

VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED

AGRICULTURE GRANT

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS – FISCAL YEAR 2023

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) is seeking applications from Vermont early childhood education providers and after school programs who want to incorporate more local food into their operations and support the nutrition needs of children and families through the purchase of community supported agriculture (CSA) shares or farm shares. This funding opportunity is part of the VAAFAM Farm to School and Early Childhood Program.

KEY DATES

PUBLICATION DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2023

APPLICANT WEBINAR: MARCH 16, 2023

APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 7, 2023

AWARD NOTIFICATION: EARLY MAY 2023

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CONTACT INFORMATION

PROGRAM QUESTIONS

Gina Clithero

gina.clithero@vermont.gov

(802) 585-6225

WEBGRANTS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Diana Ferguson

Diana.Ferguson@vermont.gov

(802) 622-4094

Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets staff are available to assist applications during State of Vermont business hours, Monday–Friday, 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM. Please note that immediate assistance may not be available shortly before deadlines.

WEBGRANTS

Applications for this program are accepted through the [WebGrants](#) grants management system.

REGISTRATION

New users must complete the [WebGrants Registration Form](#). Registrations are typically processed within two business days. Please register for an account well in advance of the application deadline.

SUBMISSION POLICY

It is the applicant's responsibility to follow all application instructions including the submission dates and times included in this request for applications (RFA). The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFMM) will accept the last validated submission through the grants management system, WebGrants, prior to the posted deadline as the final and sole acceptable submission of an application.

We cannot accept submission or re-submission of incomplete or delayed applications after the posted deadline, barring exceptional circumstances. WebGrants will prevent applications from being submitted after the posted deadline.

SUBMISSION CONFIRMATION

When you have successfully submitted your application, you will be redirected to an **Application Submitted Confirmation** page with an Application ID number. You will also receive a confirmation email.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW & ELIGIBILITY

PROGRAM PURPOSE

This purpose of this funding opportunity is to help early childhood education providers and after school programs access more Vermont grown and produced food. Successful applicants will receive a reimbursement grant to subsidize the cost of a community supported agriculture (CSA) share(s) or farm share(s). Shares must be from a Vermont farm, or farm collaborative.

ELIGIBILITY

The following entities are eligible to apply for this competitive grant:

- Vermont registered or licensed early childcare providers,
- Vermont licensed after school programs
- 21st Century Child Learning Center Programs

Previous CSA Grant recipients (2021 and/or 2022) are eligible to re-apply with a slightly higher match requirement.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

\$50,000 is allocated to this funding opportunity.

MINIMUM & MAXIMUM AWARD

The maximum grant award for this funding opportunity is \$1,000. There is no minimum grant award.

MATCH REQUIREMENT

The grants will reimburse programs for 70-80% of the cost of a CSA or farm share, up to the maximum award amount. Applicants are required to cover the remaining 20-30% of the cost of the CSA or farm share using matching funds.

How many VAAFMSA grants has your organization received before?	VAAFMSA Grant	Match Requirement
0 – This would be your organization’s first CSA grant yet	80%	20%
1 – This would be your organization’s second CSA grant	75%	25%
2 – This would be your organization’s third CSA grant	70%	30%

PROJECT LENGTH

May 2023-November 2023

FUNDING SOURCE

Grants are funded through a State of Vermont legislative appropriation.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity will partially reimburse childcare providers or after school programs for CSA or farm shares purchased from Vermont farms, or farm/producer collaboratives. Applicants must identify the farm or collaborative from whom they plan to purchase their share(s) in their application and provide documentation that share(s) are available. Applicants must provide a description of how they will utilize the farm products to support goals related to nutrition, food access, culinary education, community food systems and related areas. Successful applicants will receive a grant to cover between 70-80% of the cost of their share(s); the funding range of 70-80% is dependent on whether or not the applicant has received a VAAFMS CSA grant in a prior fiscal year.

