

2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program

Request for Applications

Draft for public comment

Released for Public Comment:
November 29, 2023

Public Comments Due:
by 5pm PT on December 14, 2023
No late submissions accepted



**California Department of Food and Agriculture
Inspection Services Division
Office of Farm to Fork
California Farm to School Program**

Website: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/caf2sgrant>

Email: cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov

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Public Input

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) seeks public comments about this Request for Applications (RFA). The CDFA will consider comments received before finalizing this Farm to School RFA and when developing future Farm to School RFAs. Public comments are **due by 5pm PT on December 14, 2023**. The public may submit comments in one or more of the following ways:

- **Written Comments via Email:** Please submit written comments via email to: cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov. Include “Farm to School Public Comments” in the subject line of your email. Please specify which funding track each comment is regarding in the body of your email.
- **Live Comments via Zoom:** During the public comment period, the CDFA Office of Farm to Fork will host a series of public info sessions about this RFA. Each info session will include an overview of the RFA and time for questions and comments. Please join us at one or more of the public info sessions by following the Zoom registration links below:

Public Info Session	When	Where	Register
Public Info Session #1	November 30, 2023 at 10am PT	Zoom	Register here
Public Info Session #2	December 6, 2023 at 4pm PT	Zoom	Register here

Program Timeline

Please note the **estimated** program timeline below. The grant application period is approximately two months.

2023-24 CA Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Timeline (estimated)	
Public Comment Period	November 29 – December 14, 2023
Invitation to Submit Grant Applications	Estimated January 2024
CDFA Grant Application Q&A Zoom Sessions	Weekly throughout the application period
Grant Applications Due	Estimated March 2024
Review Process	Estimated Spring 2024
Award Notification and Announcement	Date to be released in final RFA
Grant Term Begins	Date to be released in final RFA

1.0 About the Program

1.1 Purpose

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program will award competitive grants to support projects that cultivate equity, nurture students, build climate resilience, and create scalable and sustainable change.

Funding Priorities: The California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program will award additional points during the grant review process for projects that:

- Engage students from [underserved communities](#)
- Include [small to midsize California food producers](#)
- Include [veteran California food producers](#), [socially disadvantaged California food producers](#), and/or [limited-resource farm households in California](#).
- Include California food producers who utilize [climate smart agriculture practices](#); [climate smart agriculture production systems](#) like certified organic or transitioning to certified organic; [other regenerative strategies](#) that increase resilience to climate change, improve the health of communities and soil, protect water and air quality, increase biodiversity, and help store carbon in the soil; [or sustainable pest management](#).

Please see the detailed grant application questions and review criteria in the [Grant Application and Review Criteria](#) section for details about how the application and review criteria will address each of the funding priorities noted above.

Additional Priorities: The California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program will:

- Aim to distribute awards geographically across California to the extent possible
- Set aside up to 10% of all available grant funding for awards for Tribal governments and Tribal-based non-profit organizations

The California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program is in alignment with California's report entitled [Planting the Seed: Farm to School Roadmap for Success](#), which highlights policy goals to advance child well-being, economic growth, environmental resilience, and racial equity through farm to school systems that connect children to locally sourced, whole foods and produce in cafeterias, classrooms, and gardens. The report and its recommendations are the result of a collaboration – led by First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom and CDFA Secretary Karen Ross – among a number of state agency leaders, education professionals, and farm to school experts and practitioners.

The California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program is also 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 well-being, 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.

1.2 Definitions

The definitions below are in alphabetical order.

California Grown or Produced, Whole or Minimally Processed Foods:

