

# Beginning Farmer & Farmworker Training and Workforce Development Grant Program

## Proposed – 2022 Request for Applications

30-day Public Comment Period  
March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022- April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022



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# Stakeholder Input: Public Comment Period

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) seeks public comments on this Request for Applications (RFA). The CDFA will consider all comments received before releasing a final RFA for this program. Comments will be accepted the following ways:

**Written Comments:** Please submit written comments via email to:

**[carmen.carrasco@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:carmen.carrasco@cdfa.ca.gov)**

Include “Beginning Farmer & Farmworker Training Program Comments” in the subject line of the email. Please specify which funding track each comment is regarding in the body of the email.

**Live/ In-person Comments:** The CDFA Farm Equity Office will host two listening sessions during the public comment period to welcome live feedback for each funding track. Please join us by following the Zoom registration links below:

## **Zoom Session #1: Tuesday April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 11:00 am PST**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81709220740>

Meeting ID: 817 0922 0740

Passcode: CDFA!220

Dial by your location

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+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 817 0922 0740

Passcode: 78021037

## **Zoom Session #2 \*English and Spanish\* Tuesday April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 11:00am PST**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88087518271>

Meeting ID: 880 8751 8271

Passcode: CDFA!220

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+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 880 8751 8271

Passcode: 18257780

## PURPOSE

- The proposed Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training and Workforce Development Program (BFFTP) is a new grant program, funded through the 2021 California general fund budget. This program will provide support to organizations to enhance or expand beginning farmer and farmworker training/apprenticeship programs. The overall goal of the program is to ensure that resources are dedicated to strengthening support for historically underserved beginning farmers in the first ten years of business, and farmworkers who need job skills training to provide job sustainability. A secondary goal of the program is to build and grow regional networks to ensure organizations can provide adequate support and training opportunities for those most underserved in the agriculture industry.

The program aims to support the following priorities:

- Regional collaborative partnerships to ensure beginning farmers and farmworkers have the resources they need to be successful and adapt to changing climate and economic factors in California agriculture.
- Applications from organizations who serve primarily historically underserved/ socially disadvantaged farmers.
- The Track 3: Farmworker training and Workforce Development track will prioritize programs that consider the unique cultural and language needs of the farmworker community, and which are in regions with high numbers of farmworkers.
- Strengthen networking, collaborative planning and overcoming structural barriers such as land access and access to capital and equipment and apprenticeships. The BFFTP is in alignment with the CDFA's [California Agricultural Vision](#) (Ag Vision), which serves as a roadmap for California agriculture. The goals of Ag Vision include better health and wellbeing, a healthier planet, ensuring thriving communities in the state, ensuring connections between farmers and the

consuming public, and ensuring that a diverse set of agriculture entities are thriving.

The CDFA encourages applications from organizations who serve small to medium sized and socially disadvantaged California ag producers and farmworkers, including but not limited to BIMPOC (Black, Indigenous, Multiracial, and People of Color), LGBTQ+, women and veterans.

## FUNDING AND DURATION

The CDFA anticipates up to \$10 million for the BFFTP, of which approximately \$5 million would be available in Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and \$5 million in Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

Applicants may apply for two types of awards: program planning and curriculum development grants of up to \$100,000, or program implementation grants up to \$1,000,000 for both farmer training and farmworker training programs. One additional round of funding will be available for \$5,000,000 for FY 2022-2023.

Approximate funds available from CDFA for this RFA round	Funding Tracks	Minimum Award	Maximum Award	Maximum Grant Term
\$5 million	<b>Program Planning/Development Grants</b>	\$50,000	\$100,000	1 year
	<b>Program Implementation Grants</b>	\$100,000	\$1,000,000	2 years
	1) Beginning Farmers 2) Farmworker Training and Workforce Development	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	2 years

**Additional Funding Details:**

- The CDFA reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the award amount requested.
- This is a **Reimbursement Grant Program**. If awarded a grant, grant recipients will fund the project and submit monthly or quarterly invoices to the CDFA to be reimbursed within 45 days after invoices are approved in most circumstances. The grant agreement must be completed and signed by the CDFA before project activities begin.
- Grant recipients **may be eligible to receive an Advance Payment** for project expenditures. If eligible, grant recipients must follow the [Advance Payment regulations](#).
- **Matching Funds are NOT required**. The CDFA will fund up to 100% of the total project cost. See **Cost Share** for more details.
- See the list of allowable and unallowable Items of Cost pursuant to Section 330.2 of the Final Grant Administration regulations ([Link](#)).
- Additionally, see **Appendix B Additional Information on Allowable Costs on Page 10** for guidance regarding use of funds.

