![USDA United States Department of Agriculture — Food and Nutrition Service]

Farm to School Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2019 Request for Applications

Catalog for Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA): 10.575

Dates:

Publication Date: October 2, 2018

Application Due Date: 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST), December 4, 2018

Estimated Award Date: May 2019

Program Solicitation Information

Executive Summary:

Section 18 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) established a Farm to School program in order to assist eligible entities, (schools, school districts, agricultural producers, Indian tribal organizations, nonprofit organizations, state agencies and local agencies), through grants and technical assistance, in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. To fulfill the farm to school mandate in the NSLA, effective October 1, 2012, $5 million will be provided to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on an annual basis to support grants, technical assistance, and the Federal administrative costs related to USDA's farm to school program.

Designed to increase the availability of local foods in schools, grants can help new farm to school programs get started or expand existing efforts. Funds support a wide range of activities from training, planning, and developing partnerships to creating new menu items, establishing supply chains, offering taste tests to children, purchasing equipment, planting school gardens, and organizing field trips to agricultural operation. FNS will competitively award grants to eligible applicants for projects that meet the purpose of the grant program.

Additional funding for the Farm to School Grant Program was made available through the FY 18 Omnibus bill, and as a result, approximately $7.5 million will be released under this solicitation in FY 2019. In the FY 2018 application cycle, FNS received 290 eligible applications and was able to fund 73 (25%) of the applications. To be competitive, applications must be complete and of high quality.

Planning and training grant awards range from $20,000 to $50,000, and implementation grant awards range from $50,000 to $100,000. Organizations that have received implementation, support service, or training grants through the Farm to School Grant Program in the last two funding cycles (FY 2017 or FY 2018) are ineligible to apply for FY 2019 funding. Planning grantees may reapply for an implementation or training grant. A 25 percent cash or in-kind funding match is required.

Webinar Information and FAQ

USDA will conduct two webinars to review the RFA and address questions regarding the application process. These informational webinars are scheduled for **Tuesday, October 16, 2018 and Wednesday, October 17, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. ET.** Please register on the Farm to School Grant Applicant resource page. A recording will be available for those who cannot attend the live presentations.

In addition, applicants can find a set of *Frequently Asked Questions* and summaries of previously awarded projects online via the **USDA Office of Community Food Systems website.** We strongly encourage applicants to review the *Frequently Asked Questions* resource prior to preparing an application.

2019 Highlights and Changes

Below are highlights of major changes to the program since the last fiscal year:
- Provides an updated definition for agricultural producer.
- Proposal narrative lengths have been shortened for each grant track:
  - o Implementation: Max page limit is six pages.
  - o Planning: Max page limit is four pages.
  - o Training: Max page limit is four pages.
- Slight revisions to the information requested in the proposal narrative.
- Up to three letters of commitment may be submitted for planning and implementation grants. Additional guidance regarding content and length of commitment and support letters has been provided.
- Applicants may only submit up to three resumes for key staff managing the project.
- Additional guidance provided regarding allowable costs for equipment and supplies as well as how to estimate budget line items.
- *Suggested* lengths have been provided for each subsection of the proposal narrative.
- Applicants will no longer be able to include optional attachments (additional materials not specifically requested for inclusion) in the grant application package.
- For your SAM.gov registration, you must submit a **notarized letter** appointing the **authorized** Entity Administrator. The review process changed for the Federal Assistance community on June 11, 2018. Read the updated FAQs to learn more: https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/sam-update-updated-july-11-2018

Application Checklist

This application checklist provides a list of the required documents; however FNS expects that applicants will read the entire RFA prior to the submission of their application.

In order to apply, **at least three weeks** prior to submission, you must have:
- ☐ Obtained a Duns number from Dunn & Bradstreet (D&B) (Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number);
- ☐ Register the DUNS number and the TIN or EIN number into the System for Award Management (SAM). SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov and;
- ☐ Create a Grants.gov account.

When **preparing your application**, ensure:
- ☐ Your application format and narrative meet the requirements included in Section 4 "Application and Submission Information," including page limits, priorities outlined in Section 1.4, and all necessary attachments.

When **preparing your budget,** ensure the following information is included:
- ☐ You have at least a 25 percent match and that you have detailed the source of those funds.
- ☐ All key staff who are paid by this grant.
- ☐ The percentage of time the project director will devote to the project in full-time equivalents.
- ☐ Your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation.
- ☐ The type of fringe benefits to be covered with federal funds.
- ☐ Itemized travel expenses (including type of travel), travel justifications, basis for lodging estimates, and estimates for one mandatory face-to-face meeting.
- ☐ Types of equipment and supplies, justifications, and estimates, ensuring that the budget is in line with the project description.
- ☐ If the sole purpose of equipment and/or supplies is not intended to be used to support Child Nutrition Programs, the applicant must determine what percentage of the good's time or space will be dedicated to project activities.
- ☐ Information for all contracts and justification for any sole-source contracts.
- ☐ Justification, description and itemized list of all consultant services.
- ☐ Indirect cost information (either a copy of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or if no agreement exists, the basis of the indirect costs requested). If none requested, please indicate this in the budget narrative.

When **submitting** your application, ensure you have submitted the following:
- ☐ Farm to School Grant Program Application Cover Sheet (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424 – **Application for Federal Assistance** (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424A – **Budget Information and Instruction Form** (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)
- ☐ SF-424B – **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs** (fillable PDF in Grants.gov)

- ☐ **SF-LLL** Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**.**
- ☐ Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire (in Appendix B)
- ☐ Project Narrative (PDF - Upload using the "**Add Attachments**" button under SF-424)
- ☐ Budget Narrative (PDF-Upload using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424)
- ☐ Signed Letters Verifying Matching Funds for EACH cash and/or in kind resource (PDF or MS Word - Upload using the "**Add Attachments**" button under SF-424)
- ☐ Signed Letter(s) of Commitment from Partner and Collaborator Organizations (PDF or MS Word - Upload using the "**Add Attachments**" button under SF-424)
- ☐ Staff Resumes (PDF or MS Word - Upload using the "**Add Attachments**" button under SF-424)

When applicable, application packages are required to include the following documents:
- ☐ AD-3030 – **Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants** (fillable PDF in Grants.gov).
- ☐ Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (PDF - Upload using the "Add Attachments" button under SF-424)
- ☐ Include 501(c)(3) determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

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1.0 Program Description

1.1 Legislative Authority

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) establishes a Farm to School Program in order to assist eligible entities, through grants and technical assistance, in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools.

To fulfill the farm to school mandate in the NSLA, $5 million is provided to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on an annual basis to support grants, technical assistance, and the Federal administrative costs related to USDA's Farm to School Program. The USDA Farm to School Grant Program is housed within the Food and Nutrition Services' (FNS) Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS). Additional funding for the Farm to School Grant Program was made available through the FY 18 Omnibus bill, and as a result, up to $7.5 million will be released under this solicitation.

Authorizing language in the NSLA directed the Secretary of Agriculture to award competitive grants for:
- Training;
- Supporting operations;
- Planning;
- Purchasing equipment;
- Developing school gardens;
- Developing partnerships; and,
- Implementing farm to school programs.

The Secretary of Agriculture was also directed through the NSLA to ensure geographical diversity and equitable treatment of urban, rural, and tribal communities, as well as give the highest priority to funding projects that, as determined by the Secretary –
- Make local food products available on the menu of the eligible school;
- Serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;
- Incorporate experiential nutrition education activities in curriculum planning that encourage the participation of school children in farm and garden-based activities;
- Demonstrate collaboration between eligible schools, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, agricultural producer groups, and other community partners;
- Include adequate and participatory evaluation plans;
- Demonstrate the potential for long-term program sustainability; and,
- Meet any other criteria that the Secretary determines appropriate.

Authorizing language also states that as a condition of receiving a USDA Farm to School Program Grant, each grant recipient shall provide **matching** support in the form of cash or **in-kind** contributions, and agree to cooperate in an evaluation of the program carried out using grant funds.

1.2 Defining Local Foods

Local and regional food systems typically centralize within a specific region where all activities associated with producing, processing, distributing, and marketing foods take place. How one defines "local" or "regional" – which are often used interchangeably, and will be for the purposes of this request for applications – can depend on geographic, social, governmental, physical, or economic parameters, seasonality, or other factors. USDA fully expects applicants of this RFA to have varying definitions of "local" specific to their individual contexts.

1.3 Grant Tracks

Grant funds will be made available on a competitive basis, subject to availability of Federal funds, using three grants tracks: Planning, Implementation, and Training. Applicant eligibility varies across grant type, for further clarification see Sections 3.0 through 3.3, Eligibility Information. The grant tracks are independently awarded and are not intended to be sequential sources of funding. For example, a district that has been awarded a Planning Grant is not automatically eligible for or awarded an Implementation Grant. The grant tracks exist to provide diverse funding for a wide range of farm to school constituents in different stages of farm to school development.