- **California Grown or Produced Foods:** Foods that are produced in California or harvested in its surface or coastal waters *AND* if minimally processed, then 100% processed in California.
- **Minimally Processed Foods:** Per the USDA, minimal processing may include: (a) those traditional processes used to make food edible or to preserve it or to make it safe for human consumption, e.g., smoking, roasting, freezing, drying, and fermenting, or (b) those physical processes that do not fundamentally alter the raw product or that only separate a whole, intact food into component parts, e.g., grinding meat, separating eggs into albumen and yolk, and pressing fruits to produce juices.
 - CDFA staff intend to convene a working group to work out the detailed parameters for “minimally processed” food products that this grant program may fund and will collaborate with this working group to develop an allowable foods resource list for grant recipients. Please note that although the following products may not fit the USDA definition of *minimally processed*, they are allowable purchases through this grant program and the CDFA will collaborate with the working group mentioned above to determine if there should be any additional parameters around these foods:
 - Yogurt and cheese dairy products that are 100% produced, processed, and manufactured in California are allowable. Please note that California produced fluid milk and fluid milk substitutes are unallowable.
 - Whole grain-rich flours and other whole grain-rich products that are 100% grown, milled, processed, and manufactured in California are allowable. In alignment with the USDA, whole grain-rich means that at least 50 to 100% of the grains in the product are whole grains, and the remaining grain, if any, must be enriched.
- **NOTE:** Please note that CDFA staff will work with grant recipients to identify food products that meet the grant program values of “California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed” foods and will review every food procurement purchase made with grant funds to make sure it is in alignment with these values.

Child Care Center:

This grant program defines California child care centers as those that:

- Are located in CA
- Provide care all or part of the day
- Are single-site or multi-site
- *Primarily* serve young children birth through age five (i.e., infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers); may also serve school-age children
- Are licensed by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) OR meet appropriate criteria for a license exemption (e.g., a license-exempt Tribal child care center located on an Indian reservation)

Climate Smart Agriculture Practices, Climate Smart Agriculture Production Systems, Other Regenerative Strategies, or Sustainable Pest Management:

Climate smart agriculture practices include those defined by [the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\) Conservation Practice Standards \(CPS\)](#) and those identified by [the CDFA Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation](#) via the [Healthy Soils Program \(HSP\)](#), [Alternative Manure Management Program \(AMMP\)](#), [Dairy Digester Research and Development Program \(DDRDP\)](#), and [State Water Enhancement and Efficiency Program \(SWEET\)](#), including but not limited to cover cropping, no or reduced till, hedgerow plantings, compost application, and prescribed grazing. Climate smart agriculture production systems include certified organic or transitioning to certified organic. Other regenerative strategies include those that also increase resilience to climate change, improve the health of communities and soil, protect water and air quality, increase biodiversity, and help store carbon in the soil. Sustainable Pest Management (SPM) and [examples of SPM practices](#) are defined in the [Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap](#) that the CA Department of Pesticide Regulation developed in collaboration with the CDFA and CA Environmental Protection Agency.

ECE:

ECE is an acronym for Early Care and Education. The term ECE site refers to sites where early care and education occurs, i.e., child care centers; family child care homes; and license-exempt family, friend, or neighbor settings.

Educator:

A person who provides instruction or education; a teacher.

Farm to School:

While individual farm to school programs vary based on their unique vision, community, and geographic region, the CDFA broadly considers farm to school programs as combining: (1) schools and early care and education (ECE) programs buying California grown or produced foods from California food producers for school meal programs, and (2) hands-on food education opportunities that engage students and connect the classroom with the cafeteria, such as activities in school gardens, on farms, in culinary classes, in settings that celebrate traditional foodways and cultivate food sovereignty, and through other experiential learning pathways. Programs may include forest-to-school, river-to-school, and ocean-to-school.

Farm to ECE Technical Assistance (TA) Organization:

This program defines farm to ECE TA organizations as any of the following organizations that provide support to ECE providers in California:

- Child and Adult Care (CACFP) Sponsors of Day Care Homes in California or CACFP Sponsors of Child Care Centers in CA
- Child Care and Development Fund Tribal Lead Agencies in CA
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R) in CA
- First 5 county commissions in CA
- Head Start grantees in CA (i.e., an agency that is awarded funding by the Office of Head Start to provide or subcontract Head Start services in their area)
- Non-profit organizations, including agricultural industry non-profit organizations
- Tribal-based non-profit organizations
- Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) in CA

- University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) and Cooperative Extension (UCCE) county offices
- Public universities in CA such as University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and community colleges
- California Native American Tribes
- County agencies in CA
- Local governments in CA
- Projects with a non-profit fiscal sponsor
 - NOTE: Applicants must clearly identify the fiscal sponsor in the application. If awarded, the fiscal sponsor will be the grant recipient and will be responsible for executing the grant agreement and ensuring all project activities and costs follow grant requirements.
- The CDFA acknowledges that other types of organizations not listed above may operate as farm to ECE TA organizations. Beyond the list above, the CDFA will determine eligibility of farm to ECE TA organizations on an individual basis and encourages interested applicants to connect via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov.