**TIMELINE**

March 30, 2022-April 30, 2022	30-day Public Comment Period (RFA)
April 12 <sup>th</sup> and April 19 <sup>th</sup> 2022	Public Comment Listening Session webinars via Zoom (2) see above for registration link
May 2022- Exact date TBD	Application Period Open
TBD	Application Review
TBD	Awards Announced

## ELIGIBILITY

Eligible entities include **Non-profit organizations, Tribal Governments and Community colleges. Community Colleges are eligible as co-applicants with local partner organizations.** Entities applying must have demonstrated expertise in assisting historically underserved, small-scale farmers, and farmworkers and in workforce development programs.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

In developing the Grant Application and Budget, applicants should ensure that all costs are reasonable, necessary to meet the objectives of the project, allowable, and incurred in a manner consistent with the applicant organization's established practices.

All applicants are subject to section 330.2 of the Grant Administration Regulations set forth by CDFA's Office of Grants Administration at:

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Regulations/General/FinalGrantAdminRegs-Text.pdf>

## HOW TO APPLY

Effective March 2022, CDFA will be utilizing a new online grant platform for this grant program. Applicants are required to complete and submit the 2022 BFFTP grant application online using the *Amplifund program platform* to answer all applications questions. All required grant application components and templates if applicable will be available on the BFFTP website. More information about Amplifund can be accessed at <https://www.amplifund.com>.

Details regarding creating an account and how to access the system will be included in the final RFA.

Grant applications must be submitted electronically to by 5:00 p.m. PT on xxx, 2022.

## Track 1: Program Planning and Curriculum Development Grants

This program provides direct support for existing or new programs to fully develop their programs serving beginning farmers *OR* farmworker training and workforce development program, establish partnerships, seek accreditation [from the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards \(if applicable\)](#), land tenure (either land lease or purchase) and design curriculum. This track is for organizations who would like to formalize or expand the reach of existing programs and need assistance during the phase of program planning or curriculum development. Each applicant organization can apply for a maximum amount of \$100,000 in this track. This track also prioritizes programs that are developing local or regional partnerships that will support beginning farmers and farmworkers to be successful. This track aims to prepare organizations to

successfully apply for larger grants and build capacity to serve a region's beginning farmers and/or farmworkers through training and workforce development for the agriculture industry. This track includes mandatory networking and mentoring partnership components.

## Track 2: Program Implementation: Beginning Farmer Training Program

The Program Implementation track (beginning farmers) provides support for eligible entities to apply for funds to support a beginning farmer training grant in the amount of up to \$1,000,000. The priority for this track will be funding for infrastructure, tool lending libraries, land tenure (either land lease or purchase), regional networking opportunities and apprenticeships (including stipends). Priority will be given to those applications with partnerships and demonstrated ability to continue the program beyond the funding period.

## Track 3: Program Implementation: Farmworker Training and Workforce Development Program

The Program Implementation (farmworker training) track provides support for eligible entities to apply for funds to support development of farmworker training and workforce development program in the amount of up to \$1,000,000. The priority for this track will be regional collaborations that focus on job skills training, paid apprenticeships, education, and agricultural technology training for farmworkers. The priority will be for programs serving the farmworker community, with curriculum and instruction tailored towards serving their unique cultural and language needs and providing advanced skills training needed in the ag sector. There will be 1-2 awards for this category with a geographic preference and priority for projects in areas with high concentrations of farmworkers (Central Valley, Coachella Valley, Imperial Valley, Central Coast, Southern California). A secondary priority of this track is programs that target job upskilling for agricultural workers who have lost jobs due to climate change, drought, or other natural disasters.