1.3.1 Planning Grants

Planning grants are intended for eligible entities that are just getting started with farm to school activities. Planning grants should primarily focus on goals and objectives that lay a solid foundation for launching or scaling up farm to school work. Key activities for a planning grant proposal include (but are not limited to): collecting data; engaging stakeholders; identifying gaps in knowledge and resources; and pinpointing and developing solutions for obstacles that hinder farm to school programming for a particular community.

Planning grants will be awarded to entities that can demonstrate support and excitement for starting a farm to school program, but have undertaken few Farm to School activities thus far. Over the course of the grant period, planning grantees will be encouraged to use USDA resources intended to help organize and structure their farm to school efforts for maximum impact by embedding known best practices into early design considerations.

Recipients of planning grants must complete a comprehensive *Farm to School Action Plan*, the submission of which will be required in final reporting documents. Applicants may use the **Farm to School Planning Toolkit** and other technical assistance resources prepared by USDA staff.

Activities supported by planning grants include, but are not limited to:
- Developing a Farm to School Action Plan that includes goals, activities, and timelines to develop and implement a farm to school program or project that identifies responsible parties for each activity. The creation of a Farm to School Action Plan is a **required activity** for all awarded planning grant projects, and applicants should budget ample staff time for its completion. Sample action plans are available on the USDA website.
- Aligning the Farm to School Action Plan with the agency's, organization's, farm's school district(s)' or school(s)' existing operations, goals and commitments, integrating farm to school concepts in local wellness policies or school board resolutions, and identifying

key internal and external allies;

- Assessing a state, community, farm's school district(s)' or school(s)' need and readiness for development of a farm to school program and determining the tools, training, and technical assistance needed to create a farm to school program;
- Engaging a wide variety of internal and external collaborators and forming a leadership team with the purpose of designing a Farm to School Action Plan;
- Identifying obstacles and gaps in resources, training, and knowledge and exploring options for addressing existing barriers to launching or expanding farm to school activities;
- Hosting stakeholder meetings, conducting trainings, and/or attending professional development conferences and seminars;
- Conducting menu audits and/or issue surveys to determine reasonable first or intermediate steps school districts, schools or SFSP sponsors can take to offer locally- or regionally-sourced foods;
- Research garden, farm, or classroom-based educational curriculum that integrates farm to school concepts;
- Developing a garden or farm-based food safety plan that aligns with the needs and expectations of CNP operators (e.g., schools, districts, child care centers, etc.); and
- Assessing local or regional product availability and identifying key supply chain relationships necessary for successful implementation of a farm to school program.

1.3.2 Implementation Grants

Implementation grants are intended for eligible entities to scale up or further develop existing farm to school initiatives. Applicants may focus on a relatively discrete set of schools as direct recipients of project activities, or may provide products and services that have national, regional, or statewide relevance and scope. As such, eligible activities may include: training and technical assistance; supply-chain development; evaluation activities; curriculum development; creation of promotional materials or campaigns; and formation of networks or coalitions; among other activities. In addition to these activities, state agencies are well-positioned to develop strategic plans and coordinate efforts among schools and with other states. Working at the state level offers opportunities to incorporate farm to school strategies in trainings and professional development opportunities, while also identifying barriers and exploring options for addressing existing barriers at the state and school levels.

Implementation grants are appropriate for entities with established partnerships and initial implementation success. Proposals must be responsive to the USDA Farm to School Grant Program goals as described in Section I.0: Legislative Authority.

Activities supported by implementation grants may include, but are not limited to:
- Bringing more unprocessed and value-added, minimally processed, regionally-sourced meal components into the cafeteria;
- Expanding farm to school programs beyond lunch to bring local or regional products into the School Breakfast Program, school-based SFSP or school-based CACFP;
- Operating service projects (e.g. AmeriCorps, VISTA, FoodCorps, local service corps programs, etc.) that support farm to school initiatives in schools;

- Readying producers to participate in the school food market by providing training on procurement regulations, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and other food safety-related topics;
- Improving infrastructure to accommodate new local ingredients or local menu items;
- Providing technical support in the form of face-to-face trainings, consultations, webinars, etc.;
- Developing promotional campaigns in support of farm to school initiatives;
- Strategic planning efforts to expand or coordinate efforts across multiple districts;
- Conducting farm to school evaluation efforts;
- Solving distribution bottlenecks that limit the feasibility of sourcing more regionally produced items by working closely with distributors or serving as a broker to develop business relationships between farmer(s), schools, and aggregation entities such as food hubs or food distributors;
- Establishing new or strengthening existing community partnerships (e.g. working with culinary schools on training or menu development; partnerships with extension personnel to identify appropriate suppliers, etc.);
- Encouraging increased consumption of fruits and vegetables through promotional activities, taste tests, and other activities;
- Expanding experiential or agriculture-based learning opportunities, such as creation of school gardens, developing school-based farmers markets, providing support to ag/food clubs, or increasing exposure to local farms and on-farm activities; and,
- Developing and implementing integrated curriculum to reinforce food and nutrition-based learning throughout the school environment or on a local farm(s).
- Activities in state agency proposals may include, but are not limited to: hiring of staff to support statewide farm to school, school-based farm to summer, and/or school-based farm to childcare efforts; creation of statewide marketing campaigns or harvest of the month initiatives; and formation of statewide coalitions or taskforces.

1.3.3 Training grants

Training grants are intended to support eligible entities to conduct <u>state, regional (across multiple states), and national-</u> <u>level</u> trainings that strengthen farm to school supply chains and/or increase trainees' knowledge and capacity related to local procurement, food safety, school gardens, culinary education, and/or integration of agriculture-based curricula. Applications that have a specific emphasis on developing supply chain relationships by connecting local producers to school food buyers will also be considered.

Activities supported by training grants may include, but are not limited to:
- Technical assistance trainings that address buying or selling local foods to the federal child nutrition programs;
- Training events that bring together stakeholders from across the supply chain, (including producers, manufacturers, distributors, buyers, educators, etc.), e.g. statewide producer-buyer meetings designed to stimulate cross learning and business connections;

- Trainings on school garden development and food and agriculture curricula integration;
- Culinary training or educational activities, e.g. a "Junior Chef" competition where local products are incorporated into school meal programs; and,
- National, state, or regional trainings to support information sharing, networking, or the professional development of farm to school practitioners.

1.4   FY 2019 Funding Priorities

In addition to the general program purpose and priorities outlined above, across all grant categories, USDA considers the following priorities for FY 2019:

- Applications from school districts (i.e. the school district is the lead applicant[1]): schools or school districts will receive at least 50 percent of the overall number of planning and implementation awards.
- Applications from Indian Tribal Organizations and entities serving Native communities.
- Projects that reach more than one school.
- Projects that serve a high proportion of children (at least 40 percent or more) who are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

In selecting successful applicants, USDA, to the maximum extent practicable, will seek to ensure geographical diversity and equitable treatment of urban and rural communities.

2.0   Federal Award Information

2.1   Type of Federal Assistance

Funding of applications will be provided through the grant award/letter of credit process, via electronic transfer of funds, or by another payment method as determined by USDA, upon receipt of a properly executed grant agreement and subject to the availability of funding. USDA expects to make funds available to the grantee in advance of need. The submission of an application does not guarantee funding.

2.2   Award Amounts and Period of Performance

Planning and training grant awards will range from $20,000 - $50,000, and implementation grants will range from $50,000 - $100,000. Training grant applications to conduct state-level training are encouraged to cap their grant funding requests at $25,000. While USDA sets specific award amounts for each grant track, please note that the total project costs (including the non-USDA portion) may exceed these amounts.

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[1] The lead applicant is the organization that submitted the grant application.

The period of performance for the FY 2019 USDA Farm to School Grant Program will be as follows, beginning from the date of the award:

Grant Track	Award Period	Eligible Entities	Award Amounts
Implementation	12 **or** 24 months	Schools, Nonprofits, ITOs, Ag producers, state/local agencies	$50,000 - $100,000
Planning	12 **or** 24 months	Schools, Nonprofits, ITOs, Ag producers, state/local agencies	$20,000 - $50,000
Training Grants	12 months	Nonprofits, ITOs, Ag producers, state/local agencies	$20,000 - $50,000

Applicants should expect the grant life cycle to include start-up activities, execution, and close- out activities (final financial and program reports, accounting, etc.). Applicants are expected to plan accordingly in order to achieve project deliverables within the award period selected.

All grant funds must be obligated, and all program activities under the grant (other than activities relating to the close out of the grant) must be completed by the end of the award period. The close-out of the grant must occur no later than 90 days following the end of the award period, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any funds that are not used within 90 days following the end of the award period must be returned to USDA. In addition, final progress reports are due to USDA no later than 90 days following the end of the award period.

2.3 Allowable Costs
Among other costs, budgets may include expenses related to personnel, contractors, equipment and supplies, meeting expenses, travel, and trainings.

