from Project Contact</i> )	
<b>Acres in production agriculture</b>		<b>Do you farm:</b>	Full Time / Part Time
<b>Describe in detail the production agriculture carried out on the farm. Give acreage and quantities of the crops grown, the number and kinds of livestock, forest products, value added products, greenhouses, etc.</b>			
<b>Is any of the land in production or land associated with this project in the Farmland Preservation Program or under any other conservation restrictions?</b>			Yes / No

If yes to above, please state under what program/what the restrictions are:			
Have you submitted an Application to Construct if land is protected through a conservation easement?		Yes / No	
Have you received other Connecticut Department of Agriculture Grants in the last five years?	Yes / No	If yes state the grant program, year received, and amount for each award.	
Do you a written business plan for the farm?	Yes / No	If yes state the year the business plan was last updated.	
Do you currently have an open grant contract with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture?			Yes / No

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Applicant** **Title** **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Owner of Record** **Title** **Date**

*Typed name serves as signature.*

## **Appendix B: Budget 2020 Farm Transition Grant**

The project budget can be submitted in one of two formats:

1. MS Word fillable chart. Applicants must calculate the sums and totals themselves.

**OR**

2. MS Excel Spreadsheet. Applicants enter the itemized costs and the subtotals and category totals are calculated automatically.

Both fillable forms can be found online at [www.CTGrown.gov/Grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/Grants)

*Budgets provided in any other format other than the two formats noted above will not be accepted and will result in an incomplete application that will not be evaluated.*

## **Appendix C: Required Format for Project Plan 2020 Farm Transition Grant**

Use the following section headings when writing the project plan. Be thorough yet concise in each section addressing all questions/statements below. Project plans are typically between 5-7 pages.

1. **Cover Sheet** – Name of business and contact information.
  
2. **Introduction** – Introduce your business to the reviewers. Include information such as:
  - a. How long have you been in business?
  - b. What do you produce and how many acres are in production? How/why has that changed over the years?
  - c. What are your future project and business plans?
  
3. **Project Explanation** – Explain in detail what your project is and what it's going to accomplish. The reviewers will be looking for a statement that begins with "This project will....."  
  
How the project will improve your agribusiness? Provide a before and after of business operations once the project is complete.
  
4. **Funding Requirements and Proposals** – Summarize the budget. Include information such as:
  - a. Where the match is coming from (cash, loan, other grant, etc.)
  - b. Sufficient explanation and justification of the financial support requested
  
5. **Project Timeline** – Include all project milestones and related deadlines. Include information such as:
  - a. When you need to begin the project
  - b. When necessary activities/tasks to complete the project will occur
  - c. When the project will be completed

Below is an example of how to present this information:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Task Completion Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Completing Task</b>
Contractors hired	_____ week(s) from final contract signing	Farm Owner
Retail store construction completed	_____ month(s) from final contract signing	Contractor
Plumbing completed	_____ days from final contract signing	Plumber
Electrical completed	_____ week(s) from final contract signing	Farm Owner
Retail display items installed	_____ month(s) from final contract signing	
Stand open for retail business	No later than ( <i>Month, Day, Year</i> )	Farm Owner

6. **Target Markets** – What expanded, additional, or new market(s) will your project allow you to serve or reach? Include information such as:
- The number or volume of people, markets, products, etc.
  - How will you change your marketing?
7. **Business Goals and Objectives** – Identify at least one project goal. How does the project goal work towards the business goals for the next three to five (or more) years?

*Goal vs. Objective*

A *goal* is defined as a broad-based result.

*Example:* A new farm store will be open for business by June 2018.

An *objective* is defined as a step taken towards achieving a goal. There are often multiple objectives that must be completed in order to measure progress and reach the goal/outcome.

*Example:* Objectives to meet the goal of opening a farm store by June 2018:

- Hire an architect to design the building
- Go out to bid and select a contractor to build the building
- Bring in stone and level for parking area
- Hire an electrician to install electrical
- Purchase and identify delivery date(s) for display cases and shelving
- Move produce and other materials from current sales location to new retail store
- Promote the opening of the new store
- Open store in June 2018

Hiring a contractor is an objective, not a goal. Goals are broad-based results of objectives.

8. **Outcome** – Identify an outcome you strive to achieve as a result of completing this project.

An *outcome* is defined as a quantifiable result and usually accomplished after the project is done.

*Example:* There will be a 7% increase in sales in 2020 as a result of the new retail farm store.

9. **Financial History** – Provide copies of IRS Schedule F, Schedule C, or Form 1120S for the last three years starting with the most recently filed. These can be added after the Project Plan or embedded into the plan itself.

10. **Project Summary and Conclusions** – Summarize the project.

Explain:

- how it relates to your business goals
- how the project helps to sustain and promote Connecticut agriculture

## **Appendix D: Project Ideas and Checklist for Projects Related to the Produce Safety Rule**

*Before submitting a project which addresses areas for compliance with the Produce Safety Rule, a portion of the Food Safety Modernization Act, please consider the following information.*

The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is the most sweeping reform of United States food safety laws in more than 70 years. It was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama on January 4, 2011. It aims to ensure a safe U.S. food supply by shifting the focus from a reactive to a preventative approach.

