Connecticut Milk Promotion Board Request for Quotes

Funding Opportunity for Consumer Nutrition and Education
As of February 24, 2025

SUMMARY

Submissions for qualifying consumer nutrition education and promotional projects should focus on increasing consumption and sales of dairy products in Connecticut by expanding access to milk and dairy products to consumers, retailers, institutions, and other applicable outlets and align with at least one or more of the following goals of partnering with (including but not limited to):

1) grocery, retail, processors, supply chain entities
2) health professionals and nutrition educators
3) institutions, particularly those that serve youth, and schools
4) other milk and dairy promoters in the region and nationally

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board (CTMPB) seeks to positively impact dairy farmers' economic viability by increasing the purchase of and access to Connecticut fluid milk and dairy products.

To achieve this, CTMPB will focus on retail consumers, chefs and restaurants, institutions, and other outlets as a result of developing, coordinating, and implementing promotional, research, educational, and other programs for the program partners.

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board has budgeted up to $137,500 for one year with the option to extend a second year under the producer-approved Dairy Promotion Order for consumer nutrition and promotional activities. CTMPB determines promotion and nutrition education programs and various dairy product research projects.

The proposed programs submitted under this RFQ should be designed to increase awareness of Connecticut dairy farms and increase Connecticut milk consumption in local, domestic, or international markets.

BACKGROUND

The Board consists of nine members including Connecticut milk producers, a nutritionist appointed by the Connecticut Legislature, and the Commissioner of Agriculture. Connecticut has 85 dairy farms. The dairy industry is the state's second-largest agricultural sector, generating over $1 billion in economic activities, providing some of the highest economic multipliers in the state.

Funding for this project is provided through the Dairy Research and Promotion Program, also known as the Dairy Checkoff Program. CGS Sec. 22-137d specifies the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board's ability to award the funds from Connecticut's portion of check-off dollars. All projects should be executed in accordance with the national Dairy Research and Promotion Program, which can be found at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/research-promotion/dairy

To learn more about Connecticut Dairy, please visit www.CTDairy.org. You can also find Connecticut Dairy on social media sites including Facebook (@CTDairyFarms), Pinterest (ConnecticutDairy), Instagram (@ConnecticutDairy), YouTube (Connecticut Dairy), and TikTok (@ConnecticutDairy).

GOAL

The overall goal is to develop a nutrition and education campaign for CTMPB to educate consumers on the nutritional benefits of dairy. Funding will be allocated by the CTMPB at its discretion across its funding priorities and based on submissions received.

Development, coordination, implementation, promotion, research, and other programs should be designed to promote Connecticut dairy farms and milk consumption. The CTMPB five (5) year target is to accomplish an increase in dairy purchases and consumption throughout the supply chain in Connecticut. It is expected that the awarded submissions will contribute to the target goal.

Campaigns should implement a strategy engaging farmers, producers, educators, and influencers in key target markets that highlight and/or result in increased consumer awareness by:

- **Educating target audiences** by informing consumers, retailers, institutions, and other relevant parties about the nutritional benefits of milk and dairy products.
- Increasing **trust in dairy farmers** by helping consumers understand healthy cow farm settings and practices by incorporating evidence-based information on animal care, environmental impact, and land conservation/preservation efforts.

- Bolstering and highlighting the **local** aspect of dairy farming without promoting one specific brand.
- **Building connections** between farmers and communities that result in an improved image of dairy farming and dairy farming practices.
- Promoting scientific and market **research**:
    - to increase the purchase and consumption of dairy as a **highly nutritious** component of a diet;
    - to show the breadth and importance of the **integration of dairy** products in the American diet;
    - to show how dairy farmers are part of the **climate change solution**.
- **Aligning strategies** with other national efforts to promote the purchase and consumption of milk and dairy products.

CONSIDERATIONS

For each respective goal, prospective proposers should develop, design, and execute activities and programs that educate the target audience and/or increase the consumption of dairy products in Connecticut.

Contractors may contact and work with industry and national experts.

If the Contractor is also funded by other agriculture programs, including funding from the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, or any national or regional agriculture or dairy partners doing work in Connecticut, the Contractor may build off their work but cannot duplicate programming under this funding.

Subcontractors will be permitted under the guidelines of the contract.

CTMPB, at its discretion, may request more information or a presentation, as needed, to evaluate the scope of work submitted. If presentations are requested, Contractors will be notified.