Equipment and Supplies: Expenditures for both equipment (i.e., items of personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a cost of $5,000 or more such as walk-in freezers, coolers, and ovens) are allowable expenses **only** for implementation grants. Supplies (e.g., knives, cutting boards, and food processors) are an allowable expense. Salad bars are also an allowable expense. Equipment is an **unallowable** cost for training and planning grants. Vehicles and permanent structures are also **unallowable** costs. For more information regarding allowable costs, please see the Frequently Asked Questions document on the [Farm to School Grant Applicant resource page](#).

Please refer to 2 CFR 200.313 for more information on the definition of equipment, as well as the disposition requirements for equipment once the grant has ended. In your application, you will need to address how you will handle the disposition of any equipment purchased with grant funds. This can be found online at: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1#se2.1.200_1313

Equipment and supplies purchased using Farm to School Grant Program funds must be used for the purpose of accomplishing stated project objectives. (It is expected that project objectives will be in alignment with the legislative priorities outlined in section 1.1 of this RFA.) If purchased equipment or supplies are not fully dedicated to project activities, including beyond the grant period end date, the applicant must determine what percentage of the good's time or space will be dedicated to project activities. This percentage must then be applied to the value of the good in order to determine the amount of federal funds that can be used to purchase said good. Please note that if awarded, a completed SF428 (Disposition request form) will need to be submitted with the close out of the grant.

> **For example:**
> - Purchase large walk-in freezer that will store foods for Child Nutrition Program but will also store food for the community food pantry.
> - Walk-in Freezer total cost: $8,000
> - 25% of freezer space used to store foods that will be serve the Child Nutrition Programs
> - $8,000 x 25% = $2,000 (amount of federal funds that can used to make this purchase)

Food Expenses: No more than 10 percent of the grant funds may be used for food purchases in the grant budget. The ultimate goal of funded projects should be to make local food products available on school menus; however, purchasing local products should not be a primary use of grant funds. Food purchases should be limited to educational purposes, including: farm to school sample tables, taste tests, or promotional use. Food costs related to conducting a test run of a new local or regional product are also deemed an appropriate use of funds.

Partnerships: Partners essential to the proposed project that may require funding from USDA to participate in the proposed project can be included in applicant budgets as a sub-grantee or line item contractor. Please be sure to provide a rationale for the partner(s)' services.

2.4   Match Requirements and Cost Sharing

For all grant types, federal funds should constitute no more than 75 percent of the total project budget. The grant recipient must show evidence of matching support of at least 25 percent of the total budget in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, including facilities, equipment, or services provided by state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private sources as defined in The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.). For help calculating your project's match requirement, please use OCFS' Match Calculator on the [Farm to School Grant Applicant resource page](#).

In-kind contributions are generally defined as the value of goods or services provided by a third-party for the benefit of the grant program, where no funds transferred hands. Applicants may not use Federal funds of any kind, including Federal food service funds, as a match for this grant program. The match contributions reflected in the submitted grant proposal must be documented, including the basis for the value determination as well as be reasonable, allocable, and allowable under the criteria for this grant award. Matching funds may be in the form of

allowable direct or indirect costs. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306.

The grantee must maintain written records to support all allowable costs which are claimed as being its contribution to participation, as well as costs paid by the Federal Government. In the event the grantee does not provide the minimum amount of cost share, as described in the budget, the Government's contribution will be reduced in proportion to the grantee's contribution. A sample match calculation can be found in section 4.3.1 Budget.

3.0 Eligibility Information

The authorizing language specifies the following eligible entities:
- Eligible schools;
- State and local agencies;
- Indian tribal organizations;
- Agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers; and
- Non-profit entities.

Eligible schools are defined as pre-K-12 School Food Authorities (SFAs), non-profit private schools, charter schools, Indian tribal schools, and others that participate in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs. Eligible SFAs may apply for funding that spans the entire SFA, for a specific group of schools (e.g. only K-5 schools within an SFA), or for an individual school. In the case where an SFA exists, the application must come from the SFA, and only one application per SFA is allowed.

Please note that the Office of Community Food Systems seeks to award funding to agricultural producers who operate small- to medium-sized farms. Please note that agricultural producers are not limited to those producing fruits and vegetables but also include fishers, ranchers and those raising other livestock for consumption. A small- to medium-sized farm is any place from which up to $1 million (gross) of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the previous calendar year. Or a small to medium farm is any place with land acreage measuring less than 1,582 acres that produced and sold, or normally would have sold agricultural products.

For more information regarding eligibility entity definitions, please review the Frequently Asked Questions document on the Farm to School Grant Applicant resource page.

3.1 Planning and Implementation Grant Eligibility

Eligible schools, state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers, and non-profit entities are eligible to receive planning and implementation grants.

Funding is available to support school-based programs only. If a proposal seeks to increase local foods in the Child and Adult Care Program or the Summer Food Service Program, target sites must be located at an eligible school. If a proposal seeks to target school(s), schools discussed in the project proposal as benefiting from the project must be eligible as defined in section 3.0.

Proof of existing support: Applicants must show evidence of existing community support or partnerships with entities that will be involved in the implementation of the project. Applicants must submit up to three letters of commitment from key partners identified in the project plan or budget. Letters are not to exceed more than one page. Please do not provide more than three letters; they will not be considered. Potential partners may include, but are not limited to, key food service personnel (e.g. school nutrition directors), school administration (e.g. superintendent, principal, etc), teachers, agricultural producers or distributors providing local food for the school nutrition programs or educational enrichment, or other key organizations (e.g. cooperative extensions, rural development centers, etc.). Applications which do not include relevant letter(s) of commitment may be subject to a reduced score in the review process.

Letters must include a description of the partner's:
* overall support of the project's execution;
* role and responsibility in achieving the proposed project; and
* demonstrated experience or expertise with executing the assigned role/responsibility.

Please carefully review sections 3.0 and 3.3 before proceeding with preparing a proposal.

3.2   Training Grant Eligibility

Only state and local agencies, Indian Tribal Organizations, agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers, and non-profit entities are eligible to receive training grant funds. Unlike planning and implementation grants, training grants may support projects that impact CACFP and SFSP operators that have sites beyond schools. Please review section 3.0 for additional eligibility requirements before proceeding with preparing an application.

Proof of existing support: Applicants must show evidence of existing community support in the form of a support letter from a stakeholder the applicant intends to train. The letter is to describe the individual's support of the training and how such a training will overcome farm to school challenges experienced by the target audience. The letter is not to exceed more than one page. Applications which do not have a support letter from a potential training attendee may be subject to a reduced score in the review process.

Please carefully review sections 3.0 and 3.3 before proceeding with preparing a proposal.

3.3   Additional Eligibility Requirements

* **One grant application per entity:** Applicants must choose between submitting a planning, implementation, or training grant request and may only submit one application.
* **Current and previous implementation, support service, and training grantees:** in order to ensure diversity among awardees, organizations that have received implementation, support service, or training grants though the USDA Farm to School Grant Program in the last two funding cycles (FY 2017 or FY 2018) are ineligible to apply for FY 2019 Farm to School Grant Program funding.

- **Past planning grantees:** While being a past planning grant recipient does not guarantee an implementation award, previous planning grantees that have completed their projects may apply for implementation or training grants.
- **Past implementation, support service and training grantees:** Organizations that have received implementation, support service, or training grants though the Farm to School Grant Program in the last two funding cycles (FY 2017 or FY 2018) are **ineligible** to apply for FY 2019 Farm to School Grant Program funding.
- Cooperative Extension Service[2] programs and institutions of higher learning are **ineligible** to apply for these grant projects as the lead applicant, however they can be a key partner.

3.3.1 Fiscal Sponsors

Eligible applicants may use fiscal sponsors/agents in their effort to attain and administer a grant award. Such applicants seeking to implement a Farm to School Grant project may utilize a fiscal sponsor/agent to apply for an award on behalf of the implementing organization. By doing so, the sponsor/agent accepts all financial and legal liabilities for that organization at the time the award is made. Fiscal sponsors/agents must submit the application as the applicant organization, and the Authorized Organizational Representative responsible for all grant decisions should be listed as an employee of the fiscal sponsor/agent. Fiscal sponsors/agents are bound by the same requirements mentioned in this RFA as other applicant organizations. An applicant organization cannot accept an award and later transfer the award to a fiscal sponsor/agent. Distinct eligible applicants that use the same fiscal sponsor may submit applications during the same round of funding.

3.4   Grantee Requirements

All grant recipients must:
- Participate in an orientation call.
- Complete standardized evaluation activities as determined by USDA which includes baseline and final reporting, an annual grantee satisfaction report, as well as quarterly progress and final reports.
- **Acknowledge USDA support:** As outlined in 2 CFR 415.2, grant recipients shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any publications written or published with grant support and, if feasible, on any publication reporting the results of, or describing, a grant-supported activity. Recipients shall include acknowledgement of USDA Food and Nutrition Service support on any audiovisual which is produced with grant support and which has a direct production cost of over $5,000.
  - When acknowledging USDA support, use the following language: "This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture." Whenever practical, FNS also expects that grantees use the Office of Community Food Systems identifier in publications, posters, websites and presentations resulting from their award. Grantees are asked to follow the **USDA Visual Standards Guide** when using the USDA logo.

