

GRANTS AND LOANS THAT SUPPORT FARM TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SMALL GRANTS

Annie's Grant for Gardens

Type: Grant

Max Award: \$500

Big Idea: To help schools start school gardens

Who can apply: Anyone willing to put the time and effort into starting a school garden

Possibilities: Applicants who are looking for funds to start or maintain a school garden

Timeline: Applications are generally due the beginning of June

Link: <http://www.annies.com/giving-back/school-gardens/grants-for-gardens>

Whole Kids School Garden Grant

Type: Grant

Max Award: \$2,000 to support a new or existing edible garden on school grounds, can only receive grant once

Big Idea: Created in partnership with FoodCorps, the School Garden Grant program provides monetary support for school garden programs.

Who can apply: Public schools, public charter schools, private schools with 501-C3 status, private charter schools with 501-C3 status, a 501-C3 non-profit organizations that support a garden at a public or non-profit school

Possibilities: To use funds for starting or maintaining an edible school garden on a K-12 school campus

Timeline: Application opens September 1st, applications close October 31st, and notification are sent to all applicants in March

Link: <https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/schools/programs/school-garden-grant-program>

Lowes Toolbox for Education

Type: Grant

Max Award: \$5,000

Big Ideas: There is a preference for funding requests that have a permanent impact such as facility enhancement (both indoor and outdoor) as well as landscaping/clean up type projects. Projects that encourage parent involvement and build stronger community spirit will be favoured.

Who can apply: Any individual public school or non-profit parent group associated with that public K-12 school. Parent groups who apply must have an independent EIN and official 501-C3 status from IRS.

Timeline: There are two Low's Toolbox for Education grant cycles in a school year. Typically, the first deadline is mid October and the spring deadline is mid February.

Link: <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/index.html>

Captain Planet Small Grants

Type: Grant

Max Award: Fluctuates, but will fund as many projects as its annual resources allow

Big Ideas: The Captain Planet Foundation primarily makes grants to U.S.-based schools and organizations with an annual operating budget of less than \$3 million. Grants are made for activities that conform to the mission of

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the Captain Planet Foundation and MUST have all three of the following to be considered for funding: Be project-based; projects must be performed by youth; and projects must have real environmental outcomes.

Who can apply: All applicant organizations or sponsoring agencies must be exempt from federal taxation under the Internal Revenue Code Section 501, in order to be eligible for funding (this includes most schools and non-profit organizations).

Timeline: September 30th – typical for spring and summer projects; January 31st – typical for fall and winter projects

Link: <http://captainplanetfoundation.org/apply-for-grants/>

LARGE GRANTS

Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes

Type: 2 Grand Prizes - \$30,000 in prizes for a school's wellness program or a new playground from Playworld Systems, Inc and 3 runner-up prizes of \$5,000 in prizes for a school wellness program.

Big idea: To help schools source more foods locally and to provide complementary educational activities to students that emphasize food, farming, and nutrition.

Who can apply: Anyone can enter on behalf of a school (ages 18 and older)

Timeline: The winner is announced March 19th and is open to applications 5 months prior.

Link: <http://www.togethercounts.com/at-school/win-for-your-school/sweepstakes>

USDA Farm to School Grants Program

Type: Grant

Max award: Planning, Implementation and Support Service grants are available from \$20,000 - \$100,000. Matching funds of 25% of the total project is required.

Big idea: To help schools source more foods locally and to provide complementary educational activities to students that emphasize food, farming, and nutrition.

Who can apply: Eligible schools, State and Local agencies, Indian Tribal Organizations, agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers, and non-profit entities.

Possibilities: Applicants are planning programs to bring local or regionally produced foods into school cafeterias; hands-on learning activities such as school gardening, farm visits, and culinary classes; and the integration of food-related education into the regular, standards-based classroom curriculum.

Real example: Portland Maine Public Schools is using a Farm to School grant to update central kitchen equipment, certifications, and training in order to become a large-volume processor of local foods. The project also includes a number of experiential learning activities such as school gardens, after-school agriculture clubs, school curriculum, taste testing, and chef-to-school. The school district will also hold an annual "Local Food Show" open to the public exhibiting the farms, recipes, and student projects related to farm to school.