REQUIRED SUBMISSION ELEMENTS

Submissions should describe a comprehensive campaign to identify and target consumers from various backgrounds, including multiracial and multiethnic groups, by integrating different mediums to effectively reach the target audience. Submissions should address how each of the following tasks will be implemented and the cost associated with each task:

These activities and programs may include, but shall not be limited to:

- Partnerships with grocery stores, chefs and restaurants, processors, and supply chain on projects that:
    - activate in-store consumer experiences and education, i.e., shelf talkers, contests
    - implement shopper marketing features (i.e., email marketing/home mailers, etc.) to highlight the sustainable nutrition of dairy as part of consumers' weekly meal plan
    - develop consumer education campaigns including digital, social, and geotargeting
    - partner with other agricultural groups (for example: farm wineries, farm breweries, etc.) to showcase pairings with dairy products
- Partnerships with health professionals and nutrition educators through projects that:
    - promote the value of milk and dairy through events, speakers, and organization sponsorships
    - showcase the importance of dairy in the diet by farm tours (virtual or in-person), speakers, and webinars
    - develop/inform a curriculum that engages supporting health professionals (including pre-professional) with science driven data
- Partnerships with educational institutions, particularly those who serve youth through projects that:
    - Develop or inform classroom curriculum (virtual and in-person) on dairy sustainability, dairy nutrition, and dairy farm experiences
    - Develop and administer school nutrition equipment and/or program grants to increase access and availability of milk and dairy products
- Partnerships with other milk and dairy promoters in the region and nationally:
    - Obtain access to existing campaign assets and consumer insight research to incorporate in multi-media marketing strategy.
    - Utilize national dairy science research and communications for consumer education
    - Activate/Implement national campaigns on a state level.

Examples of ineligible projects:

- A project that uses contract funds for lobbying purposes;
- A project that promotes a specific dairy product brand, product, or dairy farm.
- A project that promotes non-bovine dairy products such as goat, sheep, etc.
- Projects that cannot be conducted in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, ordinances, or other guidance issued related to COVID-19.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions cannot exceed 6 pages (8.5" x 11"), excluding appendices.

Submissions may **only** be submitted via the Cognito link which may also be accessed through the agency grants page listed above or applicants may also use this web address: https://www.cognitoforms.com/CTDoAg/CTMPBConsumerNutritionAndEducationApplicationFY2627 **by March 31, 2025.**

Please provide the following information in your response:

Agency Overview

- Briefly describe your agency/firm's capacity to complete the project on time and on a budget.

Details of the Submission

- Detail how your firm would provide the **Required Submission Elements** while considering the Goals and Considerations, as outlined above.
- Provide a proposed timeline for the completion of the project.
- Provide an itemized budget and budget narrative for the specified time.
- Identify any services that would be subcontracted, with the specific responsibilities and a brief background of the subcontractor.

Required appendices (not subject to the 6-page limit):

- Provide select examples of past campaigns you have executed including any metrics that illustrate the effectiveness of the campaign. Include any former work you have done on similar dairy promotion efforts and/or marketing efforts.
- Include the names and bios of all individuals who would work directly on this project and outline each person's role.

Optional Appendices (not subject to the 6-page limit):

- Examples of proposed work for this project as cited in the narrative.
- Examples of any former work you have done on similar projects.

TIMELINE

Planning for this project shall begin as soon as possible upon execution of a contract and purchase order by the State of Connecticut. The purchase order and campaign work must conclude by June 30, 2027.

A timeline for the campaign itself will be developed in 2025 with the Board, the Coordinator, and the awardee.

PROJECT BUDGET

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board has budgeted up to $137,500 for one year with the option to extend a second year for all work associated with this submission. Partial or full awards will be reviewed and considered.

Provide an itemized budget and detailed budget narrative broken down by the Required Elements above and ensure the information provided in the Goals and Considerations sections is addressed.

SELECTION PROCESS SCHEDULE

Task	Deadline
RFQ Released	February 24, 2025
Q&A period ends	March 10, 2025, 4 p.m.
Answers provided to applicants	March 17, 2025
RFQ Deadline	March 31, 2025, 4:00 p.m.
Presentations by Applicants on or after (if applicable)	April 15, 2025
Award Decision on or after	April 15, 2025
Project Start Date	July 1, 2025

Please direct questions related to this RFQ to Ally Hughes, AMIR 2, Connecticut Milk Promotion Board Coordinator via email to: Allison.Hughes@ct.gov.

Questions will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on March 10, 2025, and answers will be shared with all interested firms by the close of business on March 17, 2025.