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[2]Cooperative Extension Service is defined by USDA NIFA as a nationwide, non-credit educational network that addresses public needs by providing non-formal higher education and learning activities to farmers, ranchers, communities, youth, and families throughout the nation.

Grant recipients *ma*y be asked to host USDA officials for a site visit during the course of their grant award or during the training event. All costs associated with the site visit will be paid for by USDA and are not expected to be included in grant budgets. Site visits serve to augment USDA's understanding of the challenges with and best practices of farm to school efforts.

3.4.1 Planning and Implementation Grantee Requirements

Planning and Implementation grant recipients must:

- Participate in webinars and regularly scheduled training and technical assistance throughout the course of the grant period.
- Engage in periodic one-on-one consultations with USDA personnel.
- Attend one face-to-face meeting with USDA personnel and fellow grantees to provide exposure to farm to school best practices and networking opportunities, discuss project progress, explore opportunities for collaborative efforts, and enhance dissemination of exemplary methods.
    - Applicants must include travel costs for at least one and no more than two project representatives, preferably including the project director, in their grant budgets to attend this meeting.
    - Applicants should estimate three full days of travel including hotel, airfare, ground transportation, meals, etc. For airfare, assume that the destination of the meeting will be several states away and that tickets will be medium to high priced.
- Planning grantees must create a Farm to School Action Plan using USDA's Farm to School Planning Toolkit.

3.4.2 Training Grant Requirements

- Make best faith efforts to include USDA FNS Regional Farm to School personnel, time permitting, in the planning process.
- Where relevant, disseminate USDA Farm to School Program fact sheets and other relevant resource materials.
- Place the USDA logo on all training materials and reference USDA as a training event sponsor in all promotional materials including websites.
- Use standardized USDA evaluation questions to monitor the effectiveness of any programming.
- Submit results from all evaluations to USDA.
- Submit meeting agendas, presentations, and other training materials to USDA.

4.0 Application and Submission Information

4.1   Application Format

Applications should meet the following formatting guidelines:
- Include a **table of contents** (not counted towards page limit);
- **4-page** maximum length for **Planning** and **Training** grant narrative response; or
- **6-page** maximum length for **Implementation** grant narrative response.
- A *suggested* length for each subsection of the proposal narrative is provided.

- **1-page** maximum length for support and commitment letters.
- Narrative response page restrictions apply only to content of the narrative proposals and do not apply to other required forms/attachments, nor the budget-related documents. Pages exceeding the stated page limits may be omitted during the review process.
- 8 ½" by 11" paper;
- 12 point Times New Roman font size (smaller font may be used in tables, charts and graphs as long as they are clearly readable);
- Single-spaced;
- At least 1 inch margins on the top and bottom of the page; and,
- Numbered pages.

4.2   Application Content: Proposal Narrative

4.2.1 Planning Grant Proposal Narrative (Maximum 4 pages)

In preparing your proposal narrative, provide the information requested, in the order presented below.
- **Farm to School Background and Readiness:** Describe your school(s) and the number of students that will benefit from this project. Briefly describe the vision for your farm to school program, including any goals related to local food purchasing, school gardens, and agriculture education and how many schools your project will reach. Note any challenges, anticipated or existing, as well as how challenges can be overcome through this grant. Clearly indicate why your site is ready to undertake this planning process at this time.
  Suggested length: ~200 words

- **Need:** Describe the population being served by the proposal and how a farm to school program would address an identified gap or need that exists within your school and/or community. Support your position with relevant quantitative or qualitative data, (e.g. Farm to School Census data, demographic information, levels of access to healthy foods, poverty statistics, public health information such as obesity rates in your city/county, school meal participation rates, Census of Agriculture information, etc.).
  Suggested length: ~200 words

- **Objectives, Activities, and Timeline:** *All objectives should lead to the end goal of having a comprehensive Farm to School Action Plan in place by the end of the grant period.* Action plan corresponds to Farm to School legislative priorities outlined in Section 1.1. Use "SMART" objectives (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) to describe what you hope to accomplish. Activities should clearly align with the identified objectives and support the development of a Farm to School Action Plan. **Your project timeline should start no earlier than July 1, 2019.** The timeline should have a logical order of activities that can be completed within the 12 or 24 month time period. (If awards are made after the expected award date the timeline may be shifted appropriately.)
  (Example) Objective: By September 2019, identify supply chain partners we could work with to increase our procurement of regional foods by 20%.*

Activities:
- *Identify X n u m b e r o f local farmers and regional supply chain actors*
  - *Who: Bob Jones (By: July 2019)*
- *Host initial meeting w/ potential supply chain partners*
  - *Who: Bob Jones (By: August 2019)*
- *Follow up w/ supply chain partners one-on-one*
  - *Who: Bob Jones (By: August-September 2019*)

Suggested length: ~800 words

- **Evaluation**: Evaluating your farm to school progress, both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, and then assessing your program's overall impact, will be critical. Please describe how you would monitor your proposed activities, how you would evaluate progress against stated objectives throughout the grant period and at what frequency would these activities occur. Outline the roles and responsibilities of the staff, volunteers, or contractors involved in monitoring and evaluating success. For more information on evaluation resources, see: http://www.usda.gov/farmtoschool.
  Suggested length: ~300 words

- **Staffing, Project Management, and Quality Assurance.** Describe your approach to managing the project to ensure that project activities are completed on time, within budget, and with quality results. Identify the staff (or contractors) who will manage the project. Describe roles and responsibilities of these employees or contractors, as well as relevant qualifications and experience. You may reference attached resumes to demonstrate relevant experience. If a key staff member has not been hired, in lieu of a resume, please attach the job description that will be used to fill this position (including desired knowledge, skills and education).
  Suggested length: ~300 words

- **Sustainability**. How will you ensure your Farm to School Action Plan is executed regardless of whether future funding is awarded? Please share which other funding opportunities will be pursued to initiate your action plan. Discuss the current and future roles of any partners and stakeholders in this section, and include how planned activities will be integrated into the organization's regular, ongoing operations and/or local policies.
  Suggested length: ~200 words

4.2.2 Implementation Grant Proposal Narrative (Maximum 6 pages)

Farm to School Experience
- Describe the type of organization you operate, including your line of business and the product(s) or the services you provide. Discuss previous experience in providing support for farm to school procurement strategies, promotional efforts, hands-on learning, training, curriculum development, planning, and evaluation. Note existing or

potential challenges in executing farm to school work and how those can be overcome. Identify and briefly describe key partnerships in place that will support the successful execution of this project.

Suggested length: ~350 words

Need

- **Need:** Describe the population being served by the proposal and how a farm to school program would address an identified gap or need that exists within your school and/or community.. Support your position with relevant quantitative or qualitative data, (e.g. Farm to School Census data, demographic information, levels of access to healthy foods, poverty statistics, public health information such as obesity rates in your city/county, school meal participation rates, Census of Agriculture information, etc.), to support your justification. Briefly explain why the project is needed at this time.

  Suggested length: ~250 words

Project

- **Proposed Project.** Describe the overall goal of your proposed project and the specific farm to school activities you will conduct. Discuss how the project's goal(s) will address the objectives of the Farm to School Grant Program (outlined in Section 1.1)

  If your project includes local procurement activities, please describe the intended approach, (i.e. do you plan to purchase via existing distributors, DoD Fresh, direct from farms, school gardens etc.?). If your project includes experiential/nutrition education activities, please detail approach for rolling out among target audience.

- **Objectives, Activities and Timeline**: Use "SMART" objectives (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) to describe what you hope to accomplish. **Your project timeline should start no earlier than July 1, 2019**. If awards are made after the expected award date the timeline may be shifted appropriately.

  (Example) Objective: By August 31, 2019, freeze at least XXX lbs of local fruit for use in lunch program.

  Activities:

  - *Query food service staff regarding type of fruit preferred along with preferences for receipt of product (size pouch, amount of pre-cutting, etc.)*
  - *Who: Sarah Johnson, District (By: August/September 2019)*
  - *Identify 3-5 test products*
  - *Who: Sarah Johnson, District, and Bob Jones, Mid-Valley Growers (By: January 2020)*

  Suggested length: ~1,400 words

Evaluation Plan

- Evaluating your farm to school progress, both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, and then assessing your program's overall impact, will be critical. Please describe how you would monitor your proposed activities, how you would evaluate progress against stated objectives throughout the grant period and at what frequency would these activities occur. Outline the roles and responsibilities of the staff, volunteers, or contractors involved in monitoring and evaluating success.

  For more information on evaluation resources, see: http://www.usda.gov/farmtoschool.