## REVIEW PROCESS

CDFA will select the highest scoring applications for award of grant funds.

CDFA will conduct two levels of review during the application process. The first level is an administrative review to determine whether grant application requirements are met. The second level is a technical review to evaluate the merits of the grant application based on the detailed scoring criteria outlined below.

During the administrative review, the following may result in disqualification of a grant application:



- One or more unanswered questions necessary for the administrative or technical review;
- Missing, blank or unreadable content;
- Requests for more than the maximum award amount;
- Applications that do not comply with Eligibility or meet Program Requirements

Grant applications disqualified as a result of the administrative review may be appealed.

**APPEAL RIGHTS:** Any discretionary action taken by the Farm Equity Office may be appealed to CDFA’s Office of Hearings and Appeals Office within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a notice of disqualification from CDFA. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the submitted grant application. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the CDFA decision being challenged. The submissions must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 or emailed to [CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov). If submissions are not received within the time frame provided above, the appeal will be denied.

<b>Application Section</b>	<b>Points Available</b>
<b>Eligibility</b> (1) Which funding track is the best fit (2) Past and prospective CDFA grants (series of brief questions)	--
<b>Project Summary</b>	--
<b>Total Dollar Amount Requested</b>	--
<b>Community Need</b> Narrative (20 points) and Organizational/Program Data (30 points)	<b>50</b>
<b>Project Description and Timeline</b> (1) Project Narrative (15 points) (2) Goal, Objectives, Activities, Timeline, Team Responsibilities (5 points)	<b>20</b>
<b>Project Evaluation</b> Participation in all reporting activities (see <b>Reporting</b> ) is required if awarded a grant.	<b>5</b>
<b>Project Viability</b> (1) Budget/Narrative (must use required template provided) (8 points) (2) Sustainability Plan (2 points)	<b>15</b>
<b>Project Partners and Commitments</b> (1) Internal Project Partners (at least 2) * and External Project Partners (optional) (5 points) (2) Letters of Support (from each partner or named contractor) (5 points)	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## Notification and Feedback

All applicants will be notified regarding the status of their grant applications. Applicants not selected for funding will receive feedback regarding their applications within 60 days after receiving notification.

## GRANT RECIPIENT INFORMATION

### Grant Agreement

Applicants with projects selected for award of funds will receive a Grant Agreement package with specific instructions regarding award requirements including information on project implementation and payment process. Grant execution may take up to 90 or 120 days.

During this step, CDFA will work with you to get all of the information the state needs to execute the grant. The timeline for this step is dependent on how quickly information is provided to program staff. Below are examples of information that may be requested at this time:

- Std 204, 205 for new recipients to set up supplier ID for issuing payments. This document can now be signed electronically or printed and scanned and sent back via email.
- Grant Agreement Package: This document can now be signed electronically or printed and scanned and sent back via email.

Once a Grant Agreement is executed, grant recipients can begin implementation of the project. Grant recipients are responsible for the overall management of their awarded project to ensure all project activities are completed by the end of the project.

### Payment Process

CDFA will provide grant recipients with the necessary grant award and invoicing documents. Funds will be allocated on a reimbursement basis. Invoices must be submitted quarterly and include all supporting documentation to substantiate expenses.

If you request and are granted an advance payment, please be aware that it will take up to 4 weeks to process this payment once the grant is executed.

## REPORTING

The CDFA will require grant recipients to complete the following reporting components.

<b>Monthly or Quarterly Invoices</b>	Submit monthly or quarterly invoices along with documentation to demonstrate proof of payment to the CDFA, detailing spending to be reimbursed for actual allowable costs incurred. If eligible and approved for an Advance Payment on
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	Track One Planning projects, submit regular invoicing in accordance with Advance Payment regulations.
<b>Quarterly Reports &amp; Networking Call</b>	Quarterly check-ins and report to the CDFA summarizing project progress, successes, and challenges. These may also be group networking calls that CDFA facilitates to ensure grant recipients can share ideas and resources to support sustainability of projects beyond scope of current funding.
<b>Final Project Report</b>	Submit one final report to the CDFA at the conclusion of the grant period.