CSA and farm shares are two similar models of direct procurement. Both require the customer to pay upfront for farm products that are delivered or picked over the course of the growing season. As this is a reimbursement grant, successful applicants should be prepared to pay the full cost of their share(s), and document their purchase to the grant program manager, before receiving their grant award. Successful grantees can anticipate receiving their grant award payment within ten business days of submitting a grant claim.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Applications must be submitted by the fiscal agent. For most organizations the fiscal agent is the business owner, executive director, or business manager. This is a legal requirement, as the prospective grant agreement (a legal agreement with the State of Vermont) must be held with the organization bearing fiscal responsibility. Therefore, the fiscal agent is responsible for submitting the grant application, signing the grant agreement, and ensuring all terms of the grant agreement are met. Applications not submitted by the entity bearing fiscal responsibility will not be accepted.

Applicants should also carefully review [Attachment C - Standard State Provisions and Contracts and Grants](#). Successful applicants must submit W-9s and Certificates of Insurance before grant agreements are finalized. More information on these can be found in the Appendix.

GRANT TIMELINE

DATES MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

FEBRUARY 24, 2023	REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) RELEASED
MARCH 16, 2023	APPLICANT WEBINAR
APRIL 7, 2023 AT 12 PM (NOON)	APPLICATIONS DUE BY NOON IN WEBGRANTS
EARLY MAY 2023	APPLICANTS NOTIFIED OF AWARDS

MAY 2023	GRANT AGREEMENTS FINALIZED
MAY 2023 – JUNE 2023	GRANTEES PURCHASE CSA/FARM SHARE(S)
MAY 2023 – NOVEMBER 2022	GRANTEE CAN SUBMIT CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT
NOVEMBER 2023	FINAL REPORT DUE, LAST OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM FUNDS

SECTION 2: APPLICATION

Estimated time to complete application: 20-40 Minutes

Documents needed to complete the application:

- Proof of CSA/farm share availability (see question 6 under “Farm and Farm/CSA Share Information”)

Below is a complete copy of the application questions you will need to answer to submit your online application. **Applications must be completed in [WebGrants](#) by Friday, April 7 at 12PM (noon).** Applicants without an existing WebGrants account will need to account for the two-day registration process when planning to fill out and submit their application.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Applicant/fiscal agent information:
 - a. Name
 - b. Title
 - c. Email
 - d. Phone Number
2. Additional grant contact (if desired) **Grantees may add secondary grant contacts if and when funds are awarded.*
 - a. Name
 - b. Title
 - c. Email
 - d. Phone Number (personal or business)
3. Legal name of business or fiscal agent organization (as it appears on your IRS tax documents)
4. Select the category that best describes your business/organization.
 - a. Family Home Care Provider, Center-Based Provider, Parent Child Center, Head Start Program, Licensed After School Program, 21st Century Child Learning Center Program, Other
 - b. If “Other” was selected, provide a brief description.
5. Street address
6. City/town
7. County
8. Mailing address (if different than above)
9. Business website (if available)
10. Years in operation
11. Hours of operation

12. Total number of employees (if possible, indicate how many are full time or part time)
13. Current number of children enrolled
14. Age range of children enrolled
15. Are you a Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS) provider? If yes:
 - a. What level is your program?
16. Has your organization ever received a grant from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets? If yes:
 - a. Please list all grants and the years in which they were received

PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

1. In addition to childcare services, do you provide programs or services for families and/or guardians? If yes:
 - a. Please list all programs and provide a brief description of each. Include the number of participants if possible.
2. Are you applying as an afterschool program? If yes:
 - a. Describe your program. What is its purpose? What kind of activities are participants engaged in?
3. Does your business or organization participate in one or more federal meal program(s)? If Yes:
 - a. Is your meal program sponsored by an outside organization such as Capstone?
 - b. Which federal child nutrition programs (Child and Adult care Food Program, Summer Food Program, etc.) does your organization participate in? List all that apply.
4. Do any of the children you serve qualify for free or reduced-price meals? If yes:
 - a. Approximately what percentage qualify for free or reduced-price meals?
5. Do you provide any programs, services or resources designed to address food insecurity among the children and/or families you serve?
6. Describe the meals or snacks you currently provide. Include information about the frequency of meals and snacks served, examples of the types of foods commonly offered, and information about how food is prepared.
7. Provide a brief description of your kitchen infrastructure. Do you have access to an oven, range, microwave, refrigerated storage, etc.?
8. Do you currently utilize local food in the meals and snacks you serve? If yes:
 - a. Provide a description of the common types of local food utilized, how frequently those foods are served, and how they are sourced (grocery store, farm stand, farmers market, etc.)
9. Have you previously used CSAs or farm shares as a source of local food for your business or organization?