Suggested length: ~350 words

Staffing and Project Management and Quality Assurance
- Describe your approach to managing the project to ensure that project activities are completed on time, within budget, and with quality results. Identify the staff (or contractors) who will manage the project. Describe roles and responsibilities of these employees or contractors, as well as relevant qualifications and experience. You may reference attached resumes to demonstrate relevant experience. If a key staff member has not been hired, in lieu of a resume, please attach the job description that will be used to fill this position (including desired knowledge, skills and education).
  Suggested length: ~375 words

Sustainability:
- USDA funds are envisioned as a one-time infusion of capital. Describe which aspects or components of the project will continue beyond the end of the project period and how. How will your farm to school program be sustained over the long-term with minimal or no need for grant funding? Discuss how your efforts will be integrated into ongoing operations and structures such as in your district's Local Wellness Policy, Administrative Rules or other guidance documents or policies.
  Suggested length: ~275 words

4.2.3 Training Grant Proposal Narrative (Maximum 4 pages)

- **Farm to School Background Information.** Briefly describe your farm to school t r a i n i n g efforts to date. Describe any resources, infrastructure, or systems/processes already in place that will help your organization host a successful farm to school training. Note any potential or existing challenges and how they will be overcome. Describe your partners' experience providing training on farm to school or related topics. Describe why the timing is right for the proposed training.
  Suggested length: ~300 words

- **Need:** Describe your target audience and why there is a need for such a training. When possible, use any relevant quantitative or qualitative data, (e.g. Farm to School Census data, demographic information, levels of access to healthy foods, poverty statistics, public health information such as obesity rates in your city/county, school meal participation rates, Census of Agriculture information, etc.), to support your justification. Describe how the training will address the identified gap or need that exists among your target audience. Attach a letter of support from an intended audience member of the proposed training. Make sure to include the name, affiliation, and contact information for this intended audience member in the Need section as well.
  Suggested length: ~250 words

- **Proposed Training:** Describe the training, including:

- Scope (state, regional, or national);
- Date and location;
- Organizers or planning committee (describe a n y partners that will play a substantive role in putting on the event);
- Topics to be addressed, including how this need was determined;
- Primary goals of the event;
- Attendees (what types and how many people do you expect at your event?);
- A draft agenda (the draft agenda will not be counted against the page limit.); and,
- Focus (farm to school, school-based farm to summer, and/or school-based farm to CACFP). If the event includes a procurement focus, include whether the trainer has participated in a USDA local procurement training (typically conducted by a farm to school regional lead or an Institute of Child Nutrition trainer). If the designated trainer has not, please provide information regarding why this individual is suited to conduct local procurement training. Explain if this is an event you have hosted before or if it is the first time the event will be held.

Suggested length: ~800 words

- **Relevance.** Describe how the proposed training will advance the priorities and goals of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program in Section 1.1 and how the training will strengthen farm to school networks, trainees' knowledge, and overall community impact.

  Suggested length: ~350 words

- **Staffing, Project Management, and Quality Assurance.** Describe your approach to managing the project to ensure that project activities are completed on time, within budget and with quality results. Identify the staff (or contractors) who will manage the project. Describe roles and responsibilities of these employees or contractors, as well as relevant qualifications and experience. Describe the qualifications and the appropriateness of desired speakers to teach specified topic areas. You may reference attached resumes to demonstrate relevant experience. If a key staff member has not been hired, in lieu of a resume, please attach the job description that will be used to fill this position (including desired knowledge, skills and education).

  Suggested length: ~300 words

4.3 Application Content: Budget and Budget Narrative

The same budget format is used for all grant types and the pages are not counted against the proposal narrative page limits.

4.3.1 Budget

Provide a proposed budget describing appropriate use of grant funds and justifying costs. Your budget must be submitted using the "Budget Information and Instruction Form" (SF-424A) Proposed costs must be necessary, reasonable and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives. Include a total project budget, the amount requested from USDA, and the match contributed to the project.

Reminder: USDA will contribute no more than 75 percent of the total project costs; applicants must include at least a **25 percent** of the total project cost. See Section III: F. Match Requirements and Cost Sharing.

Sample Match Calculation

Grant Request: $100,000
Match Amount: $35,000
Total Project Cost: $135,000
Match Percent: 26 % (match / total project cost) USDA Percent: 74 % (grant request / total project cost)
R*eminder*: Note that allowable food costs may not constitute more than 10 percent of the grant.

Indirect Cost Rate: If available, the current **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)**, negotiated with a Federal negotiating agency, should be used. Indirect costs may not exceed the negotiated rate. If a NICRA is used, the percentage and base should be indicated. If the applicant does not have, and has never been approved for, a NICRA, they may charge up to 10% de minimis; in this instance, the applicant must note that this is what they are requesting. An applicant may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "None requested" should be stated in the budget narrative.

4.3.2 Budget Narrative:

In addition to the budget submitted via the "Budget Information and Instruction Form" (SF-424A), you must also include a narrative line item description for every allowable cost and show how it supports the project goals as well as briefly describe how the total amount for that line item was determined. If key partner(s) are receiving a portion of grant funds to provide essential services, please justify the organizations' participation in the project. This narrative, like the budget form itself, is not considered part of the page limit. A sample budget and budget narrative are available on the **USDA Farm to School Grant Program website.**

4.4 Application Content: Attachments

4.4.1 Required Attachments

- **Nonprofit Applicants:** All non-profit organizations must include their 501(c)(3) determination   letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Applicants that are fiscally sponsored should include their fiscal sponsor's 501(c)(3) letter from the IRS along with a signed letter from the fiscal sponsor outlining the relationship between the fiscal sponsor and applicant.
- **Training Applicants:** Include a draft agenda in addition to your project narrative. The draft agenda will not count against the narrative page limit.
- **All Applicants:**
    - Include relevant resumes for up to three key staff managing this project.
    - **Proof of existing support**: Applicants must show evidence of existing community support or partnerships with entities involved in the implementation of the project. Depending on the grant track of interest, please see section 3.1 or 3.2 for more information.

4.5   Application Content: Required Grant Application Forms

 Refer to the application checklist on page 4 for a list of required grant forms.

4.6   Submitting an Application

4.6.1 Submission Date

Complete grant applications must be uploaded to Grants.gov by 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time (EST), on December 4, 2018.

- Late applications will not be considered.
- FNS will not consider additions or revisions to applications once they are submitted.
- Applications must be submitted via the Grants.gov web portal. Mailed, e-mailed or hand-delivered application packages will **not** be accepted.
- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- FNS reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants this or subsequent fiscal years should additional funds become available.

USDA strongly encourages applicants to begin the process at least **three weeks before** the due date and to submit applications to Grants.gov at least **one week** before the deadline to allow time to troubleshoot any issues, should they arise. The Grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was **accepted** (not just received). Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting an application to Grant.gov should contact the grant support team listed in Section 8.0: Federal Awarding Agency Contacts.

Notice of Submission: Approximately three weeks after the close of the grant period, USDA will confirm receipt of all proposals via email. If you do not receive an email, please contact USDA via email. (Section 8.0: Federal Awarding Agency Contacts)

4.6.2 Electronic Submission Details

Please be aware that the Grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; applicants should ensure receipt of confirmation that the application was accepted. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting applications to Grants.gov should contact the grant support team noted in Section 8.0: Federal Awarding Agency Contacts.

In order to submit an application, you must:

1. Obtain a **DUNS** number
    - In order to obtain a DUNS number, if your organization does not have one, or if you are unsure of your organization's number, contact Dun and Bradstreet or by calling 1-888-814-1435, Monday thru Friday, 8am-9pm ET. There is no fee associated with obtaining a DUNS number.
    - **It may take 2-3 business days to obtain a DUNS number.**

2. Register in the System for Award Management (**SAM)**
    - SAM combines Federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. For additional information regarding SAM, see the following link: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/.https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/
    - Must have organization's DUNS, entity's Tax ID Number (TIN), and taxpayer name (as it appears on last tax return). **It may take 3-5 business days to register in SAM, however** in some instances the SAM process to complete the migration of permissions and/or the renewal of the entity record will require **5-7 days or more**.
    - All applicants must have current SAM status at the time of application submission and throughout the duration of a Federal Award in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25.
    - We strongly encourage applicants to begin the process **at least 3 weeks** before the due date of the grant solicitation.
    - UPDATED ALERT from SAM.gov: For your SAM.gov registration, you must submit a **notarized letter appointing the authorized** Entity Administrator. The review process changed for the Federal Assistance community on June 11, 2018. Read the updated FAQs to learn more: https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/sam-update-updated-july-11-2018

3. Register in **Grants.gov**
    - Visit the website.
    - For an overview of the Grants.gov application process, visit the webpage.
    - Must have DUNS and be registered in SAM.
    - Applicants must have a valid SAM registration **no later than 3 days prior to the application due date** of this solicitation in order to upload their application in Grants.gov.
    - Ensure that if your organization has previously registered in Grants.gov that the individual who is submitting the application has been designated as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) by the E-Business Point of Contact in your

organization. **If you are not designated as an AOR, you will be unable to submit your application package through the Grants.gov.**

- Generally, the registration process takes between 3-5 business days.

4.6.3 More Information on the System for Award Management (SAM)

For applicant organizations that were previously registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), relevant applicant information is already in SAM; however, you will need to set up a SAM account, as necessary, to update any information. **Applicants that do not receive confirmation that SAM registration is complete and active after 3 days should contact SAM at via phone at:** 866-606-8220 (U.S. calls) or on their website.