Farm to School Technical Assistance (TA) Organization:

This program defines farm to school TA organizations as any of the following organizations that (a) have an established history supporting California School Food Authorities or California educators with implementing farm to school initiatives or (b) have an established history supporting California food producers and institutional food procurement:

- Non-profit organizations, including agricultural industry non-profit organizations
- Tribal-based non-profit organizations
- Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) in CA
- University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) and Cooperative Extension (UCCE) county offices
- Public universities in CA such as University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and community colleges
- California Native American Tribes
- County agencies in CA
- Local governments in CA
- Projects with a non-profit fiscal sponsor
 - NOTE: Applicants must clearly identify the fiscal sponsor in the application. If awarded, the fiscal sponsor will be the grant recipient and will be responsible for executing the grant agreement and ensuring all project activities and costs follow grant requirements.
- The CDFA acknowledges that other types of organizations not listed above may operate as farm to school TA organizations. Beyond the list above, the CDFA will determine eligibility of farm to school TA organizations on an individual basis and encourages interested applicants to connect via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov.

Food Producer:

This grant program defines a California food producer as a person, group of individuals, non-profit organization, or California Native American Tribe that leases, rents, or owns land in

California (whether the land is publicly owned, privately owned, or Tribal land) and cultivates crops, raises livestock, and/or uses Indigenous food production practices on this land, **and/or** a California seafood harvester. NOTE: this *does not* include school-operated gardens and school-operated farms; however, this *does* include third parties (such as individual contractors or non-profit organizations) that operate a farm on school property.

Hands-on Food Education:

Hands-on food education refers to activities in which students learn by doing and gain knowledge through experience. Hands-on food education may include but is not limited to: activities in school gardens, on school farms, in school greenhouses, in other food production environments, and in culinary classes; experiential lessons celebrating traditional foodways and cultivating food sovereignty; cooking and tasting activities; food-based student internships; farm tours, field trips, or school visits from producers; student-led recipe creation; student-run farm/food stands featuring produce from school gardens/farms; or other transformative opportunities for students to better understand the relationships between food and the world around them. Please note that posters and marketing materials are *not* considered hands-on food education.

Limited-Resource Farm Households:

Per [the United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), limited-resource farm households are those that, for two years in a row, have low farm sales and low household income, according to [this tool](#).

Public-Serving Food Aggregation and Distribution Enterprise:

Often called a “food hub,” a public-serving aggregation and distribution enterprise serves as a supply chain intermediary for local or regional farms or ranches, particularly those optimizing climate smart agriculture production practices or methods and following state labor practices. An eligible enterprise must prioritize to the greatest extent possible, but is not limited to, serving farms or ranches that are 500 acres or less; cooperatively owned; or owned by farmers who are socially disadvantaged, beginning, limited resource, veterans, or disabled. This definition aligns with [California’s Farm to Community Food Hub Program \(Assembly Bill \(AB\) 1009, Chapter 608, Statutes of 2021\)](#). Additionally, within this grant program, an eligible enterprise must handle 100% California grown products within California or be able to farm identify sourcing for 100% of products to ensure state dollars support California farms and ranches.

NOTE: The CDFA acknowledges that a variety of types of organizations may operate as public-serving aggregation and distribution enterprises. In alignment with the definition above, the CDFA will determine eligibility of public-serving aggregation and distribution enterprises on an individual basis and encourages interested applicants to connect via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov.

School Food Authority (SFA):

Per [7 CFR 210.2](#), a California School Food Authority (SFA) is the governing body that is responsible for the administration of one or more schools in California and has the legal authority to operate the National School Lunch Program therein.

Small to Midsize Food Producers:

The California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program defines small to midsize food producers as those for which the average annual gross cash farm income during the previous three-year period is no more than \$750,000. The Track 4 application uses a tiered scoring system to allocate more points for operations with less average annual gross cash farm income.

Socially Disadvantaged Food Producers:

A socially disadvantaged food producer means a food producer who is a member of a “socially disadvantaged group.” Per [California’s Farmer Equity Act of 2017 \(Assembly Bill \(AB\) 1348, Chapter 620, Statutes of 2017\)](#), a “socially disadvantaged group” is a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. In accordance with AB 1348, these groups include all of the following: African Americans, Native Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. In addition, the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program includes women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people as socially disadvantaged groups. The CDFA recognizes that using the language “socially disadvantaged groups” does not fully reflect and honor the many other characteristics of groups included in this category; the CDFA chose to utilize this language in this Request for Applications to ensure that these groups are included in the funding priority.

