

2019 Farm-to-School Request for Proposal

Questions and Answers

***Project Objective, Tasks and Performance Measures are no longer pre-filled in Grants Gateway. Please enter the following under Work Plan Detail:**

Required Objective: *To increase the volume and variety of New York State farm products procured by schools/districts for inclusion in school meals programs.*

Required Task: *Evaluate the overall success of the project.*

Required Performance Measure: *Compare the volume and variety of New York State farm products procured for school meals programs at the beginning and end of the project.*

If you are having trouble registering, prequalifying, or filling out the grant application, please call the Grants Gateway help desk. They are available Monday – Friday, from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm, and can be reached by calling 518-474-5595, or by emailing grantsgateway@its.ny.gov.

Q: Where can I access the Farm-to-School RFP?

A: The RFP can be found on the Department of Agriculture and Markets’ “Funding Opportunities” page. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/rfps.html>

Q: We are finishing the 1st year of a Farm-to-School grant. Are we eligible to apply this year?

A: Applicants with current NYS Farm-to-School grants are eligible to apply, however the RFP prohibits applicants from submitting more than one proposal to the same RFP.

Q: Who are the eligible applicants?

A: Eligible applicants include – K-12 School Food Authorities, Charter schools, Not-for-profit organizations and Indian tribal organizations.

Q: Is the webinar scheduled on October 23rd optional or mandatory for applicants?

A: The webinar for the Farm-to-School RFP is completely optional.

Q: Do we need to submit MWBE and SDVOB utilization forms with our Farm to School application, or can we submit them post-award if an award is made?

A: Per the RFP, interested proposers are required to submit a MWBE/SDVOB form with their Proposal. If the proposer has not identified MWBE/SDVOB vendors at the time of submission, they can write “TBD” in locations where specific MWBE/SDVOB vendor identification is requested. This will allow the Department to mark the proposer as compliant for MWBE/SDVOB requirements under the RFP. If the proposal is awarded, they will need to submit revised forms once a MWBE/SDVOB is identified for use.

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Q: Are there any exemptions to the M/WBE calculation? Or is the goal 30% of the total grant budget?

A: MWBE exemptions are determined on a case-by-case basis. The Department of Agriculture and Markets has established an overall goal of 30 percent of a contractor's non-personnel budget to be used toward MWBE participation in the Farm-to-School program. Please refer to Section 11 on page 11 of the RFP for more information regarding the MWBE requirements.

Q: Are applicants required to participate in the National School Lunch program?

A: Participating in the National School Lunch program is not a requirement.

Q: Can more than one BOCES apply together (with component districts of each BOCES)?

Only one eligible entity may apply via Grants Gateway, but proposed activities can be attributed to and performed by project partners (e.g. – another BOCES district).

Q: Can a K-12 school district apply for a NYS Farm-to-School grant to develop a district-owned and operated farm whose products are then served in the district schools? Or, must grant funds be used by the district to partner with and procure products from NYS farms operated outside of the district?

A: While the program description encourages applicants to foster relationships among New York State farmers, food hubs, producers, processors, and distributors, the food does not specifically need to be purchased from a farm. Please refer to page 7, section 4.1: Evaluation Factors, for more information on how the proposals will be evaluated.

Q: Is the 6% SDVOB allocation a requirement or just a suggestion?

A: The 6% SDVOB goal is a requirement. If a good faith effort is made and the goal cannot be met, a *Request for Waiver* must be submitted.

Q: Please confirm the eligibility status of individual K-12 public schools for this grant?

A: An individual public school may apply to the RFP.

Q: I know some grants want you to be either Planning or Implementation, but not both, does that apply to this RFP?

A: The RFP makes no distinction to the project being Planning, Implementation or both; as long as the proposal meets the sole objective of the RFP: 'To increase the volume and variety of New York State farm products in school meal programs.

Q: Does eligible equipment need to be installed at the location of the entity that submits the proposal?

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A: There are no restrictions on the location of the project equipment, as long as it is being used for the sole objective of the proposal.

Q: Is the electrical work required to hook-up a walk-in cooler an eligible cost?

A: Electrical work that is required for the installation of eligible equipment is an allowable expense.

Q: In Question 2: Plan of Work in the RFP, I'd like to provide a month-by-month break-down of the work to be performed rather than trying to put it in paragraph form. However, it's difficult to paste into the Gateway and it seems like it would be redundant to the Objectives, Tasks, Performances Measures that we also submit. Should we include the same information in both sections?