The General Services Administration (GSA) has created a SAM training presentation. This presentation will be extremely useful or SAM users that are registering for SAM for the first time; setting up user permissions from CCR into the SAM registration (called migrating); or, updating /renewing CCR record in SAM.

4.6.4 More Information on Grants.gov

Special Characters Not Supported in Grants.gov: All applicants **MUST** follow Grants.gov guidance on file naming conventions. To avoid submission issues, please follow the guidance provided in the Grants.gov Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- File attachment names longer than approximately 50 characters can cause problems processing packages. Please limit file attachment names. Also, do not use any special characters (example: &,–,*, %, /, #', -), this includes periods (.), spacing followed by a dash in the file and for word separation, use underscore (example: Attached_File.pdf) in naming the attachments."

Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application will be rejected by

Grants.gov. Applicants experiencing difficulty submitting an application to Grants.gov should contact the grant support team listed in Section 8: Agency Contacts.

5.0   Application Review Information

5.1   Initial Screening

USDA will screen all applications to ensure they are eligible and fully responsive. Eligible and responsive applications are those that meet the following requirements:

1. Submitted by eligible applicants (see Section 3.0: Eligibility Information);
2. Meet all other eligibility requirements (see Section 3.0: Eligibility Information);
3. Successfully submitted on or before the required deadline (see Section 4.0: Application and Submission Information);
4. Include at least a 25 percent match of the total cost of the project (see Section 2.0: Federal Award Information); and,
5. Are complete (see Section 4.0: Application and Submission Information).

If an application does not include all appropriate information, FNS may consider the application to be non-responsive and may eliminate it from further evaluation.

5.2   Panel Review

After initial screening, USDA will convene an evaluation panel to consider the merit of each grant application. Each application that passes initial screening will be given to the panel to be evaluated and scored according to how well it addresses each application component. The panel will assign each application a score using the evaluation criteria and weights specified below.

5.2.1 Scoring for Planning Grant Applications

Farm to School Background Information   **10 points**
- The applicant describes the vision for farm to school programming
- Applicants lists the number of schools and students to benefit from the program
- Applicant explains why the timing is right for a farm to school planning grant
- The applicant is appropriate for a planning grant, i.e., has minimal farm to school experience and would benefit from training and the development of an action plan.
- Existing or anticipated challenges are described, and applicant clearly articulates a plan for overcoming these obstacles.

Need   **10 points**
- Applicant describes a clear picture of the school or site and the target audience to benefit from the project. When possible, applicant provides at least one piece of relevant quantitative or qualitative information and/or data, such as demographic

information, number of students, local Farm to School Census data, food insecurity rates, poverty statistics, public health information such as obesity rates, free/reduced price school meal rates, Census of Agriculture information, etc.)
- The applicant demonstrates how a farm to school program would address the target audience's need.

Objectives, Activities, and Timelines   **30 points**
- The objectives are "SMART" (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound).
- Proposal focuses primarily on actions that lay the foundation or framework for launching farm to school activities. Key planning activities include but are not limited to collecting data, engaging stakeholders, pinpointing obstacles, forming a leadership team, identifying gaps in resources, training, knowledge, equipment/supplies, staffing etc.
- A timeline or action plan with a list of activities is included and does not begin prior to July 1, 2019.
- The activities support the development of a Farm to School Action Plan that clearly supports legislative priorities:
    - Inclusion of local and/or regional products in cafeteria offerings;
    - An integrated approach that includes promotional or educational activities along with farm, garden, and nutrition-based education; and,
    - Creation or further strengthening of community partnerships.

Evaluation   **10 points**
- A clear plan is in place that describes how activities will be monitored, how progress will be measured against stated objectives and at what frequency these activities will occur.
- Roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating activities are clearly outlined (e.g. contractors, designating a current staff member, etc.)
- Evaluation plan is linked to proposed objectives, activities, and timeline.

Staffing, Project Management, and Quality Assurance   **20 points**
- Applicant included (no more than three) resumes of relevant key staff and the qualifications of the staff involved with the proposed project and/or organizational leadership reflect the expertise necessary to carry out the proposed project. If a key position has not been filled, a job description including desired knowledge, skills and education has been included in the application in lieu of a resume.
- The management approach (including staffing, procurement of contractors, quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, monitoring progress, etc.) indicates that the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the planning project and development of the action plan.
- The level of staff allocation is appropriate to expect both excellent program execution as well as program evaluation.
- Roles and responsibilities among staff are clearly outlined.

Sustainability   **10 points**

- The applicant clearly describes how the program will continue past grant funding including future roles of staff and/or partners
- The sustainability plan includes a variety of strategies to ensure long term viability, including but not limited to building organizational capacity, seeking other funding sources, building or strengthening community partnerships, reallocating existing resources, integrating farm to school activities into existing operations and structures, enacting policy, etc.

Budget Plan   **10 points**

- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.
- Proposed costs are reasonable and necessary to carry out the project's goals and objectives.
- The budget includes a line item description for every allowable cost and shows how it supports the project goals.
- Budget calculations and documentation show clearly how the budget components were developed and costs estimated.
- Budget narrative, itemized budget and the proposal narrative align with one another.

5.2.2 Scoring for Implementation Grant Applications

Farm to School Experience   **15 points**

- Applicant includes a description of the organization and products and/or services provided.
- Evidence of previous experience with farm to school execution exists, and applicant describes existing or potential challenges as well as how to overcome.
- School and community partnerships are in place, as evidenced by (no more than three) letters of commitment. Applicant describes key relevant partnerships in place that will support the successful execution of the project.

Need   **10 points**

- Applicant describes a clear picture of the school or organization and the target audience to benefit from the project. When possible, applicant provides at least one piece of relevant quantitative or qualitative information and/or data, such as demographic information, number of students, local Farm to School Census data, levels of access to healthy foods, poverty statistics, public health information such as obesity rates, school meal participation rates, Census of Agriculture information, etc.)
- The applicant demonstrates how a farm to school program would address the target audience's need.
- Applicant explains why the project is needed at this time.

Project   **30 points**

- Applicant describes project's overall goal.
- Project aligns with the USDA Farm to School Grant Program focus areas (outlined in Section 1.1) and leverages an integrated approach that includes promotional or

educational activities along with farm, garden and nutrition-based education, and the creation or further strengthening of community partnerships.
- Applicant clearly describes the approach and activities.
  - For local procurement activities: includes intended approach (e.g. purchase via existing distributors, DoD, fresh, direct from farms, school garden etc)
  - For experiential/nutrition education activities includes details regarding roll out among target audience
- Applicant includes a timeline of activities that does not begin prior to July 1, 2019.
- Objectives are "SMART" (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound).

Evaluation   **10 points**
- A clear plan is in place that describes how activities will be monitored, how progress will be measured against stated objectives and at what frequency these activities will occur.
- Roles and responsibilities and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating activities are clearly outlined (e.g. contracting a third party, designating a current staff member, etc.).
- Evaluation plan is aligned to proposed objectives, activities, and timeline.

Staffing, Project Management, and Quality Assurance   **15 points**
- Applicant included (no more than three) resumes of relevant key staff and the qualifications of the staff involved with the proposed project and/or organizational leadership reflect the expertise necessary to carry out the proposed project. If a key position has not been filled, a job description including desired knowledge, skills and education has been included in the application in lieu of a resume.
- The management approach (including staffing, procurement of contractors, quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, monitoring progress, etc.) indicates that the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the project and development of the action plan.
- The level of staff allocation is appropriate to expect both excellent program execution as well as program evaluation.
- Roles and responsibilities among staff are clearly outline

Sustainability   **10 points**
- The applicant clearly describes how the program will continue past grant funding including future roles of staff and/or partners
- The sustainability plan includes a variety of strategies to ensure long term viability, including but not limited to building organizational capacity, seeking other funding sources, building or strengthening community partnerships, a Farm to School advisory council, reallocating existing resources, integrating farm to school activities into existing operations and structures, enacting policy, etc.

Budget Plan   **10 points**
- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.

- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives.
- The budget includes a line item description for every allowable cost and shows how it supports the project goals.
- Budget calculations and documentation show clearly how the budget components were developed and costs estimated
- Budget narrative, itemized budget and the proposal narrative align with one another.

5.2.3 Scoring for Training Grant Applications

Farm to School Background Information   **15 points**
- Evidence of previous farm to school training or event planning experience exists through the mention of resources, capacity, systems, structures, etc.
- Potential and/or existing challenges are identified and ways to overcomeare discussed.
- Partnerships are in place and applicant describes partners' experience in training on farm to school topics.
- Applicant explains why the timing is right for the proposed training.

Need   **10 points**
- Applicant describes a clear picture of the target audience. When possible, applicant provides at least one piece of relevant quantitative or qualitative information and/or data, such as demographic information, local Farm to School Census data, levels of access to healthy foods, poverty statistics, public health information such as obesity rates, school meal participation rates, Census of Agriculture information, etc.
- The applicant demonstrates how the training would address the target audience's need.
- Applicant attached a letter of support from an intended training attendee.