The CDFA will answer any questions received regarding the public comment period and will summarize the questions and answers online at [www.cdfa.ca.gov/BFFTP](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/BFFTP)

The Farm Equity office will conduct two public listening sessions via Zoom during the public comment period. To attend each webinar, please follow the Zoom links below. The first session will be presented in English and the second will be presented in English and Spanish.

**Zoom Session #1: Tuesday April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 11:00 am PST**

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+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 880 8751 8271

Passcode: 18257780

## OTHER CDFA GRANT PROGRAMS

Please explore other CDFA grant programs that might be of interest to you on the CDFA grants webpage: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants/>.

## Appendix A

### **Grant Application and Review Criteria (additional detail)**

#### **Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training and Workforce Development Program**

[Information to be released in final RFA]

## Appendix B

### **Additional Information on Allowable Costs**

BFFTP grant recipients should refer to the list of Allowable/Unallowable Costs of the California Code of Regulations- Title 3, Division 1, Chapter 5 Grants Administration. ([Link](#)) and the list of allowable and unallowable Items of Cost in Section 330.2 of the Final Grant Administration regulations ([Link](#)).

**Capital Expenditures:** Please refer to Final Grant Administration Regulations, Section 330.2(8) Equipment and Other Capital Expenditures.

- Purchasing new infrastructure or making improvements to existing structures for the purpose of providing on-hands training to beginning farmers is allowable if the applicant can demonstrate how the infrastructure is needed to ensure the success of the program. Examples of infrastructure include hoop houses or improvements to address food safety concerns such as washing/packing or storage facilities.
- Funding for down payment of a land purchase, or monthly/annual lease payments is allowable up to a total of \$1,000,000
- New or used agricultural hand tools and equipment for a tool lending library will have a limit of \$8,000.
- Acquisition of larger equipment such a tractor will have a limit of \$30,000.

**Up to 10% of Indirect Costs\*:** As defined in Section 303(a)(36) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations

**Additional Details:**

\*For this grant program, if an organization has a federally negotiated indirect cost rate that is higher than 10% and provides documentation of its federally negotiated indirect cost rate in the application, the CDFA may accommodate this rate or an indirect cost rate of up to 30% of direct costs, whichever is less. CDFA will verify the documentation to substantiate the rate requested.

**Stipends:** Please refer to Final Grant Administration Regulations, Section 330.2 (18) Participant support costs.

- Stipends for beginning farmers and farmworkers as participants of a farmer training program or workforce development program are allowed.

**Travel:**

- Mileage: Mileage reimbursement rates are subject to the California Department of Human Resources- Personal Mileage Reimbursement Rates.
- <https://www.calhr.ca.gov/employees/pages/travel-reimbursements.aspx>
- The following travel costs are subject to the following time frames and limits: Meals (breakfast, lunch & dinner), Incidentals, and Lodging.
- <http://hrmanual.calhr.ca.gov/Home/ManualItem/1/2203>

## DEFINITIONS

**For the purposes of this grant program, the following definitions apply:**

**Beginning Farmer.** Anyone who has operated a farm or ranch for less than ten years is considered to be a beginning farmer or rancher (USDA).

**A Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher (SDFR)** is a member of a socially disadvantaged group (SDG). Members of SDG's have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. These groups include all the following: (1) African Americans (2) Native American Indians (3) Alaskan Natives (4) Hispanics (5) Asian Americans (6) Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. Definition established through [AB 1348](#), the Farmer Equity Act. CDFA recognizes this specific language ("socially disadvantaged") can have negative connotations, and thus uses "historically underserved" interchangeably to indicate persons who have been subjected to racial, ethnic and gender prejudice without regard to their individual qualities and who have as a result not had equal access to resources and programs needed to run successful businesses.

**Disadvantaged communities** refers to the areas throughout California which most suffer from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens. These burdens include poverty, high unemployment, air and water pollution, presence of hazardous wastes as well as high incidence of asthma and heart disease. (California Public Utilities Commission).

**BIMPOC** refers to Black, Indigenous, multiracial, and people of color.

**LGBTQ+** stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and more, including Intersex and Ally.