

Farm to School Grant / Request for Application (RFA)

Division of Food and Nutrition



Background

Farm to School (F2S) programs aim to connect schools and local farms through changing food purchasing and education practices. In the F2S program, students gain direct access to healthy local foods through school meals and are paired with educational opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons, taste tests, and farm field trips. F2S activities provide a variety of benefits to students, parents, schools, communities, and food producers.

The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) F2S program has been working on F2S efforts since 2014. These efforts have included:

- Hosting four school garden conferences to promote F2S from 2016-2019,
- Managing funds from Senate Bill 167 in School Years (SY) 2017-19, which provided \$5,000-\$10,000 per school to Title I schools for school gardens, including food safety plans and guidelines for garden staff, and
- As a 2020 federal F2S grant awardee, NDA increased access to local foods in school meal programs through 10 Meet your Farmer events, F2S quarterly surveys, and the development of two F2S procurement training courses in 2021 and 2022.

Despite these efforts, F2S in Nevada has struggled to evolve to more than single projects or events because of lack of available funding and full-time personnel dedicated to F2S efforts in the state.

Grant Objectives

On September 30, 2022, the NDA was awarded the F2S State agency grant. The purpose of this grant is to support state agency efforts to implement and expand F2S activity among institutions participating in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP). The objectives of this grant are to:

1. Build and increase the capacity of participating institutions to procure and use local food in program meals; and
2. Provide agricultural education opportunities for participating children.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

RFA Project Goals

As part of this F2S grant, the NDA has been awarded an allotment of funds that can be passed through to schools, School Food Authorities (SFA), community organizations, farmers, producers, and non-profits to implement F2S efforts in the above objectives. The purpose of this funding is to implement allowable F2S activities that will improve agricultural education and increased local procurement at the local education level. This Request for Application (RFA) seeks to award projects that will accomplish these objectives.

The NDA will sub grant awards to partner organizations to conduct allowable activities through an RFA process. Example activities include but are not limited to:

- Expanding agricultural literacy and education programs, including local food promotional and educational activities,
- Support existing school gardens or start a new garden,
- Outreach to local producers or participating institutions and children; and
- Local food procurement capacity building and coordination.

Timeline

October 3, 2024: RFA is sent out and application is available at NDA's website, www.agri.nv.gov.

October 31, 2024: Applications due to NDA.

November 25, 2024: Notice of subgrant award sent out to those who are awarded funds.

December 2025: Additional funds to be allocated (if applicable).

June 2026: All funds to awardees must be spent. Final report sent to NDA.

Application Due Date

October 31, 2024, by 5:00 p.m. PDT.

Funding Available

\$500,000. The maximum award for a single grantee will be \$75,000 and the minimum award amount will be \$500. These thresholds were established to ensure that a variety of projects are funded in multiple communities.

Eligibility

Any non-profit organization or public entity that can meet the objectives of the grant described in Section II is eligible to apply.

Contact

Send your email to the attention of Cindy Cohen and Haley King, Division of Food and Nutrition, at fnd@agri.nv.gov

SECTION I: DESIRED OUTCOMES

The goal of the NDA F2S grant is to provide funding for the expansion of F2S activities in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) in Nevada. The benefits of funding for F2S activities will help children in participating schools expand their knowledge of nutrition and agricultural education, including learning where their food comes from, how it is grown, get hands-on gardening experience, and bringing local foods into schools by connecting with local Nevada farmers and producers.

These activities will also help to support local farmers by increasing economic opportunities for local farms, educate students about farming and food systems, encourage and increase the use of nutritious foods served in school meals, and improve institution-community relationships. With this grant, eligible applicants will be able to support and expand these activities to help children across Nevada.

Section II: GRANT INFORMATION

Allowable Uses of Funds

Funds from this grant award must be used to support the State Agency F2S grant objectives:

1. Build and increase the capacity of participating institutions to procure and use local food in program meals; and
2. Provide agricultural education opportunities for participating children.