Proposed Training   **30 points**
- The scope, date, location, organizers, topics, goals, intended audience, and focus for the training are included.
- The training is clearly described and is reasonable and attainable during the grant time frame.
- A draft agenda is included.
- The trainer was trained by USDA if providing procurement training.

Relevance   **20 points**
- Training aligns with USDA Farm to School priorities outlined in Section 1.1.
- Applicant clearly demonstrates how the proposed training will help to strengthen farm to school networks, knowledge, or capacity.

Staffing, Project Management, and Quality Assurance   **15 points**
- Applicant included (no more than three) resumes of relevant key staff, organizers, and trainers and the qualifications of the people involved reflect the expertise

necessary to carry out the proposed training. If a key position has not been filled, a job description including desired knowledge, skills and education has been provided in the application in lieu of a resume.

- The management approach (including staff, procurement of speakers/contractors, communications planning, quality assurance planning, tracking timelines, monitoring progress, etc.) indicates that the applicant has the capacity to manage and execute the planning project and development of the action plan.
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined among staff and partners, or contractors.
- Qualification of desired speakers are relevant to the topic areas that they are assigned to cover.

Budget Plan   **10 points**
- The total funding amount requested is appropriate for the scope of the project.
- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary and allocable to carry out the project's goals and objectives.
- The budget includes a line item description for every allowable cost and shows how it supports the project goals.
- Budget calculations and documentation show clearly how the budget components were developed and costs estimated.

5.3   Selection Process

After evaluation and scoring, grant applications will be arrayed by type (planning, implementation, and training) and by score within each type, starting with the highest score. For planning and implementation tracks, applications from school districts will be arrayed separately to ensure that schools are prioritized and not in direct competition with other entities. Schools or school districts will receive at least 50 percent of the overall number of awards. A list of all applications deemed eligible for award will be submitted to the Selection Official for a final decision regarding funding.

The Selection Official has ultimate authority to decide which applications are approved and funded, and *generally* will adhere to the recommendations made by the reviewers, provided that funding is available. However, the Selection Official reserves the right to deviate from those recommendations. The Selection Official may take other factors into account when selecting awards, such as: projects that serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals; projects that serve more than 1 school; the need to ensure geographic diversity and a range of projects from rural and urban areas; representation of Indian Tribal Organizations and agricultural producers; agency and funding priorities; and, the scores assigned by the review panel. In addition, USDA reserves the option to select one or more lower rated applications in order to achieve a diversity of projects and regional representation. Prior to final award determinations, applicants are vetted to ensure that they are responsive, fiscally responsible entities capable of stewarding and executing the requirements of a farm to school grant. The Selection Official may also determine that, based on their scores, few of the applications are of technical merit. In such a case, FNS may make fewer awards or smaller awards than expected or make no awards.

5.4   Determination of Award Amounts

As part of the technical review process, USDA will review applicants' budgets to ensure that all costs are reasonable, allowable, and applicable. Applications selected and approved for funding with budgets that are well justified and supported will likely be funded at the requested amounts. However, USDA reserves the right to fund applications at lesser amounts if USDA determines that the project can be implemented with less funding; or at lesser amounts if federal funding is not sufficient to fully fund all applications that merit awards. This is subject to availability and appropriation of funds.

6.0   Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire

In reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, Federal Awarding Agencies, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.400, are required, prior to making a Federal award, to review information available through various OMB-designated repositories for eligibility qualification or financial integrity, and to have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive Federal awards. The evaluation of the information obtained from the designated repository systems and the risk assessment may result in FNS imposing special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed. The Federal repository systems FNS will review include:

- SAM, the System for Award Management, the Official U.S. Government system that consolidated the capabilities of Central Contractor Registration (CCR)/FedReg, ORCA, and EPLS;
- FAPIIS, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, is a database that has been established to track contractor misconduct and performance;
- Dun and Bradstreet (D&B), the system where applicants establish a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number which is used by the Federal government to better identify related organizations that are receiving funding under grants and cooperative agreements, and to provide consistent name and address data for electronic grant application systems. The Federal government requires that all applicants for Federal grants and cooperative agreements with the exception of individuals other than sole proprietors have a DUNS number.

Applicants must also respond to the application assessment questions to allow FNS to evaluate aspects of the applicant's financial stability, quality of management systems, and history of performance, reports and findings from audits. A questionnaire containing these questions has been provided to facilitate the process and can be found in Appendix A. Applicants must answer all the application questions. While answering "yes" may be an indicator of risk, the consideration and evaluation of these questions is only an indicator of potential risk and may or may not result in additional oversight requirements or special conditions be placed on an award should an award be made. Decisions regarding additional oversight requirements will take into consideration the total number of risks identified.

7.0   Federal Award Administration Information

7.1   Federal Award Notice

Unless an applicant receives a signed award document with terms and conditions, any contact from a FNS grants or program officer should not be considered as a notice of a grant award. No pre-award or pre-agreement costs incurred prior to the effective start date are allowed unless approved and stated on FNS' signed award document.

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. Only the recognized FNS authorized signature can bind the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to the expenditure of funds related to an award's approved budget.

7.2   Non-selected Applicants

Non-selected applicants will be contacted by FNS via email as soon as possible after awards are announced to inform them of the results.

7.2.1 Debriefing Request

Non-selected applicants may request a debriefing to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of submitted proposals. This information may be useful when preparing future grant proposals. Additional information on debriefing requests, including deadline by which to submit the request, will be forwarded to non-selected applicants.

7.3   Reporting Requirements

7.3.1 Progress Reporting

The recipient will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the grant project activities and performance and reporting progress status to FNS through the submission of SF – PPR (periodic performance report). All grant types will submit semi-annual reports. The award document will indicate the reporting schedule for submitting programmatic reports to FNS. The recipient may be required to submit these reports to FNS via an online survey. Additionally, award recipients must complete a baseline report at the start of the project and a final report no later than 90 days following the termination date of the grant term. Planning grants must submit an action plan along with their final report. Any additional reporting requirements will be identified in the award terms and conditions.

7.3.2 Financial Reporting

The award recipient will be required to enter the SF-425, Financial Status Report data into the FNS Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) on a quarterly basis. The award recipient will also be required to submit a final Financial Status Report no later than 90 days following the termination date of the grant project

In order to access FPRS, the grant recipient must obtain USDA e-authentication certification and access to FPRS. More detailed instructions for reporting will be included in the FNS Federal financial assistance award package.

7.3.3 Evaluation and Impact

As per authorizing language, as a condition of receiving a grant, grant recipients shall agree to cooperate in an evaluation of the program carried out using grant funds. Upon selection of grant awardees, USDA will provide further guidance and direction regarding evaluation protocols and common indicators. Applicants should expect that evaluation protocols will include both process evaluations (qualitative and quantitative indicators of progress toward the objectives, accomplishment of activities) and outcome evaluations (to determine whether the objectives were met and what impact they had).

7.4 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

7.4.1 Confidentiality of an Applicant

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of FNS transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. Any application that does not result in an award will be not released to the public. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

7.4.2 Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality of the Review Process

The agency requires all panel reviewers to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality form to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect the application review and evaluation process. Names of applicants, including states and tribal governments, submitting an application will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of the reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

7.4.3 Administrative Regulations

Federal Tax Liabilities Restrictions
None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Felony Crime Conviction Restrictions
None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a

loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

Debarment and Suspension 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417
A recipient chosen for an award shall comply with the non-procurement debarment and suspension common rule implementing Executive Orders (E.O.) 12549 and 12669, "Debarment and Suspension," codified at 2 CFR Part 180 and 2 CFR Part 417. This common rule restricts sub-awards and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs or activities. The approved grant recipient will be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspension and debarment rules prior to approving a sub-grant award by checking SAM website.

Universal Identifier and Central Contractor Registration 2 CFR Part 25
Effective October 1, 2010, all grant applicants must obtain a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number as a universal identifier for Federal financial assistance. Active grant recipients and their direct sub-recipients of a sub-grant award also must obtain a DUNS number and a SAM number. Please also refer to Section 4.6.2. FNS may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with the requirements described in 2 CFR 25 to provide a valid DUNS number and maintain an active CCR registration with current information.

Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information 2 CFR Part 170
The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 (Public Law 109–282), as amended by Section 6202 of Public Law 110–252 requires primary grantees of Federal grants and cooperative agreements to report information on sub-grantee obligations and executive compensation. FFATA promotes open government by enhancing the Federal Government's accountability for its stewardship of public resources. This is accomplished by making Government information, particularly information on Federal spending, accessible to the general public.

Primary grantees, including State agencies, are required to report actions taken on or after October 1, 2010, that obligates $25,000 or more in Federal grant funds to first- tier sub-grantees. This information must be reported in the Government-wide FFATA Sub-Award Reporting System (FSRS). In order to access FSRS a current CCR registration is required. A primary grantee and first-tier sub-grantees must also report total compensation for each of its five most- highly compensated executives. Every primary and first-tier grantee must obtain a DUNS number prior to being eligible to receive a grant or sub-grant award. Additional information will be provided to grant recipients upon award.

Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417
Section 872 of this Act requires the development and maintenance of a Federal Government

information system that contains specific information on the integrity and performance of covered Federal agency contractors and grantees. The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) was developed to address these requirements. FAPIIS contains integrity and performance information from the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System, information from the CCR database, and suspension and debarment information from the EPLS. FNS will review and consider any information about the applicant reflected in FAPIIS when making a judgment about whether an applicant is qualified to receive an award.

Code of Federal Regulations and Other Government Requirements

This grant will be awarded and administered in accordance with the following regulations 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subtitle A, Chapter II. Any Federal laws, regulations, or USDA directives released after this RFA is posted will be implemented as instructed.

7.4.3.1 2 CFR Part 25: "Universal Identifier and Central Locator Contractor Registration"

7.4.3.2 2 CFR Part 170: "Reporting Sub-award and Executive Compensation Information"

7.4.3.3 2 CFR Part 175: "Award Term for Trafficking in Persons"

7.4.3.4 2 CFR Part 180: "OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-Procurement)"

7.4.3.5 2 CFR 200: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"

7.4.3.6 2 CFR 400: "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"

7.4.3.7 2 CFR Part 415: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations"

7.4.3.8 2 CFR Part 416: USDA "General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments"

7.4.3.9 2 CFR Part 417: USDA "Implementation of OMB Guidance on Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension"

7.4.3.10 2 CFR Part 418 USDA "New Restrictions on Lobbying

7.4.3.11 2 CFR Part 421: USDA "Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)"

7.4.3.12 41 U.S.C. Section 22 "Interest of Member of Congress"

7.4.3.13 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Public access to Federal Financial Assistance records shall not be limited, except when such records must be kept confidential and would have been excepted from disclosure pursuant to the "Freedom of Information" regulation (5 U.S.C. 552)

General Terms and Conditions of the award may be obtained electronically. Please contact the Grants Officers at:

<div align="center">

Grants and Fiscal Policy Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture, FNS
3101 Park Center Drive Room 740
Alexandria, VA 22301
E-mail: **farmtoschool@usda.gov**

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8.0 Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

For questions regarding this solicitation, please contact us at: **farmtoschool@usda.gov**. Please note that agency contacts are only available during Eastern Standard Time operating hours.

Please visit the **Office of Community Food Systems' applicant resource page** for RFA supporting materials such as our FAQ document. For more general information about the Office of Community Food Systems, please visit our website.

All questions regarding Grants.gov technical assistance must be directed to Grants.gov's Applicant Support

9.0 Other Information

9.1 What is Farm to School?

While individual farm to school programs are shaped by their unique community, geographic region, and scope, the term 'farm to school' is generally understood to include efforts that connect schools with local or regional farmers, food processors, and manufacturers in order to serve local or regionally procured foods in school cafeterias. Bringing more locally sourced, fresh fruits and vegetables into school cafeterias is a seminal activity of many farm to school efforts; procuring locally sourced, minimally processed main meal items so that the entire school meal is representative of regional options is also a focus of many farm to school programs. Thus, USDA considers farm to school to be inclusive of many types of producers, such as farmers, ranchers, and fishermen, as well as many types of food businesses, including food processors, manufacturers, distributors, and other value-added operations.

In addition to procurement activities, farm to school programs often include food, agriculture and nutrition-based educational efforts including standards-based curriculum and a whole host of hands-on experiential activities, such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes. For example, students might dissect vegetables in science class, run farm stands using school garden produce to learn business skills, or practice data visualization techniques using plant growth measurements, all contributing to a holistic approach to learning centered on food, agriculture and nutrition. To embed farm to school activities into school culture, promotional and outreach efforts often aim to keep farm to school activities front and center in both the school and broader community.

As the potential impact of farm to school programs is significant, sophisticated evaluation and impact assessments are routinely used to monitor progress toward goals. Ultimately, farm to school programs are believed to strengthen children's and communities' knowledge about, and attitudes toward, agriculture, food, nutrition, and the environment, increase children's consumption of fruits and vegetables, increase market opportunities for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors and food manufacturers, and support economic development across numerous sectors.

9.2   A Vision for Health and Economic Opportunity

In USDA's vision, school cafeterias championing U.S. agriculture and proudly promoting regionally sourced foods that meet or exceed school nutrition standards are the norm, not the exception. Regional offerings, and therefore economic opportunities for U.S. food producers, span the school meal tray and include everything from the salad bar and fresh fruit and vegetable servings to the wheat in the pizza crust, beans in the chili, rice in the stir fry, turkey in the sandwiches, and cheese in the quesadillas. As routinely requested in bid specifications as the   requirement to adhere to nutrition standards, activities related to sourcing regional foods are integrated into everyday workflows.

USDA fully recognizes that the vision described above is most likely to be achieved when food, agriculture and nutrition-based educational efforts are also part of a school's daily rhythm. Thus, we view regional procurement activities as integrated with complementary efforts to encourage healthy eating behaviors. Ultimately, we expect dual health and wellness and economic prosperity impacts, where food literate children graduate empowered to make life-long healthy eating choices and the U.S. school cafeteria represents a consistently reliable market for U.S. agricultural producers.

Consistent with the authorizing language referenced below, to achieve these outcomes, with this RFA, USDA intends to strategically invest in a wide variety of farm to school initiatives that improve access to local and regional foods in eligible schools.

Helping schools find and procure regionally produced food is a key component of the USDA's **local and regional food systems work**. For more information on USDA's many farm to school initiatives, or to access resources associated with farm to school, please visit USDA's **Office of Community Food Systems website**.

Appendix A: Urban/Rural Classification Instructions

To determine urban/rural classification, please use the National Center for Education Statistics online tool.

1) Go to the search site.
2) Enter search criteria (*Tip*: Use general search terms and then select from the results list, e.g., to search for Medina City Schools in Medina, Ohio, enter Medina in the 'district name' field and Ohio in the 'state' field. Then you can choose Medina City Schools from the search results.)
3) Click 'Search'.
4) Choose the school/district from the search results.
5) Scroll down to 'Locale' and note the classification code (see screen shot).
6) Enter the two-digit classification code (e.g., 11, 12, 31) on the Cover Sheet.

Urban Classifications	Rural Classifications
11 - City, Large	41 - Rural, Fringe
12 - City, Midsize	42 - Rural, Distant
13 - City, Small	43 - Rural, Remote

21 - Suburb, Large
22 - Suburb, Midsize
23 - Suburb, Small
31 - Town, Fringe
32 - Town, Distant
33 - Town, Remote

For complete definitions, visit the [National Center for Education Statistics website](#).

Appendix B: Grant Program Accounting System & Financial Capability Questionnaire

Recipients of Federal funds must maintain adequate accounting systems that meet the criteria outlined in 2 CFR §200.302 Standards for Financial and Program Management. The responses to this questionnaire are used to assist in the Food and Nutrition Service Agency's (FNS) evaluation of your accounting system to ensure the adequate, appropriate, and transparent use of Federal funds. Failure to comply with the criteria outlined in the regulations above may preclude your organization from receiving an award. This form applies to FNS' competitive and noncompetitive grant programs. Please return this questionnaire with your application package to us.

Organization Information

Legal Organization Name:	
DUNS Number:	

Financial Stability and Quality of Management Systems

Requirement	Yes	No
1. Has your organization received a Federal award within the past 3 years?	☐	☐
2. Does your organization utilize accounting software to manage your financial records?	☐	☐

3. Does your accounting system identify the receipt and expenditure of program funds separately for each grant?	☐	☐
4. Does your organization have a dedicated individual responsible for monitoring organizational funds, such as an accountant or a finance manager?	☐	☐
5. Does your organization separate the duties for staff handling the approval of transactions and the recording and payment of funds?	☐	☐
6. Does your organization have the ability to specifically identify and allocate employee effort to an applicable program?	☐	☐
7. Does your organization have a property /inventory management system in place to track location and value of equipment purchased under the award?	☐	☐

Audit Reports and Findings

Requirement	Yes	No
1. Has your organization been audited within the last 5 fiscal years? (If the answer is "Yes" and this report was issued under the Single Audit Act please note this in the box below marked "Additional Information" and if not issued under the "Single Audit Act", please attach a copy or provide a link to the audit report in the Hyperlink space below).	☐	☐
2. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a "Qualified Opinion" or an "Adverse Opinion"?	☐	☐
3. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a "Material Weakness" disclosed?	☐	☐

4. If your organization has been audited within the last 5 fiscal years, was there a "Significant Deficiency" disclosed?	☐	☐
5. Provide Hyperlink to any audit findings (if available):		
6. Additional information including expanding on responses in previous sections:		

Applicant Certification

I certify that the above information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Authorized Representative's Signature and Date Name: Date:	
Phone:	
Email:	