Timeline: Request for applications are typically released February 18th, Letters of Intent due via email April 2nd, proposals due April 30th, and awards announced in November.

Link: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=kyf-grants-fns5-content.html>

USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Type: Block grants awarded directly to State departments of agriculture

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Max award: Varies by state

Big idea: States administer grant program to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, nursery crops, floriculture), including locally grown and consumed specialty crops.

Who can apply: State departments of agriculture award funds to a range of specialty crop stakeholders

Timeline: Request for proposal approximately January, completed applications due mid May, and October is announcement of awards.

Link:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&rightNav1=SpecialtyCropBlockGrant0Program&topNav=&leftNav=CommodityAreas&page=SCBGP&resultType>

Food Hub Development Grant Program

Type: Grant

Max Award: Range between \$10,000 and \$75,00 for 12 month projects

Big Idea: The objective of the Food Hub Development Grant program is to build food hub's capacity to overcome current challenges and position them for long-term success. The Strengthening Small-Scale Sustainable Farming and Local Food Systems by Accelerating Food Hub Development program, funded by Walmart Foundation, will build on the significant work of Wallace's National Good Food Network (NGFN) initiative to support food hub development and build capacity among small and mid-size farms throughout the U.S. to access regional markets, with an emphasis on targeting minority and female farmers.

Who Can Apply: The grant is for food hubs that are already operating.

Timeline: Request for Application release is late February with applications to be submitted end of March.

Link: <http://www.wallacecenter.org/strengtheninglocalfoodsystems/>

USDA Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program

Type: Grants - matching resources required

Max award: No max - grants generally range from \$25,000 - \$135,000

Big idea: Funds are used to explore barriers, challenges, and opportunities in marketing, transporting, and distributing food and forest products.

Who can apply: State Departments of Agriculture, but they often partner with local organizations, so see your State Department of Agriculture website for more information.

Possibilities: Given the broad flexibility of this program, there are many possibilities for projects, including:

- Determining market demand for local products;
- Building online marketing tools such MarketMaker;
- Developing protocols for harvesting excess crops for local food banks;
- Developing business plans for food hubs.

Real Example: The Maryland Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the University of Maryland School of Nursing, Future Harvest/Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, and others, received \$100,620 to increase the use of locally-produced sustainable proteins such as beef, pork, poultry, dairy, eggs, and seafood in Maryland health care facilities. This grant built upon two previous FSMIP grants facilitating increase consumption of locally-produced foods in Maryland hospitals.

Timeline: Applications due approximately mid February.

Link: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/fsmip>

Local Food Promotion Program Planning Grants

Type: Grant

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Max Award: A minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$25,000. Matching funds are required in an amount equal to 25% of the total cost of the project.

Big Idea: LFPP Planning Grants are used in the planning stages of establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise. Activities can include but are not limited to market research, feasibility studies, and business planning. The grants must be completed within a 12 month period.

Who Can Apply: Those interested in promotion of local foods; agriculture businesses, agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, CSA associations, local government, non-profit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers market authorities, tribal governments.

Timeline:

Link:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateA&leftNav=WholesaleandFarmersMarkets&page=LFPP&description=Local%20Food%20Promotion%20Program>

Local Food Promotion Program Implementation Grants

Type: Grant

Max Award: A minimum of \$25,000 and a maximum of \$100,000. Matching funds are required in an amount equal to 25% of the total cost of the project.

Big Idea: LFPP Implementation Grants are used to establish a new local and regional food business enterprise, or to improve or expand an existing local or regional food business enterprise. Activities can include but are not limited to training and technical assistance for the business enterprise and/or for producers working with the business enterprise; outreach and marketing to buyers and consumers; working capital; and non-construction infrastructure improvements to business enterprise facilities or information technology systems. Grants must be completed within a 24 month grant period.

Who Can Apply: Those interested in promotion of local foods; agriculture businesses, agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, CSA associations, local government, non-profit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers market authorities, tribal governments.

Timeline:

Link:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateA&leftNav=WholesaleandFarmersMarkets&page=LFPP&description=Local%20Food%20Promotion%20Program>

USDA Community Facilities Grants

Type: Direct loans, guaranteed loans, and grants

Max award: Varies by project, applicant's financial feasibility, and community size

Big idea: The Community Facilities Program supports rural communities by providing loans and grants for the construction, acquisition, or renovation of community facilities or for the purchase of equipment for community facilities.

