



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the School Child Nutrition Programs

FROM: Cheryl Resha, Education Manager *Cheryl Resha*
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: December 9, 2011

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum #02-12
Rural Development Community Facilities Program

In support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) focus on rural development, this memorandum brings attention to the Rural Development Community Facilities (CF) program. The CF program provides loans and grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. It offers a unique opportunity for non-profit organizations, public bodies, and tribal organizations to upgrade their community's child nutrition facilities and purchase equipment that could improve access to healthy, locally or regionally grown products.

The CF low-interest loans and grants are available to public entities such as county and local governments, non-profit organizations and tribal organizations. These funds can be used to construct, enlarge or improve community facilities that provide healthcare, education, public safety and public services. Specific to the Child Nutrition Programs, the CF loan/grant funds could be used to improve public buildings like school food service facilities, Head Start centers, pre-schools, adult day care centers, child day care centers and food preparation centers.

In the past, communities have used CF funds to renovate cafeterias and purchase food preparation and storage equipment. For example, one Board of Education Food Service Division that provides breakfast and lunch programs for public school students used CF funds to improve a warehouse by adding refrigeration units for fresh fruits and vegetables. In turn, this allowed them to purchase larger quantities, expand choices and increase the amount of locally grown food served in their schools. One school used a CF loan to expand its campus to include an organic vegetable garden and fruit orchards which provide fresh produce for the after school snack program. Another school purchased a convection food steamer to prepare locally grown vegetables with CF funds.

Although the CF loans and grants are both competitively scored, grant funds are limited. Therefore, communities are encouraged by the USDA to consider the affordable low-interest, fixed-rate loans the CF program offers. Child Nutrition Programs operating in small, low-income communities may be eligible for a higher percentage of grant funding or loans.

Interested participants should contact their local USDA Rural Development office to learn more about how the CF Program can help them expand their access to and support local and regional foods. Further information about this opportunity can be found at the following Web site: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF CF.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF_CF.html).

Additionally, attached is a Q and A that was issued by the USDA to assist in clarifying the grant opportunity.

Questions may be directed to:

<i>COUNTIES</i>	<i>CONSULTANT</i>	<i>E-MAIL</i>	<i>PHONE</i>
Hartford and Windham	Teri Dandeneau	teri.dandeneau@ct.gov	860-807-2079
Litchfield, Middlesex and Tolland	Fionnuala Brown	fionnuala.brown@ct.gov	860-807-2129
Fairfield and New London	Jackie Schipke	jackie.schipke@ct.gov	860-807-2123
New Haven (Towns/Cities beginning with A – M)	Jackie Schipke	jackie.schipke@ct.gov	860-807-2123
New Haven (Towns/Cities beginning with N – W)	Teri Dandeneau	teri.dandeneau@ct.gov	860-807-2079

CR:tdd

Attachment