This can be done in a variety of ways and activities, as mentioned previously

- Expand or develop agricultural literacy and education programs, including local food promotional and educational activities,
- Support school garden programs, including existing school gardens or start a new garden to be used as an edible school garden,

- School staff training and development on applicable areas such as procurement and menu planning and implementation of local foods in school meals,
- Outreach to local producers or participating institutions and children,
- Conducting farmer promotional events at schools, including taste tests and F2S sample tables, and
- Local food procurement capacity building and coordination (such as value chain coordination, grower/buyer matching tools, etc.).

Unallowable Uses of Funds

- Funds may not be used to purchase food for consumption in school meals programs.
- Funds may not be used to support food production or processing enterprises.

Eligibility Information

Nevada nonprofits, School Food Authorities (SFA), schools, farmers, producers, and F2S related community organizations are eligible to apply. Applicants must also be a state vendor with a current vendor number and have a current Unique Entity Identification (UEI) number to apply. If you are a farmer/producer, you must have a current producer or livestock number issued by the NDA.

SECTION III: AWARD INFORMATION

Award Process

The NDA will award funds based on a competitive process with an application evaluation. The NDA may request additional information through clarifying questions after receiving applications and prior to award. Priority will be given to applicants who are directly supporting a school.

Award Amounts

Maximum award amount of \$75,000 and minimum award amount of \$500.

Performance Period

The term of the grant will be from the date of the project award through June 30, 2026, which means all awarded funds must be used by June 30, 2026, no exceptions granted.

SECTION IV: APPLICATION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applications must be received on or before 5:00 p.m. PDT on October 31, 2024. The NDA will only accept applications via email and will not accept applications by mail, in-person, flash drive, or fax. Email completed applications to attention Haley King and Cindy Cohen at fnd@agri.nv.gov.

Format Requirements

The application must be submitted using the Nevada Farm to School Grant Application Template provided. Applicants must submit one clearly identified, signed application. Signatures may be either digital or wet signatures clearly signed in blue or black ink.

Applications submitted in a format other than in the manner prescribed in this announcement will not be considered for funding.

1. Applicant Information Required
 - a. Organization name
 - b. Full mailing and physical addresses

- c. Name of contact person and title
 - d. Email
 - e. Phone number
 - f. State of Nevada Vendor Number
 - g. Unique Entity Identification (UEI) number
2. Organization/Background
 - a. Eligibility Requirements – describe your organization.
 - b. Experience/Services Provided
 3. Project Description
 - a. The project title, requested dollar amount, target audience, and location of project implementation
 - b. Brief summary of project
 - c. Project type
 - i. If this is a pilot or brand-new project, include in the description why you chose it and what you hope to accomplish with the pilot project.
 - ii. If this is an expansion of a current project, please be clear what will be added/expanded, why and what you hope to accomplish.
 - iii. Include which grant objective the project will target: Build and increase the capacity of participating institutions to procure and use local food in program meals; or provide agricultural education opportunities for participating children.
 - d. Project impact (measurable goals and expected results or outcomes)
 4. Letter of Support from School Administration (If Applicable)
 - a. Organization name
 - b. Full mailing and physical address
 - c. Name of contact person and title
 - d. Email
 - e. Phone number
 5. Budget Narrative
 - a. The budget narrative must demonstrate a clear and strong relationship between (1) the project’s expenses, (2) the project’s goals and activities, and (3) the impact / targeted outcome and should also be detailed and focus on cost efficiency.
 - b. The narrative should focus on explaining expenses, not simply listing or summarizing them. The reviewer should be able to assess how the budget expenditures directly to the targeted outcome and how the successful project will reach those outcomes.
 - c. Approved Budget Categories
 - i. Personnel- includes staff time/salary spent on grant activities.
 - ii. Travel- includes travel costs associated with grant activities, must follow U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) rates, <https://www.gsa.gov/travel>.
 - iii. Operating- includes direct costs associated with grant activities.
 - iv. Equipment- equipment purchases to support grant activities with a useful life of over 1 year and that cost over \$5,000.
 - v. Contract/Consultant- for grant activities that may require additional contracts or consultants to perform work.
 - vi. Training- for grant activities that may require staff attend or participate in additional training.
 - vii. Other- any expenses not included above deemed allowable.
 - viii. Indirect- costs associated with grant processing that are non-direct expenses. Must be applied only to allowable categories.
 6. Audit Submission Requirements

All organizations applying for state funds must submit one (1) copy of their most recent audited financial statements as part of the application. The NDA will use the audit to ascertain the

financial viability of applicant. The audited financial statements should be included as Appendix A: Audited Financial Statements. The audited financial statements only need to be submitted one time. While the audit will not be scored as part of the review, the NDA reserves the right to use information in the audit to assist in the final recommendation for funding. Applicants are expected to demonstrate, through their audits, a strong financial position, and an ability to obtain funding outside of the public sector. Units of government (such as cities and counties, schools, health departments, etc.) do not need to submit an audit.

