

# 2015-2016 Farm to School Implementation Grant Application

**NOTE: This is an updated version 10/2/2014**

Farm to  
School  
Grant  
Program

Deadline October 28

**2014**

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This grant program is made possible by collaboration between the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day).

Implementation  
Grant Request  
for Proposals



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**AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS**

**Since 2007 the Vermont Farm to School Grant Program has been awarding Vermont schools with funds to integrate local foods in school cafeterias, classrooms and communities.**

The goals of the grant program are for schools and school districts to develop sustainable programs that serve food to Vermont students that is as fresh and nutritious as possible; maximize the use of fresh, locally grown, produced and processed foods; educate students about healthy eating habits through nutrition education, including using hands-on techniques to make the connections between farming and the foods that students consume; increase the size and stability of farmers' direct sales market; and increase school meal participation by increasing the selection of foods available to students.

**The Vermont Farm to School Implementation Grant should serve to assist Vermont schools in implementing existing Farm to School initiatives. School applying for an implementation grant must have an existing Wellness or Farm to School Committee with prior experience in community development or Farm to School training. Purchasing Vermont farm products and serving them through the school foodservice program is an essential component of all grants.**

**A school or district application should include but is not limited to the following activities:**

**Cafeteria**

- Training of food service staff to increase knowledge of local procurement and processing of local farm product
- Purchase of equipment to increase the ability of food service to serve local food
- Increase access of local farm product in the school meals program
- Taste testing with students and staff to determine recipes or items that should appear on the school meals menu
- Outreach to students to demonstrate local foods that are being served

**Classroom**

- Hands on farm and food education including school gardens and cooking
- Educational visits to farms, educational visits from farmers
- Farm and food education integrated into existing curriculum
- Professional development for educators to integrate food and farm education into existing curriculum

**Community**

- Utilizing volunteers from the community to advance the program
- Holding harvest festivals, community meals or Farm to School open house
- Communicating farm to school activities through school newsletter, community websites or local media
- Presenting about your farm to school program for local organizations such as school boards, community development boards or other organizations that could strengthen community support for the program

**ACTIVITIES THAT WILL NOT BE FUNDED:**

- **Purchase of foods that are *not* Vermont products**
- **Food services that are *not* accessible to students of all income levels**

**The maximum amount of an implementation grant award will be \$10,000.** These are competitive grants. \$56,000 is available from funds provided by the Vermont State Legislature for the 2015-2016 grant cycle. Approximately \$39,000 will be available for implementation grants, \$10,000 to support planning and pilot grants, with up to \$10,000 of technical assistance for grantees planning a farm to school program. Applicants will be notified of awards by early December 2014.

**ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE FOR 2015-2016 FTS GRANT RECIPIENTS**

**Milk Cooler Grants**

In order to ensure Vermont school children have access to fresh, nutritious dairy products, the Agency can help schools pay for a milk cooler. Up to \$2000, or ½ the cost of a new cooler (whichever is lower) is available to each school. These funds have been made available through the Vermont Dairy Promotion Fund, supported by Vermont’s dairy farmers.

To participate in the Milk Cooler grant program, please indicate your interest and include in your grant application submission (Template for applying to Milk Cooler promotion program is included in budget page below on page 9). These milk cooler grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis.

**Implementation Grant Eligibility**

A school, a school district, a consortium of schools may apply for this competitive grant. Applicants demonstrate prior Farm to School experience and show support from a variety of school and community partners. Schools or districts who have already received an implementation grant will not be eligible to reapply at this time but should look to the Regional Network Development grants that will be announced in the spring.

1. Have or establish a school health committee or project subcommittee to implement the activities of this grant. This committee must include representatives from foodservices, farmers / local producers, teachers or school health services, and a parent or community member.

**Examples of committee members are:**

- School administration
- Food Service manager/director
- Physical education
- Students
- School board
- Health education
- Parents
- Teachers
- Health Services
- Community health agency (e.g. American Cancer Society)
- Other community representatives
- Farmers and local producers
- Local chefs or food store managers
- Local non-profits (e.g. land conservation groups or agricultural groups)

2. Consult the *Vermont Nutrition and Fitness Policy Guidelines* while developing a Farm to School grant program. These guidelines were established by the Agency of Education in collaboration with the Department of Health and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets and can be accessed by the web address below.

[http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/Vermont/nutrition\\_policy\\_guidelines\\_05.pdf](http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/Vermont/nutrition_policy_guidelines_05.pdf)

3. Schools or school districts receiving a grant are required to submit an invoice and signed grant agreement to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture. Grant recipients also must complete an interim report by October 1, 2015 and final report by June 30, 2016. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture will provide sample reporting materials and forms when grants are awarded. The final report will include a description of grant activities, grant evaluation and a summary of expenditures.