FSMA is comprised of several different rules. The rules most likely to impact Connecticut farms are:

- Produce Safety Rule (PSR), the first of its kind regarding the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of fruit and vegetables for human consumption
- Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule
- Preventive Controls for Animal Food Rule
- Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food Rule

Below are some aspects of the PSR Connecticut farms may now be subject to comply with. Projects submitted which address these areas and improve the farm operation are considered eligible projects under the Farm Transition Grant.

Projects submitted which address areas of FSMA are not guaranteed an award.

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### **FSMA and PSR References**

- FDA website for FSMA:  
<https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/default.htm>
- Are You Covered? FSMA-PSR Coverage Flowchart:  
<https://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/UCM472499.pdf>
- UConn Extension Food Safety Website and FSMA Training Manual:  
<http://www.foodsafety.uconn.edu/>
- Questions regarding accredited training should be directed to UConn Extension (contact information in link above)

- Questions regarding the Farm Transition Grant can be directed to Jaime Smith, [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov) or Mark Hood, [Mark.Hood@ct.gov](mailto:Mark.Hood@ct.gov) or by phone at 860-713-2503

## **Examples of Eligible Projects to Address FSMA and PSR Compliance**

### *Worker Health and Hygiene*

- Hand washing
- Sanitation units
- Training materials - Courses and/or purchased training materials

### *Soil Amendments*

- Dedicated equipment to minimize risks of cross contamination
- Composting facilities
- Tools/equipment needed to verify treatment practices

### *Wildlife, Domestic Animals and Land Use*

- Items that will reduce wildlife, domestic animals, and the public from entering areas of covered activities

Examples: Fencing, signage, deterrents

### *Handling & Sanitation - Post-Harvest*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrooms/sanitation facilities, hand wash stations</li> <li>• Sanitary packing house equipment – cleanable, stainless steel, protection of packing line</li> <li>• Remodeling of packing houses, storage spaces – enclose, impervious surfaces for cleaning, washable walls, ceilings, covered lights, self-closing doors, etc</li> <li>• Plastic/washable harvest containers/bins</li> <li>• Storage packing containers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protected lights</li> <li>• Rodent deterrent devices/traps</li> <li>• Upgrades to cooling devices</li> <li>• New roof(s)</li> <li>• Sanitary dump tanks</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Covered/protected staging area</li> <li>• Traceability/label machine</li> <li>• See also: <i>Ag. Water – Post Harvest</i></li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### *Ag. Water - Pre-harvest*

- Enhancements to further protect surface water from containment
- Equipment used for irrigation/fertigation that leads to a reduced risk of microbial contamination



Examples:

- Well
- Drip irrigation
- Water tanks
- Backflow valves
- Filters
- Chemical injectors
- Pipes/lines
- Fixtures
- Sampling equipment
- UV light, ozonator units
- Record keeping tools

*Ag. Water – Post Harvest*

Examples:

- Well
- Water tanks
- Backflow valves
- Filters
- Chemical injector systems
- Pipes/lines
- Fixtures
- Sampling equipment
- UV light
- Record keeping tools
- Sanitizer/chemical meter
- pH meter, ORP sensor
- Temperature recording device
- Water temperature maintenance equipment
- Water disposal system

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Please be aware that this is not an exhaustive list of eligible projects. Applicants should refer to accredited training materials for a complete list.

## Checklist for FSMA Related Projects

Does the Project Plan include the following information?

- Is the farm required to comply with the PSR? (*This information should be included in the Introduction section of the Project Plan*)
  - a. If Yes:
    - What covered produce is being grown?
    - What are the average yearly food sales? This includes all human food and animal feed sold from the business.
    - What are the average yearly produce sales?
    - What percentage of food sales are sold to a qualified end user?
  - b. If No:
    - Are there other areas of FSMA the farm is required to comply with? Example: Preventative Controls (PC) for Animal Feed, Human Food, or Sanitary Transportation?
- Someone from the farm should have attended one of the following accredited training courses below. Have you provided the date of the training and trainer name? (*Acknowledgment of training and information should be included in the Introduction section of the Project Plan*)
  - a. Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Course
  - b. PC for Human Food
  - c. PC for Animal Feed
  - d. Other
- Have you attached a copy of the certificate from the accredited training course? (*This can be a .pdf/.jpg attachment to the application*)
- Have you described the specific areas of the PSR the farm is addressing through completion of this project? (*This information should be included in the Project Explanation of the Project Plan*)
- Have you explained to the reviewers that you have an understanding about the processes required to comply with the PSR and FSMA expectations? (*This should be included in the Project Explanation section of the Project Plan*)
- Have you explained the what, why, and how of the proposed project which enables the farm to comply with areas of FSMA. (*This information should be included throughout the Project Plan and reiterated in the Project Summary and Conclusions*)

## Application Submission Checklist

ALL of the following must be included for an application to be complete and eligible for review. Any application submitted with missing components will be considered incomplete and shall not be reviewed.

- Application Cover Page, Appendix A, completed in its entirety without any blanks and with an electronic signature. Submitted as a MS Word document with editable text.
- A Budget Form, Appendix B. Submitted as a MS Word document OR a MS Excel spreadsheet with editable text.
- A project plan that reflects each of the sections noted in Appendix C (and D if applicable.) Submitted as a MS Word document with editable text.

**The application must be received by email between February 10, 2020 and 4:00 p.m. on February 17, 2020. February 25, 2020**

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This checklist does not need to be submitted with your application. It is for your reference only.