Who can apply: Public bodies, non-profit organizations and Federally-recognized Indian tribes are all eligible to apply for funds to finance essential community facilities in rural areas (defined as areas with no more than 20,000 residents).

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Real example: In Wrangell, Alaska, an island community with limited access to fresh food, the Wrangell Medical Center received a Community Facilities grant of \$100,000 to purchase two greenhouses for a community garden.

Possibilities: Projects that support local and regional food systems that may qualify for CF funding include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Farmers markets (i.e. structures);
- School and community kitchens;
- Food banks, including refrigerators;
- Community gardens (i.e., purchase land; water source access) and noncommercial greenhouses;
- Refrigerated trucks.

Timeline: Generally proposals are due end of April, full applications due end of July, and awards are in September.

Link: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/had-cf_grants.html

USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program

Type: Grants

Max award: \$100,000

Big idea: To help communities support local food systems through direct marketing. Direct marketing includes farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture, agri-tourism and other direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. Project awards increase access to local foods by low-income consumers, expand opportunities for farmers and growers to market their products directly to the consumer, and raise customer awareness of local farm products through promotion and outreach.

Who can apply: Agricultural cooperatives, economic development corporations, local governments, non-profit organizations, producer associations and producer networks, public benefit corporations, regional farmers market authorities, and Tribal governments.

Possibilities: FMPP grants are available to:

- Bring local farm products into federal nutrition programs with electronic benefits transfer (EBT) technology at direct-market outlets.
- Raise customer awareness of local foods through promotion and outreach.
- Educate farmers and growers in marketing, business planning, and similar topics.
- Increase market awareness through advertising and branding efforts.
- Purchase infrastructure, such as refrigerated trucks, or equipment for a commercial kitchen for value-added products

Real example: Penn's Corner Farm Alliance of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania used a \$45,000 FMPP grant to make infrastructure upgrades to their cooperative market, including new refrigerated storage and trucks.

Timeline: Applications due end of June

Link: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=kyf_grants_ams3_content.html

USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant

Type: Grants

Max award: There is no max award, but smaller projects receive priority points

Big idea: The RBEG program funds projects that facilitate the development of small and emerging rural businesses, distance learning networks, and employment-related adult education programs.

Who can apply: Local and state governments and authorities, Indian tribes and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. For the purposes of this program a "rural community" is an area where the population does not exceed 50,000, or is next to a city or town with more than 50,000 people.

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Real examples: The Glynwood Center, located in the Hudson River Valley of New York, developed a mobile livestock unit to provide local ranchers access to slaughter and processing equipment and, ultimately, local markets. USDA awarded Glynwood a \$99,800 Rural Business Enterprise Grant to weatherize the mobile unit, as well as to hire a coordinator to assist with logistics and marketing.

Possibilities: Regarding business development, RBEGs may fund a broad array of activities including:

- Acquisition or development of land;
- Construction, conversion, or renovation of buildings;
- Purchase of machinery and equipment, including refrigerators and processing equipment;
- Capitalization of revolving loan funds;
- Provision of training and technical assistance (unless related to agricultural production);
- Project planning.

Timeline: Dates vary from year to year, but generally applications are due end of February.

Link: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_rbeg.html

USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grants

Type: Grants

Max award: \$250,000

Big idea: The RBOG program promotes economic growth in rural communities by supporting training and technical assistance for business development and to assist with regional economic development planning. A specific emphasis within RBOG is support for collaborative economic planning and development through regional food systems.

Who can apply: Local governments, economic development organizations, non-profit organizations, Indian tribes, and cooperatives are eligible to apply. For the purposes of this program a "rural community" is an area where the population does not exceed 50,000, or is next to a city or town with more than 50,000 people.

Possibilities: The types of projects that may be funded include:

- Regional economic planning focused on food system development;
- Market development and feasibility studies;
- Business training, including leadership development and technical assistance for entrepreneurs;
- Establishing business incubators, including commercial kitchens.