**While developing your grant application, please remember that a successful grant requires participation of teachers, foodservices, administrators, students, community, and local food producers. Successful projects will touch on all three areas of classroom, cafeteria, and community. Programs should also include plans for sustaining the program beyond the period of the grant including suggested language for sustainability or best management practices for Farm to School.**

### Completing the Application

The full application is provided below. Project proposals will be reviewed by an advisory panel which will include representatives from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets, Vermont FEED, Vermont Farm to School Network, and other stakeholders. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by early December 2014. Successful applicants will need to submit an invoice and signed grant agreements to the VAAFAM before funds can be disbursed.

1. **COMPLETE** the Cover Page and Signature Page.
2. **TYPE** the project summary, narrative response, and budget sections.
3. **Please attach in an email a completed application (including scanned signature page as a SINGLE document in PDF form to [alexandra.zipparo@state.vt.us](mailto:alexandra.zipparo@state.vt.us)** . If you are unable to scan and email - mail the application to:

Ali Zipparo  
Vermont Agency of Agriculture  
116 State Street; Montpelier, VT 05620-2901  
[alexandra.zipparo@state.vt.us](mailto:alexandra.zipparo@state.vt.us)

#### **Application Deadline**

Received or postmarked by  
4:30 p.m. October 28, 2014

**All grant applications must include:**

- Cover page
- Signature page
- Project summary (limited to one paragraph; separate page)
- Narrative responses (not to exceed four pages)
- Budget (one page maximum; separate page)
- Appropriate attachments (do not send your whole Wellness Policy)
- All responses must be typed, 11 or 12 point Times New Roman font, single-spaced with 1” margins
- Letter of support from school principal or superintendent and at least one additional stakeholder (Examples: food service director, teacher, school nurse, farmer, parent, school board member)

**Applications that do not follow these guidelines will not be reviewed.**

### Cover Page

#### Programmatic Contact Information:

Name of School/Schools	Name of Supervisory Union
Grades Served	Number of Students (total)
Contact Name	Title
Mailing Address	
Telephone	E-mail
Free & Reduced Lunch Rate for Participating Schools	

#### Fiscal Agent Contact Information:

Fiscal Agent & Federal ID #	
Contact Name	Title
Mailing Address	
Telephone	E-mail

### Signature Page

**Indicate potential or existing members of your school health committee, or farm to school project subcommittee (must include original signatures):** Additional members may be listed on the back of this Signature Page. Refer to page 3, Requirement #1, for committee members.

Member Name	Title	Email and phone	Signature
<b>1</b>			
<b>2</b>			
<b>3</b>			
<b>4</b>			
<b>5</b>			
<b>6</b>			
<b>7</b>			

**Supporting Administrator’s Information:**

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this application is complete. I further agree to support the activities conducted within our school for which this funding is intended.

<p><b>Principal’s name if for a school; Superintendent’s name if for a school district or consortium (Please print)</b></p>	<p><b>Principal’s signature; Superintendent’s signature if for a school district or consortium</b></p>
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## Farm to School Implementation Grant Narrative Questions

### 1. Project Summary: 5 points (Include this as a separate page, not to be counted as part of the three-page narrative question responses.)

Provide a one paragraph overview of your proposal. Include your overall project goal(s) (e.g. "The goal of this project is to develop new local foods recipes, extend our local food use into winter and set up direct relationships with 3 local farmers."). Be sure to describe why you want to do this and how your school has prepared for this step. Also, include the anticipated outcomes of your project.

### 2. Need and Readiness: 20 points

Clearly describe your school and community (e.g. # of students and staff, brief community profile, free and reduced lunch rate, local farms and agricultural resources) and the specific needs that this project will address. Describe what work your school and/or community has already completed toward your project. "Make the case" for why your school is ready to implement a Farm to School project.

### 3. Objectives, Activities and Timelines: 30 points

This part needs to be specific, but not necessarily lengthy. Restate your project goal(s). Objectives are clear, descriptive statements that describe specifically what you will accomplish and by when. Describe your expected objectives, activities planned to achieve objectives and anticipated timeframes to accomplish activities. Review the activities listed on page 2 of the application. These are some of the critical components of Farm to School and your project should reflect similar components. (A chart is great way to display this information. See the grant application provided on our website in the Farm to School section)

- The objectives should be based on the schools' needs and readiness and should align with the overarching goal (most projects have 2-4 objectives).
- The activities are tasks, events, "to-do's" that should directly link to an objective and should demonstrate ongoing Farm to School activities.
- The timeline should include anticipated dates of completion for activities and partners responsible for tasks.

**The completion deadline for this grant is 18 months** but this is still a short timeframe with start date of January 1, 2015 an end date of June 1, 2016, so depending on the readiness of your school and community, be sure to choose attainable objectives. Reviewers are looking for how activities build on each other and are working toward a greater change beyond just a onetime event or activity.

## Farm to School Implementation Grant Narrative Questions (continued)

### 4. Collaboration and Coordination: 15 points

Farm to School initiatives have greater impact when implemented in a coordinated and collaborative fashion. Identify who in your school community and greater community will be responsible for coordinate activities to accomplish your goal(s). Specifically identify your agricultural and/or local food connections and community partners. Describe how these partners will work together. Describe how this project aligns or cooperates with school and/or community wellness initiatives. The most successful projects coordinate and link efforts in the classroom, cafeteria and the community.