FARM AND FARM/CSA SHARE INFORMATION

*A list of statewide CSA providers is available on NOFA-VT's [website](#). Please note this is not a complete list of all CSA providers in the state.

1. Provide the following information about the farm or collaborative from which you would like to purchase the CSA/farm share(s):
 - a. Business/organization name
 - b. Street address
 - c. City/town
 - d. County
2. Why have you chosen this farm or collaborative?
3. Do you have an existing relationship with the business?
4. If the business has a website, provide the link here.
5. If they do not have a website, provide the following:
 - a. Name of person responsible for managing CSA/farm shares
 - b. Phone number of CSA/farm share contact
 - c. Email of CSA/farm share contact
6. You must provide documentation to confirm that the farm or collaborative has CSA or farm shares available for the upcoming season. Examples include a copy of an email exchange between you and the farm/collaborative, a screenshot/copy of recent promotional materials, or a link to their website or social media account that shows the availability of shares for sale.
7. What is the cost of the CSA/farm share(s) you would like to purchase? If you're applying to purchase multiple shares, what is the total cost?
8. Matching requirement: The grants will reimburse programs for 70-80% of the cost of a CSA or farm share, up to the \$1,000 grant maximum. Applicants are required to cover the remaining 20-30% of the cost. Where will the funding come from to cover the match requirement?
 - First time CSA grant recipients can receive a grant award for 80% of the cost of CSA or farm share, with 20% match required.
 - Second time CSA grant recipients can receive a grant award for 75% of the cost of a CSA or farm share, with 25% match required.
 - Third time CSA grant recipients can receive a grant award for 70% of the cost of a CSA or farm share, with 30% match required.
9. Are you applying to purchase a farm share(s) or a CSA share(s)?
 - a. If looking to purchase a **CSA share**: identify the number, type, and individual cost of the CSA share you would like to purchase. Provide a description of the amount of farm products in each individual share (i.e. average pounds per box, number of people it is designed to serve)

- b. If you're looking to purchase a **farm share**: describe the kinds of farm products you're looking to purchase and how often you would be picking up farm products
10. Describe how the farm/cooperative distributes its CSA/farm shares. Would you be responsible for picking them up, and if so, from where? Are they available on a certain day and at a certain time?
 - a. If the CSA/farm share(s) needs to be picked up by the customer, how do you plan to collect your farm products without causing disruptions to your business or programs?

UTILIZATION, IMPACT, AND SUSTAINABILITY

1. Why is serving local food in your program important?
2. How will the produce provided through your CSA/farm share be utilized? Select all that apply:
 - a. Served in meals and snacks
 - b. Sent home with children and/or families
 - c. Used In cooking activities with children and/or families
 - d. Other
 - i. If "Other" was selected, provide a brief description
3. How likely are you to continue to purchase CSA/farm shares in future years without support from this funding opportunity?
4. Describe any barriers that impact your ability to purchase local food.
5. Describe any farm to school activities that you engage in with the children and/or families you serve related to nutrition, local food, agriculture or food access. Examples include gardening, farm visits, cooking and nutrition-based activities, etc.
6. List any professional development opportunities which you have participated in related to farm to early childhood/ farm to school.
7. Are there farm to early childhood/farm to school related training topics or technical assistance your program could benefit from?
8. If there is any additional information you would like to share with the review committee, please do so here.
9. If you would like to include any documents, such as letters of support or examples of resources/activities, for the review committee to consider, upload them here.

SECTION 3: APPLICATION SCORING CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed by VAAFM and farm to school and early childhood partners. Notification of awards will be made by early May 2023. Reviewers will consider the following when evaluating applications:

- The applicant's ability to leverage the food provided through the grant to promote the following among their program participants:
 - Engagement with and awareness of local food and agricultural systems
 - Healthy eating habits and good nutrition practices
- The likelihood that an applicant will fully utilize the food provided through the grant in meaningful and impactful ways.
- The potential for this grant to help address food insecurity among children and families.
- The likelihood that this grant will help create and/or strengthen lasting connections between farmers and early childhood providers or after school programs.

Evaluators will also be considerate of the need to disburse funds equitably throughout the state.