Underserved Communities:

This grant program utilizes a few quantitative metrics to measure whether proposed projects will engage students from underserved communities. In Tracks 1 and 2, the metrics are Free and Reduced-Price Meal Eligibility Rate and Percentage of Students in Title I Schools. The tiered scoring system allocates more points for higher rates. In Track 3, the metric is the [Healthy Places Index](#) Percentile Ranking of ECE sites, based on census tract. The tiered scoring system allocates more points for lower percentiles. This grant program also considers specific community needs through a question called “Making the Case” in Tracks 1, 2, and 3, which prompts applicants to share about specific challenges that their community faces. Specific challenges may include but are not limited to: food insecurity rate, child poverty rate, natural disasters such as wildfires and floods, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the school community, CalEnviroScreen 4.0 percentile, historical and/or systemic injustices, limited resources, etc.

Veteran Food Producers:

Based on the first component of [the USDA](#) definition of a “veteran farmer or rancher,” the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program defines a veteran food producer as a producer who served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve components thereof, and was released from the service under conditions other than dishonorable. Please note that the full USDA definition requires that producers not only meet the first component noted above but also meet this second requirement: have not operated a farm or ranch, have operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years, or first obtained veteran status during the most recent 10-year period. This second requirement does not apply to this program.

1.3 Four Funding Tracks

To support a systems approach to advancing farm to school throughout the state, the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program offers four funding tracks. Applicants may apply to multiple tracks based on eligibility and project type.

- View the Eligibility Decision Tree (to be released in final RFA).
- For full eligibility guidelines, see [Eligibility and Exclusions](#).
- To view examples of projects, please review the list of funded projects from the [2021 grant cycle](#) and [2022 grant cycle](#). If you still have questions about which track may best fit your project, please email us at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov.

Track 1: The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant

Track 1 will fund individual public school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, and Tribal schools in California that are a School Food Authority to establish new or expand existing farm to school programs that:

- (1) procure California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods for incorporation into school meals, especially from food producers that utilize climate smart agriculture practices, small to midsize food producers, veteran food producers, socially disadvantaged food producers, and/or limited-resource farm households in California; **and**
- (2) engage students in hands-on food education opportunities, especially standards-aligned and culturally relevant opportunities led by credentialed or certificated educators, that complement the school meal program's California food procurement efforts; **and**
- (3) **OPTIONAL:** if desired, employ farm to school staff and/or offer farm to school professional development for staff.

Track 2: The California Farm to School Technical Assistance (TA) Grant

Track 2 will fund farm to school technical assistance organizations to help California School Food Authorities and California food producers implement resilient and sustainable farm to school programming. Technical assistance (TA) projects must:

- (1) build school nutrition, educator, or producer capacity to implement farm to school programs; **and**
- (2) focus technical assistance in **one** of the following categories:
 - School Food: helping California School Food Authorities implement farm to school procurement programs
 - Education: helping California School Food Authorities implement hands-on food education programs in TK-12 settings, especially programs that are standards-aligned, culturally relevant, incorporate credentialed or certificated educators, and complement the school meal program
 - Producer Training: helping California food producers sell products to California School Food Authorities

Track 3: The California Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Grant

Track 3 will fund child care centers in California and farm to ECE technical assistance organizations to establish new or expand existing farm to ECE programs that:

- (1) procure California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods for incorporation into meals/snacks and/or food boxes for young children, especially from food producers that utilize climate smart agriculture practices, small to midsize food producers, veteran food producers, socially disadvantaged food producers, and/or limited-resource farm households in California; **and**
- (2) engage young children in hands-on food education opportunities, especially standards-aligned and culturally relevant opportunities led by educators with a Child Development Teacher Permit, that complement the meal program's and/or food box program's California food procurement efforts; **and**
- (3) **OPTIONAL:** if desired, employ farm to ECE staff and/or offer farm to ECE professional development for staff.