Section V: GRANT REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

A comprehensive, well-written application provides all the information required and necessary for a complete evaluation. The review committee will use the criteria summarized above to evaluate applications. A complete application will include the four (4) components listed below, along with the audit submission requirement, and will be scored as follows:

1. Applicant Information: If this information is missing or incomplete the application will be denied.
2. Organization/Background
 - a. Eligibility Requirements: 5 points possible
 - b. Experience/Services Provided: 10 points possible
3. Project Description
 - a. Project title, requested dollar amount, target audience, and location of project implementation: 5 points possible
 - b. Brief summary of project: 20 points possible
 - c. Project type: 15 points possible
 - d. Anticipated Project Impact: 25 points possible
4. Letter of Support (If applicable)
 - a. Letter of Support
5. Budget Narrative
 - a. Budget Narrative: 20 points possible

SECTION VI: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Reimbursement

The F2S grant is a reimbursement grant. Grantees will be reimbursed for project costs through the submission of monthly requests for reimbursements (RFR), form to be provided by the NDA.

Fiscal Responsibilities

All recipients of funding are required to identify a fiscal agent if the grantee is not its own fiscal agent. All recipients of funding are required to establish and maintain accounting systems and financial records to accurately account for awarded funds. All grant awards are subject to audits during and within three years following the end of the grant award period.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees will be required to provide quarterly reports on the progress of the project. The NDA will provide the quarterly report template.

Additional Information

Financial obligations of the State payable after the current fiscal year are contingent upon funds for that purpose being appropriated, budgeted, and otherwise made available. In the event funds are not appropriated, any resulting contracts (subgrant awards) will become null and void, without penalty to the State. All materials submitted regarding this application for NDA funds become the property of the State.

SECTION VI: TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Federal/State Suspension & Debarment

Organizations or individuals that are suspended or debarred from any state or federal agency cannot apply for or be paid from NDA grants during the period of the suspension or debarment. In the event that an organization or individual is debarred, another entity from within the county, an adjoining county or regional provider can compete for the program dollars. As a result, the entity awarded the grant, cannot contract and/or hire the debarred agency in any capacity. Any expenditure charged to this grant for such individuals or agencies will be disallowed.

Applicants are required to disclose to the NDA if any of the following conditions apply to the agency or agency personnel:

- Applicant has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them within the three (3) year period preceding the application for NDA funding for any of the following:
 - Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public transaction or contract under a public transaction.
 - Violation of a federal or state antitrust statute.
 - Embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, or false statements or receipt of stolen property.
- Applicant is presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state, or local) with the commission of any of the offenses enumerated above.
- Applicant has had any public transaction (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default within the three (3) year period preceding the application for NDA funding.

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

Anyone who becomes aware of the existence (or apparent existence) of fraud, waste or abuse related to the sub grants or use of grant funds should immediately report this information to the NDA. Fraud, waste, and abuse include, but are not limited to, embezzlement, misuse or misappropriation of grant funds or property and false statements, whether by organizations or individuals. Examples:

- Theft of grant funds for personal use
- Using funds for non-grant related purposes
- Theft of federally owned property or property acquired or leased under a grant
- Charging inflated building rental fees for a building owned by the recipient
- Submitting false financial reports

NDA Conflict of Interest

Grantee agencies shall avoid any action that might result in or create the appearance of:

- Giving preferential treatment to any person.
- Losing complete independence or impartiality.
- Adversely affecting the public confidence in the integrity of the program. No grantee agency employees may participate in the process of contracting or sub granting out funds if any real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Sub recipient employees are to neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of value from contractors or parties to sub agreement.

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color,

national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:
Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.