SECTION 4: GRANT MANAGEMENT & REPORTING

GRANT AGREEMENT & PAYMENT

Prior to receiving funding, successful applicants must sign a grant agreement with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) indicating their intent to complete the proposed project and authorizing VAAFAM to monitor the project's progress. The grant agreement will include provisions (terms and conditions) set by the State of Vermont as well as any program-specific requirements. Review [Attachment C - Standard State Provisions and Contracts and Grants](#) (12/15/2017 Revised) at bgs.vermont.gov/purchasing-contracting/forms for the most recent State of Vermont provisions.

Prior to commencement of work and release of any payments, grantee must submit:

A current [IRS Form W-9](#) (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification), signed within the past six months

A certificate of insurance (COI) that lists the insurance coverage you have for your organization or business.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

At the end of the grant period, grantees will be required to submit a grant report detailing the impact of the grant. **These reports must be submitted through WebGrants and will be due November 30th, 2023.** The report requests the following information:

2023 Grant Final Report

1. What meals or snacks does your program serve?
2. Did you utilize either a CSA or Farm Share model, or both, with this grant?
3. Describe one highlight, or aspect of the CSA Grant experience which makes you feel proud, accomplished and/or excited.
4. What recommendations do you have to improve this grant program?
5. How well did the amount of food you received meet your program's needs?
6. How well did the type of food you received meet your program's needs?
7. How did your program utilize the food received through your CSA/farm share(s)?
8. Does your business or organization plan to purchase CSA/farm share(s) in the future?
9. What additional resources would help your program utilize more local food and/or expand your program's nutrition and agriculture education efforts?

APPENDIX: REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

If awarded a grant through this funding opportunity you will be required to provide VAAFM the following documentation. If you have questions about these requirements, please contact the grant program manager.

WHAT IS A W-9 AND WHY DO I NEED IT?

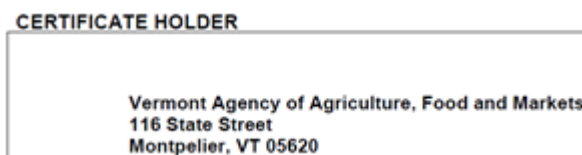
A W-9 is the form any person typically completes when they start a job so they can get paid. If awarded a grant, we will need you to complete and send us a W-9 so we can set you up in the state financial system to receive your award. *For more information, and if you do not have a W-9, please review the IRS Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification page and/or reach out to your tax advisor for assistance.*

WHAT IS A COI AND WHY DO I NEED IT?

COI stands for Certificate of Insurance, and it lists the insurance coverage you have for your organization or business.

Insurance requirements are a state regulation and are the same for all programs. You must provide a COI that includes the following coverage:

- The State listed as an additional insured. *(Adding the State of Vermont as an Additional Insured means that the State is covered under your policy, a necessity when you are performing work under the scope the project. Please reach out to the company that manages your policy to update your COI to include the State.)*



- Workers Compensation *(if you have employees)*
- General Liability and Property Damage
- Automotive Liability with a minimum of \$500,000 combined single limit or \$1,000,000 combined single limit if performance of the agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials.

If you have concerns about meeting these requirements, please reach out to the program manager.

EXAMPLE COI



CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)
Month/Date/Year

PRODUCER Insurance Agent/Broker Name Insurance Agent/Broker Street Address or P.O. Box Insurance Agent/Broker City, State & Zip Code Contact & Phone Number		THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW.			
INSURED Vendor Name Vendor Street Address or P.O. Box Vendor City, State & Zip Code		INSURERS AFFORDING COVERAGE	NAIC #		
		INSURER A: Name of Insurance Company	Enter NAIC#		
		INSURER B: Name of Insurance Company (if applicable)	Enter NAIC#		
		INSURER C: Name of Insurance Company (if applicable)	Enter NAIC#		
		INSURER D: Name of Insurance Company (if applicable)	Enter NAIC#		
		INSURER E: Name of Insurance Company (if applicable)	Enter NAIC#		
COVERAGES THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. AGGREGATE LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.					
POLICY NUMBER	TYPE OF INSURANCE	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE (MM/DD/YY)	POLICY EXPIRATION DATE (MM/DD/YY)	LIMITS