Real example: Ecotrust, a non-profit organization located in Oregon, created FoodHub, an online marketplace that allows large-scale purchasers of food to connect with nearby growers. Through a \$250,000 Rural Business Opportunity Grant, USDA is supporting the recruitment of more producers and buyers in rural communities throughout the Pacific Northwest, and to provide training and technical assistance to ensure FoodHub is able to help their businesses grow

Timeline: Proposals are generally due mid June and funds are awarded September

Link: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_rbog.html

Large Grants: Producers

USDA Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

Type: Grants

Max award: \$500,000 for working capital; \$100,000 for planning - matching resources are required

Big idea: Value-added processing and marketing helps farmers and ranchers receive a higher portion of the retail dollar. Value-Added Producer Grants support planning activities, such as developing a business plan, as

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well as working capital. Specific funds are available for projects that focus on local and regional supply networks or support beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and small or medium-sized farms or ranches.

Who can apply: Independent producers, farmer or rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and producer-owned business ventures, including non-profit organizations

Possibilities: Grants may fund projects that:

- Create a business plan to market value-added products;
- Evaluate the feasibility of direct marketing freshly bottled milk;
- Evaluate the financial benefits of processing and marketing meat versus selling live animals;
- Expand marketing capacity for locally- and regionally-grown products;
- Expand processing capacity.

Real example: Steve Pinnow raises sheep on his southeastern Wisconsin farm, Pinn-Oak Ridge Farms. When he identified a market for freshly slaughtered lamb, he ran into an immediate problem: the only places to process the lambs he raised were so busy that he would have to schedule his processing two months in advance. Fortunately, with a Value-Added Producer Grant of \$150,000, Pinn-Oak Ridge Farms was able to build a processing plant on its five-acre homestead. Opened in January 2009, the plant processes between 40 and 50 lambs a week and employs six full-time workers, and Steve now contracts with 30 producers around the state to provide him lambs.

Timeline: Proposals are typically due beginning of April

Link: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_vapg.html

Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program

Type: Grant

Max Award: A maximum of \$250,000.00. Dollar for dollar matching required except for Training and Capacity Building Projects.

Big Idea: Meet the food needs of low-income individuals through food distribution, community outreach to assist in participation in federally assisted nutrition programs, or improving access to food as part of a comprehensive service; increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for the food needs of the communities; promote comprehensive responses to local food access, farm, and nutrition issues; and meet specific state, local or neighborhood food and agricultural needs including needs relating to: equipment necessary for the efficient operation of a project; planning for long-term solutions; or the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

Who Can Apply: Public food program service providers, tribal organizations, or private nonprofit entities

Timeline: Solicitation Date is generally end of February with closing date the end of March.

Link: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/communityfoodprojects.cfm>

Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Grants

Type: Grant

Max Award: Usually does not exceed \$250,000

Big Idea: The primary focus should be to conduct research and education of three separate producers for on-farm testing, demonstration, and collaboration to improve sustainable farm practices that will enhance productivity, profitability and competitiveness; promote crop, livestock, and enterprise diversification; reduce

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the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture production; reduce fossil fuel consumption within food production systems and create sustainable, renewable energy production opportunities for farms and ranches. As well as facilitate research that transfers practical, reliable and timely information to farmers and ranchers concerning sustainable farming practices and systems; creates market opportunities that increase the producer's share of the food dollar; promotes a partnership between farmers/ranchers, nonprofit organization, agribusinesses and public/private research/extension institutions.

Who Can Apply: Agricultural producers must be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and education outreach

Real Example: 2014 Research & Education Grants

- Reducing parasite resistance on equine operations using a comprehensive whole-farm approach
- Getting the most out of cover crops
- Winter triticale or rye as double crop to protect the environment and increase yield
- Deep soil nitrogen: A resource for sustainability in the mid-Atlantic using early cover crops

Timeline: Usually, proposals are due beginning of June, technical review panel selects proposals for grant funding in July, administrative council makes final selections in August, and grant receptors are informed September.

Link: <http://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants>

Western Sustainable Agriculture Professional Development Program Grants

Type: Grant

Max Award: \$75,000

Big Idea: Profession Development Program Grants are designed to educate agriculture professionals about sustainable agriculture so that they, in turn, can help educate and train farmers and ranchers. Approaches can include workshops, conferences, development of materials, demonstrations, web-based courses, and tours.