### 5. Program Sustainability: 10 points

Farm to School implementation grants provide 18 months of funding. However, the goal is to create lasting change. Describe how your school will use this year of funding to permanently increase your capacity for using local foods and integrate local foods into school activities. Include plans for funding, maintaining farmer relationships, building community and staff support and ensuring the program remains strong even if the individuals leading it change over time.

### 6. Program Evaluation: 5 points

In collaboration with state partners the Vermont Agency of Agriculture has recently created an evaluation toolkit offering pre and post surveys for educators, students and food service as well as monthly local food purchase tracking. Using this toolkit or your own evaluation methods, describe how you will evaluate progress during the grant period and adjust activities as necessary to meet the final goals. You will also need to record, in some way, that you met your goal, and how. Other tools used to record and collect evidence can take the form of (but are not limited to) video, pictures with narration, taste test surveys and feedback. Describe your own evaluation plan and how you will integrate the evaluation toolkit into this plan.

### 7. Proposed Project Budget: 10 points (Not included in the three-page limit.)

Provide an itemized budget. Cost should be directly linked to the project objectives. When building your budget be sure to keep in mind that you must demonstrate sustainability beyond the grant year. How will funds be used to build the program? Keep in mind this is one time funding and a large portion of funding being used towards the purchase of local food does not demonstrate sustainability. Funds can be used for a coordinator's time but should not exceed more than 25% of the overall grant award.

Be sure to include stipends and mileage for farmers and/or food service personnel to attend workshops or meetings, if appropriate.

Although matching funds are not required for this grant program, demonstration of cash or in-kind time provides us with a better understanding of how schools are supporting Farm to School efforts. Therefore please, include other sources of funding if any for this project. **Total funding request of the grant shall not exceed \$10,000. See the following sample budget table.**

*Funds cannot be used for registration in Jr. Iron Chef or other competitions.*

**8. Budget Justification: 5 points**

In addition to itemizing expected expenditures, please describe the justification for the spending. This section should include considerations like the ratio of spending directly on food to investing in other areas of the program; paying an outside coordinator vs. using internal coordinators; ensuring that all students have equal access to the local foods. If one area of your budget is significantly higher than other areas (for example major equipment purchases) please explain why. Budget justification should also reflect the sustainability plan outlined in question #5 – for example, if money is spent on an outside coordinator this year, how will the project continue without the funded coordinator or will you find funding for ongoing coordination?

Task/Expense	Grant Funds	Match	Description/Explanation of Expenditures
<u>Cafeteria</u> , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy Vermont food</li> <li>• Purchase equipment</li> <li>• Training for food service staff</li> </ul>			Food will be purchased from 3 local farms for the school lunch program Salad spinner, knives and cutting boards will be purchased Food service will receive 3 half day trainings
<u>Classroom</u> , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials and food for taste testing</li> <li>• Training for educators</li> <li>• Purchase materials for school garden</li> <li>• Substitute teacher payment</li> </ul>			
<u>Community</u> , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field trip expenses</li> <li>• Stipends for farmers</li> <li>• Expenses related to community meetings or celebrations</li> <li>• Project coordination</li> </ul>			
<b>Total</b>			

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In order to ensure Vermont school children have access to fresh, nutritious dairy products, the Agency can help schools pay for a milk cooler. Up to \$2000, or ½ the cost of a new cooler (whichever is lower) is available to each school. These funds have been made available through the Vermont Dairy Promotion Fund, supported by Vermont's dairy farmers.

To participate in the Milk Cooler Grant Program, please indicate your interest below and include in your grant application submission. These milk cooler grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis.

If you are selected to receive a milk cooler grant, you need to order the cooler, and send us a copy of the cooler invoice, plus an invoice for the amount you need to be reimbursed prior to December 31, 2014.

*Yes, we are interested in a milk cooler grant*

*No, we do not need a new milk cooler at this time*

## Check List – IMPLEMENTATION Grant Narrative

Use this page to double check your work – do not submit with final proposal

- Does your grant include a committee with representatives from foodservices, farmers / local producers, teachers or school health services, and a parent or community member?
- Do your goals and activities include work in the three areas of cafeteria, classroom and community?
- Do your goals match with the stated goals of the Farm to School grant program?
  - Encourage schools and school districts to serve food to Vermont students that is as fresh and nutritious as possible
  - Maximize the use of fresh, locally grown, produced and processed foods
  - Educate students about healthy eating habits through nutrition education, including using hands-on techniques to make the connections between farming and the foods that students consume
  - Increase the size and stability of farmers' direct sales market
  - Increase school meal participation by increasing the selection of foods available to students.
- Have you clearly identified existing needs and described past planning? (If you *have not* done planning previously, you should consider a *planning/pilot* grant)
- Do your activities make local foods accessible to *all* students?
- Does your budget represent a balance of spending on different areas – and have you described how you set your budgetary priorities?
- Have you included information about sustainability beyond the grant year?
- Have you included letters of support from principal/superintendent and another supporting farm to school stakeholder?
- Have you included all required components of the grant application?