CT Grown for CT Kids Grant

FY 27 Informational Webinar

Program Coordinator: Kaylee Carlisle

Email: Kaylee.Carlisle@ct.gov

www.CTGrown.gov

Agenda

- Grant Purpose and Guidance
- Changes and Updates
- Deadlines and Timelines
- Eligible Applicants
- Grant Categories
- Funding Levels & Expenses
- Application Requirements
- Definitions, Appendices and Resources

Grant Purpose

To **assist** schools, school districts, childcare centers and 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.

Grant Guidance

Contains all the information necessary to understand how to create a competitive grant application

Changes & Updates

Updated Grant Categories

The program now aligns with the three (3) C's of Farm-to-School: Cafeteria, Classroom, and Community

Two Application Deadlines

Microgrant: September 9, 2026 at Midnight EST

Full Grant: November 9, 2026 at Noon EST

CT Grown for CT Kids Week Events

Hosting an event is no longer a post-award requirement and is now considered an awarding priority.

Application Deadlines

Grant Type	Grant Categories	Application Open	Application Deadline
Microgrant	• Cafeteria • Community • Classroom	**August 11, 2026** 12:00pm Noon EST	**September 9, 2026** 12:00am Midnight EST
Full Grant	• Cafeteria • Classroom • Community (*Excluding producers*)	**August 11, 2026** 12:00pm Noon EST	**November 9, 2026** 12:00pm Noon EST

CTG4CTK Grant Timelines

MICROGRANT

Contract Start Date: December 1, 2026 → Completing Project Tasks: Ongoing → Earliest Completion Date: June 1, 2027 → Latest Completion Date: November 30, 2027

FULL GRANT

Contract Start Date: February 1, 2027 → Completing Project Tasks: Ongoing → Latest Completion Date: December 31, 2028

Eligible Applicants

1. Local or regional boards of education;
2. Regional education service centers;
3. Private schools or institutions;
4. Colleges and universities, including student-led groups;
5. A cooperative arrangement pursuant to section 10-158a of the general statutes;
6. Childcare centers, group childcare homes and family childcare homes as such terms are described in section 19a-77 of the general statutes; or
7. Any organization or entity, including CT farmers, administering or assisting in the development of a farm to school program.

Grant Categories & Descriptions

Cafeteria:

Procurement & Culinary

To provide resources to food service directors, or other local food purchasers at educational establishments, to continue the training, support, processing, and equipment purchases necessary to sustaining purchases of CT Grown and regionally grown food.

Project Examples:

- 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.

- Creation of regional producer training, or technical assistance for individuals interested in selling to schools with specific or complex procurement standards.

- Professional development and skills training for food service staff in how to process and prepare fresh food.

- Activities focused on increasing awareness and education about CT Grown farm products such as taste tests for sustained programing and local/regional food purchases in school meals.

Classroom

Experiential Learning, AgTech, and Innovation

To fund projects that incorporate hands-on Farm to School projects through learning, technology, and innovation. Projects should give students and educators real experiences with agriculture, culturally appropriate food, or climate resilience, while connecting to classroom learning and future food careers. Projects should build long-term capacity.

Project Examples:

- School gardens or raised beds to teach about growing, harvesting, and food systems
- Hydroponic or aquaponic systems; urban agriculture installations
- Use of technology to monitor crops and support STEM learning
- Culinary or nutrition education using CT Grown products
- Field trips to CT farms or bringing farmers into the classroom
- Teacher or staff training to connect agriculture, food justice, or climate to curriculum
- AgTech and climate-smart ag. programs that promote innovation, technology, resilience, and environmental stewardship
- Storytelling and cultural food projects
- Regenerative agriculture gardens, pollinator habitats, or composting programs

Community

Producer Support (Microgrants Only) & ECE & Family Engagement

To support community-based farm-to-school initiatives that increase access to CT Grown foods and strengthen local food system connections. Projects may include producer capacity building, Farm-to-ECE initiatives, food literacy, and family engagement activities.

Project Examples:

<u>Producer Capacity Building</u> (Microgrants Only)

- Equipment for harvest, wash and pack, sorting, processing, and/or transportation of farm products to schools and ECE buyers.
- Infrastructure to allow for season extension, such as high tunnels and storage.
- Required training and certifications (such as food safety) needed to sell to local schools.
- Outreach and marketing initiatives to promote additional sales to school outlets.

<u>ECE & Family Engagement</u>

- Farm-to-ECE programming and partnerships.
- Food, garden, and nutrition education activities for young children and families.
- Cooking classes, taste tests, and food preparation activities featuring CT Grown foods.
- Family food access, shopping, or budgeting education focused on local foods.
- Indoor gardens, mobile garden kits, or growing projects

Funding Levels & Expenses

Funding Levels

Microgrants

- Awards of **$5,000** or less.
- Simpler contracting requirements
- Timeframe of 6-12 months
- Offered in Categories: Cafeteria, Classroom, & Community

Deadline:* September *9, 2026 12am Midnight EST

Full Grants

- Awards of **$5000.01** or more **up to $50,000**.
- More complex contracting requirements
- Timeframe of 12-24 months
- Offered in Categories: Cafeteria, Classroom, & Community

  (Excluding Producers)

Deadline: November 9, 2026 12:00pm Noon EST

Expenses

Key Requirements: No match required, capital expenditures must be justified, salary and fringe capped at 25% of requested funds

Eligible Expenses	Not Eligible Expenses
• Expenses generated by activities in preparation for or in celebration of CT Grown for CT Kids Week • Salary and fringe costs, not more than 25% of the requested funds	• Farmers Market Vouchers • SNAP/WIC/FMNP Doubling • Any expense incurred prior to contract execution • Land acquisition/mortgages • Cost of borrowing (points and other fees) • Expenses related to establishing a new organization or 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 • Routine business expenses (utilities, office supplies, etc) • Legal expenses related to litigation • Indirect or contingency costs of any percent • Any expense related to lobbying

Applying for a CTG4CTK Grant:
Requirements & Resources

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit the following through **DoAg's Online Grant Portal**:

Complete grant application

- Budget Form (*available in the portal*)
- Quotes/estimates for infrastructure or services (*if applicable*)
- W-9, Vendor, and Direct Deposit Forms *(only for applicants not currently registered as State of Connecticut vendors*)

- Optional supporting materials (e.g., conceptual drawings, photos, videos)
- Optional: Up to three letters of support from project stakeholders

Vendor Registration Note

- **K–12 public schools:** No vendor forms required.
- **Producers, nonprofits, and ECEs:** Contact the Project Coordinator if you are unsure whether you are already registered as a state vendor.

Definitions

Ensures that all reviewers, applicants, and program staff are working from the same understanding of key terms.

The goal of this section is:

- Create clarity
- Promote consistency
- Create a fairer process throughout

Appendices

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix B: Evaluation Criteria and Process

Appendix C: Narrative Forms

Appendix D: Letter of Support Template

ThePhoto by PhotoAuthor is licensed under CCYYSA

Additional Resources

- Best Practices for Applicants by Project Type
- Application Walk Through Video (FY26)
- Budget Tracker Guide

Thank you!

Program Coordinator:

Kaylee Carlisle

Email: Kaylee.Carlisle@ct.gov