Who Can Apply: Agricultural producers must be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and education outreach

Real Example: 2014 PDP Education Grants

- Production –Oriented Videos Teach Organic Grain-Growing Tips
- Living on the Land: Improving Education for Small-Acreage Farmers

Timeline: Deadline for submitting grant proposals is tentatively end of October, technical review panel selects proposals for funding January, and final selections are made in March with funded grants being announced by April.

Link: <http://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants>

Western Sustainable Agriculture Farmer/Rancher Grants

Type: Grant

Max Award: \$15,000 (individual) \$25,000 (group of three or more farmers)

Big Idea: These one-to three-year grants are conducted by agricultural producers with support and guidance from a technical advisor. Producers typically use their grants to conduct on-site experiments that can improve their operations and the environment and can be shared with other producers. Grant recipients may also focus on marketing and organic production.

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Who Can Apply: Agricultural producers must be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and education outreach

Real Example: 2014 Farmer & Rancher Grants

- Comparing Measurable Indicators of Soil Health under Two Different Forage Harvesting Methods Four Times During the Growing Season
- Demonstrating A Quick Start Process to help Small Blueberry Farmers Begin Transition to Organic Practices
- Data Management for Marking Alpaca Products

Timeline: Usually, the Call for Proposals will open in April, with proposals due in December. A technical review will be held in January, and proposals will be selected for funding in March.

Link: <http://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants>

Western Sustainable Agriculture Professional & Producer Grants

Type: Grant

Max Award: Applicants can seek up to \$50,000 and must have at least five producers involved.

Big Idea: These one- to three-year grants are similar in concept to the Farmer/Rancher Grants with a few key differences. Instead of a producer serving as the project coordinator, an agricultural professional – Cooperative Extension educator or Natural Resources Conservation Service professional, for example – coordinates the project. A farmer or rancher serves as the project advisor.

Who Can Apply: Agricultural producers must be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and education outreach

Real Example: 2014 Professional & Producer Grants

- Empowering Socially Disadvantaged Farmers to Investigate Nitrogen Management in High-Value Vegetable Crops
- Building Tools and Technical Capacity to Improve Irrigation and Nutrient Management on California's Central Coast

Timeline: The Call for Proposals for Professional + Producer Grants open in April, with proposals due in December. A technical review will be held in January, and proposals will be selected for funding in March.

Link: <http://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Types-of-Grants>

NIFA Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Grant

Type: Grant

Max Award: varies, estimated total program funding is \$19,200,000

Big Ideas: There will be three types of projects: (a) Standard Projects: to new and established local and regional training, education, outreach and technical assistance initiatives that address the needs of beginning farmers and ranchers in selected areas; and (b) Educational Enhancement Projects: To help develop seamless beginning farmer and rancher education programs by conducting evaluation, coordination and enhancement activities for Standard Projects and other non-funded beginning farmer programs; and (c) Curriculum and training clearinghouse, to make educational curricula and training materials available to beginning farmers and ranchers and organizations who serve them.

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Who can apply: The recipient must be a collaborative, State, tribal, local, or regionally-based network or partnership of public or private entities, which may include: state cooperative extension service; community-based and nongovernmental organization; college or university (including institutions awarding associate degrees); or any other appropriate partner.

Timeline: NIFA anticipates releasing the request for applications in the spring with a 60 day open period.

Link: <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/beginningfarmersandranchers.cfm>

Organic Research and Extension Initiative

Type: Grant

Max Award: A maximum of \$2,000,000.00

Big Idea: fund projects that will enhance the ability of producers and processors who have already adopted organic standards to grow and market high quality organic agricultural products. Priority concerns include biological, physical, and social sciences, including economics. The OREI is particularly interested in projects that emphasize research, education and outreach that assist farmers and ranchers with whole farm planning by delivering practical research-based information. Projects should plan to deliver applied production information to producers. Fieldwork must be done on certified organic land or on land in transition to organic certification, as appropriate to project goals and objectives or information technology systems.

Who Can Apply: State agricultural experiment stations; Colleges and universities; University research foundations; other research institutions and organizations; Federal agencies; National laboratories; Private organizations or corporations; Individuals who are United States citizens or nationals.

Timeline: Solicitation Date is generally mid March with application due date the beginning of May.

Link: <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/organicagricultureresearchandextensioninitiative.cfm>