A: In Work Plan Detail: The Objective, Task, Performance Measure section has limited space and does not require a time line to be entered. The better option would be to provide project time line information in question 2 of the proposal- that's the question that will be scored.

Q: Would a 501.C(5) organization be eligible if they are registered on grants gateway?

A: Yes, 501c5 organizations may be deemed as not-for-profit organizations regarding the RFP.

Q: Will this grant have various categories to choose from such as planning, implementing or educating?

A: Projects can take on different categories or types, but all projects will be rated together.

Q: Is the amount listed in the proposal a yearly amount or should we multiply our amount to run the program for two years?

A: The requested amount should reflect the **total** amount required to perform the entirety of the project.

Q: Our organization establishes hydroponic farms within public schools and distribute the produce to the school community via the cafeteria and other distribution pathways. So, we're essentially both the farmer/grower of produce as well as the conduit to the school. Will our produce count as NYS farm products?

A: Yes, this food would be considered a New York State Farm Product. The program description encourages that applicants foster relationships among local farmers, food hubs, producers, processors and distributors. Please refer to page 7, section 4.1 Evaluation Factors for more information on how the proposals will be evaluated.

Q: I am an Assistant Director for a summer camp, are we eligible to apply?

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A: If you are a non-profit organization registered with the State of New York, your organization is eligible to apply.

Q: If the RFP is open to summer meal programs, is it only available to SFSP sponsors, or may sites apply, too?

A: Summer food service programs can apply for the 2019 Farm to School grant. As far as sponsors or sites being eligible, any not-for-profit organizations registered with New York State can apply for the grant.

Q: Can you please provide a detailed definition of "NYS Farm Products"?

A: "NYS Food Product" is defined as:

- A food item that is grown, harvested, or produced in NYS; or
- A food item processed inside or outside NYS comprising over 51% agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in NYS, by weight or volume.

"Producing" means the producing of food grown upon and/or harvested from the farm or waters through agricultural, horticultural, aquaculture, or dairying processes.

"Processing" means any alteration of a food product from its raw or original state to enhance its value or render it suitable for consumption. Examples of processing include, but are not limited to, butchering of meat or poultry, and cooking, pasteurizing, and/or packaging food products.

Q: When quantifying the dollar amount of NYS farm products procured, should this number include animal farm products as well as whole produce?

A: Yes, both products are considered NYS farm products.

Q: Does this also include processed food that contains over 50% NYS farm product ingredients?

A: If NYS raw materials comprise over 51%, out of state processing is allowed.

Q: Does participation with the Summer Food Service Program and Child and Adult Care Food Program food programs prevent us from applying for this grant?

A: Participation with the SFSP and CACFP food programs does not prevent you from applying.

Q: With regard to Minority and Women Owned Businesses and SDVOB entities what conditions of a proposal would these be required? If our proposal is the creation of a partnership with local farmers for educational purposes and food procurement are either required?

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A: MWBE and SDVOB exemptions are determined on a case by case basis. The Department of Agriculture and Markets has established an overall goal of 30 percent for MWBE and 6 percent for SDVOB of a contractor's non-personnel budget to be used toward MWBE and SDVOB participation in the Farm-to-School program. Please refer to Section 11 on page 11 and Section 13 on page 14 of the RFP for more information regarding these requirements.

Q: Should we include resumes for staff who will be involved in the project?

A: Including resumes for staff is not required.

Q: If new priorities are identified during a project can adjustments be made?

A: Any proposed adjustments to a project must be submitted in writing to the Department for approval.

Q: Are BOCES eligible?

A: Yes, BOCES are eligible to apply.

Q: Can you review all the costs that aren't allowed as part of the grant application?

A: Please refer to page 4 of the RFP for both Eligible and Ineligible costs.

Q: Can you describe eligible food service equipment?

A: For food service equipment to be considered eligible, it must be used for the sole purpose of the RFP's objective "To increase the volume and variety of New York State farm products in school meals programs."

Q: Can budget line item changes be made for this grant?

A: Any proposed adjustments to a projects budget must be submitted in writing to the Department for approval.

Q: Can you describe successful programs in the past?