The CDFA encourages Track 3 projects to incorporate parent and family engagement and to build connections with K-12 and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Track 4: The California Farm to School Producer Grant

Track 4 will fund California food producers and public-serving food aggregation and distribution enterprises to increase production, processing, and/or distribution capacity to sell California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods to the school food market.

To be eligible, an applicant must show evidence of an established relationship with each California School Food Authority or center-based Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) operator to which they intend to sell food. Funding will prioritize small to midsize food producers; veteran, socially disadvantaged, and/or limited-resource food producers; and food producers utilizing climate smart agriculture practices or production systems.

Applicants may propose to use funds to:

- (1) purchase infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to increase production, processing, and/or distribution capacity to sell California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed food to schools; **and/or**
- (2) purchase infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to establish or enhance the use of climate smart agriculture practices, production systems, other regenerative strategies, and/or sustainable pest management when producing whole or minimally processed food to sell to schools; **and/or**
- (3) cover staffing costs dedicated to farm to school activities; **and/or**
- (4) pursue certifications, licensures, or insurance that the applicant needs to sell California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed food to schools; **and/or**
- (5) establish new or expand existing hands-on food education opportunities for students, School Food Authority staff, and/or center-based CACFP operator staff that complement the applicant's existing or project-related food sales to schools, such as field trips, producer visits to the cafeteria or classroom, etc.

Please note that the CDFA welcomes projects that propose implementing new ideas and/or established ideas as long as projects align with the goals of the applicable funding track.

1.4 Funding and Duration

The Budget Acts of 2021 and 2022 appropriated a combined \$60 million from the General Fund to the CDFA for the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program. The CDFA will make up to \$55.5 million available for the four funding tracks outlined above. The amount of funds that the CDFA will award in each funding track will depend on the number of competitive applications that the CDFA receives in each funding track.

Funding Track	Funding Formula	Award Amount	Grant Term
Track 1: The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant	Project award amount for which applicants may apply = Total number of students your project will serve multiplied by \$15. NOTE: The award amount requested must fall between \$200,000 and \$1.5 million. If the product of your multiplication is less than \$200,000, please apply for \$200,000. If the product of your multiplication is more than \$1.5 million, please apply for \$1.5 million.	\$200,000 to \$1.5 million	Up to 24 months
Track 2: The California Farm to School Technical Assistance (TA) Grant	No funding formula. Track 2 applicants may apply for between \$50,000 and \$500,000.	\$50,000 to \$500,000	Up to 24 months
Track 3: The California Farm to School Early Care and Education (ECE) Grant	No funding formula. Track 3 applicants may apply for between \$50,000 and \$200,000.	\$50,000 to \$200,000	Up to 24 months
Track 4: The California Farm to School Producer Grant	No funding formula. Track 4 applicants may apply for between \$15,000 and \$250,000.	\$15,000 to \$250,000	Up to 24 months

Additional Funding Details:

- The CDFA reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the amount requested.
- **Grant recipients cannot expend grant funds before the grant term start date or after the grant term end date** [exact dates to be released in final RFA].
- **This grant program does NOT require Matching Funds.** The CDFA will fund up to 100% of the total project cost. See [Cost Share](#) for more details.
- See [Allowable and Unallowable Costs](#) for guidance regarding use of funds.
- **Payment Process:** This is a **Reimbursement Grant Program**. If awarded a 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 fully executed (signed by both parties) before project activities begin.

- Please note that **grant recipients may be eligible to receive Advance Payments** for project expenditures. Advance payments shall not exceed the amount necessary for project expenses for a three-month period and cannot reduce the project balance below 10% of the award amount. If eligible and approved for advance payment, recipients must follow the [Advance Payment regulations](#).
- **Executive Order N-6-22 – Russia Sanctions:** On March 4, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order [N-6-22](#) regarding Economic Sanctions against Russia and Russian entities and individuals. “Economic Sanctions” refers to sanctions imposed by the U.S. government in response to Russia’s actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law. By submitting a proposal or application, the Applicant represents that it is not a target of Economic Sanctions. Should the State determine Applicant is a target of Economic Sanctions or is conducting prohibited transactions with sanctioned individuals or entities, that shall be grounds for rejection of the Applicant’s proposal/application any time prior to agreement execution, or, if determined after agreement execution, shall be grounds for termination by the State.

