

October is Farm to School Month, and we are excited to celebrate by announcing the official release of the FY 2019 Farm to School Grant Request for Applications (RFA). Farm to School programs support local communities through a variety of activities, including taste tests, farm visits, local purchasing, and farmers and producer training.

USDA will award up to \$7.5 million in competitive grants to eligible entities through the Farm to School Grant Program in fiscal year (FY) 2019. Each grant helps implement Farm to School programs that increase access to local food in eligible schools, providing students with quality meals at a reasonable cost while also supporting local producers. In FY 2018, USDA awarded 73 grants across the United States.

The RFA includes three tracks—**Implementation, Planning, and Training**. These will support a variety of projects and implementation stages. Each track provides funding for a specific range of activities:

- **Implementation grant** awards range from \$50,000-\$100,000. An implementation grant works well for eligible entities with prior farm to school experience, helping scale up or further develop existing farm to school initiatives. Some examples of activities in implementation grants include (but are not limited to) training and technical assistance, supply-chain development, evaluation activities, curriculum development, creation of promotional materials or campaigns, and formation of networks or coalitions.
- **Planning grant** awards range from \$20,000-\$50,000. Planning grants help eligible entities build a strong foundation for their efforts rooted in best practices, and are ideal for applicants just getting started on farm to school activities. Some activities may include collecting data, engaging stakeholders, identifying gaps in knowledge and resources, pinpointing and developing solutions for obstacles that hinder farm to school programming for a particular community, and more!
- **Training grant** awards range from \$20,000-\$50,000 to help eligible entities conduct state, regional, and national level trainings. Training grant activities strengthen farm to school supply chains or provide technical assistance related to local procurement, food safety, school gardens, culinary education, and/or integration of agriculture-based curricula.

A wide variety of entities are eligible to compete for funding through this grant opportunity. **State and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, small- and medium-sized agricultural producers or groups of small- to medium-sized agricultural producers, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply** for planning, implementation and training grants. Schools and school districts may apply for either an implementation grant or a planning grant. Please see sections 3.0 through 3.3 of the RFA and review the Frequently Asked Questions document for additional information regarding eligibility requirements.

The Grant RFA can be found on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Complete applications must be submitted on grants.gov by **11:59pm ET on December 4, 2018**. Check out the OCFS [resources](#) for grant applicants and see a list of prior grantees' project descriptions for proposal inspiration!

For more information, please join OCFS for a special two-part webinar this October 16th and 17th at 1:00pm ET. These webinars will review the important details of the FY 2019 Farm to School Grants and walk candidates through the application process. Webinars will be recorded and made available on the [Grantee Resources page](#).

- **October 16th – “Getting Familiar with the Farm to School RFA” Part 1 of 2:** This webinar will provide an overview of how to apply for the FY 2019 Farm to School Grant Program RFA. Get

familiar with the requirements of the RFA and how to submit your completed application on grants.gov.

- To register, please visit: <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/ot168k7ysx68&eom>

**October 17th – “Getting Your Grant Package Together” Part 2 of 2:** In part two, we explore the key characteristics of a competitive Farm to School Application. Get an overview of how to develop an integrated farm to school project that addresses the need of your target audience and aligns with the intention of the grant program. Learn tips and tricks for writing a succinct application that clearly outlines your project's objectives and potential for success.

- To register, please visit: <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/hqmetus6lvru&eom>