A: Here is a list of last year's projects that were funded:

2018 New York State Farm-to-School Awards

Western New York

- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County: \$92,479**
Funding will help expand on a successful Farm-to-School program through marketing, staff training and by increasing coordination between farmers, distributors and school administrators.
- **Wellsville Central School District: \$39,211**

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Wellsville Central SD will purchase an outdoor freezer to store local food and to support collaborative meal planning and coordinated crop planting with local farmers.

- **Franklinville Central School District: \$67,055**
Franklinville CSD is partnering with Cattaraugus CCE and Hinsdale SD to hire a Farm-to-School Coordinator to integrate agricultural lessons into curriculum and create a school garden.
- **Forestville Central School District: \$99,235**
Forestville CSD is partnering with Pine Valley CSD to implement a nutrition education curriculum and purchase equipment to preserve, prepare and serve local farm products. The project will serve four schools, benefiting 1,000 students and 18 farmers.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Erie County: \$80,457** Funds will be used to hire a Farm-to-School Coordinator for a county-wide initiative to benefit 97,162 students, develop a marketing plan to increase awareness of local farm products.

Finger Lakes

- **Genesee Valley Central School District: \$50,621**
Funding will be used to improve the capacity of food service teams to procure, process, preserve and serve fresh, locally grown produce within their district and increase consumption through creative marketing, field experiences and interactive food displays, giving more than 600 students access to nearly 8,000 pounds of locally-procured food.
- **Foodlink Inc.: \$66,936**
Foodlink, a regional foodbank serving 10 counties in the Finger Lakes region, will improve food safety protocols and hire and train additional staff for their state-of-the-art Value-Added Processing Center, which is used to slice New York State apples for school-aged children.

Southern Tier

- **The Rural Health Network SCNY, Inc: \$99,506**
Funding will be used to increase volume and variety of local school meals and expand NY Thursdays.
- **The Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Tompkins County: \$92,829**
Funding will be used to hire a county-wide Farm-to-School coordinator, train food service workers to prepare and serve local foods and increase student awareness and support to the State's new 30% procurement benchmark.

Central New York

- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County: \$100,000**
Ten school districts will work with the CCE to reduce childhood obesity by increasing consumption of local produce and minimally processed foods with healthy recipes and food experiences.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County: \$99,989**
Cortland County CCE will partner with five Cortland County school districts and Onondaga – Cortland – Madison BOCES to raise awareness of local foods in schools through meetings with farmers and taste test seminars. The program will also increase local procurement and develop related infrastructure.

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North Country

- **Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Essex County: \$99,939** Funding will be used to hire a regional Farm-to-School Coordinator to work with schools in Essex, Clinton and Franklin counties on educational programs, produce an updated buyers' guide and collaborate with Headwater Food Hub to streamline Adirondack Region procurement with the goal of 30% local food purchasing.

Mohawk Valley

- **Oneida Herkimer Madison BOCES: \$100,000**
Funding will support collaboration with Mohawk Valley Farm-To-School Initiative, transforming the existing central kitchen and warehouse into a mini food hub for better access and distribution of locally grown food. The project will serve 31 schools in 14 districts and could impact more than 13,000 students and boost sales for 30 farmers and producers across the Mohawk Valley.

Hudson Valley

- **Poughkeepsie Farm Project, NY Food for NY Kids: \$100,000**
Funding will be used to increase the purchase of local food at the Poughkeepsie and Wappingers Central School districts by training school nutrition staff, supporting school nutrition directors in effective local purchasing and educating students and families about new foods being introduced in their meals. The project will also use technical assistance and relationship building as it aims to reach the State's 30% procurement benchmark.

Capital Region

- **Capital Roots Inc: \$97,220**
Funding will be used to connect underserved schools with local producers and increase the number of schools purchasing local produce in the 11 counties surrounding the Greater Capital Region. The project is expected to result in the projected delivery of more than 8,000 pounds of local produce to schools in 2019.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County: \$36,226**
Funding will be used to build a wash, cure and storage facility and create an agricultural education program for students in Saratoga Central School District that will include farm experience field trips to increase awareness of locally-sourced food.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County: \$93,582**
CCE of Warren County will train food service staff, promote a meal program with locally-produced farm products and employ a Farm-to-School Coordinator. The program will also purchase vital equipment to support the purchase of local produce at five schools.

Long Island

- **Glen Cove City School District: \$84,712**
Funding will be used to train staff, develop recipes with local ingredients and hire a Farm-to-School coordinator.