1.5 Cost Share

The 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program requires no matching dollars. However, applicants must be able to show a commitment to farm to school programming in the Project Team and Organizational Commitment section of the application.

[RFA continues on next page]

1.6 Eligibility and Exclusions

The 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program is available to the entities described below.

Please note that eligible entities must select **one** funding track and may submit **one** application.

However, eligible entities may be a project partner in multiple funding tracks. Eligible entities that are a project partner in multiple tracks must ensure that projects are **not** duplicative and there is no duplication of project costs in order for the CDFA to consider each application.

- [Skip to Track 1: The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 2: The California Farm to School Technical Assistance \(TA\) Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 3: The California Farm to Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 4: The California Farm to School Producer Grant](#)

1.6a Eligibility and Exclusions – Track 1

The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant

Who can apply?	California public school districts, county offices of education, charter schools, and Tribal schools (such as those administered through the Bureau of Indian Education) that are a School Food Authority (SFA) currently operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
Additional Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note about Tribal schools: The CDFA acknowledges that Tribal governments and Tribal-based non-profit organizations may operate school meal programs outside of traditional USDA school meal programs like the NSLP. Beyond the eligibility criteria above, the CDFA will determine eligibility of Tribal schools on an individual basis and encourages interested applicants to connect via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov. • Note about charter schools: If a charter school that is an SFA is comprised of multiple charter school campuses, then the CDFA will consider the charter school as a <i>single</i> entity, not as multiple. If an eligible school district or county office of education is the SFA for a charter school, then the charter school may <i>not</i> apply but the school district or county office of education may include such schools in their proposed project if desired. • Note about identifying specific school sites: Please note that individual schools are <i>not</i> eligible to apply to Track 1, unless they are a single-site public school district, single-site charter school, or Tribal school that meets the Track 1 eligibility criteria. However, applicants may identify in the application that their proposed project will focus on one or more specific school sites within their SFA. • Note about School Food Authorities: Public school districts that serve as the School Food Authority (SFA) for multiple school districts, for a county office of education’s school sites, and/or for charter schools may include those entities in their proposed project if desired by including those school sites that the project will serve in their application. Please note that a public school district that serves as the SFA for multiple entities and would like to include those entities in their proposed project is still limited to submitting one application in Track 1. Additionally, the entities that are

	<p>not SFAs themselves are <i>not</i> eligible to submit their own separate Track 1 applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note about early care and education (ECE): The CDFA encourages applicants with preschool, transitional kindergarten, and/or Head Start programs to include those programs in their Track 1 project. • Private schools are <u>not</u> eligible to apply to Track 1. • Skip to next section of RFA: 1.7 Allowable and Unallowable Costs.
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1.6b Eligibility and Exclusions – Track 2

The California Farm to School Technical Assistance (TA) Grant

Who can apply?	Farm to school technical assistance (TA) organizations, defined here .
Additional Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Food or Education project categories: Farm to school TA organizations are eligible to apply within the “School Food” or “Education” project categories if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The organization has an established history supporting California School Food Authorities or California educators with implementing farm to school initiatives - Their proposed project includes a partnership with at least one California School Food Authority • Producer Training project category: Farm to school TA organizations are eligible to apply within the “Producer Training” project category if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The organization has an established history supporting California food producers and institutional food procurement - Their proposed project includes a partnership with at least one California School Food Authority and at least one California food producer • Note about early care and education (ECE): Track 2 applicants may incorporate TK-12 into their proposed project. Farm to ECE technical assistance organizations that would solely like to focus on farm to ECE in their proposed project should apply to Track 3. • Note about county offices of education: County offices of education are eligible in all three project categories as an applicant or SFA partner. If a county office of education is the SFA partner in the “School Food” project category, then the project may only serve the school sites that the county office of education directly oversees for the NSLP. Please contact cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov with questions about county office of education eligibility. • Note about farm to school TA organizations: Farm to school TA organizations may be organizations that are based outside of California but serve California farm to school programs (unless otherwise indicated in the list of eligible farm to school TA organizations). Such organizations must use any funding they may receive through Track 2 for project activities that support California farm to school programs. • Note about identifying specific school sites: Track 2 applicants may identify in the application that their proposed project will focus on one or more specific school sites within each California School Food Authority that is part of the project partnership.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California School Food Authorities, California food producers, and public-serving food aggregation and distribution enterprises are <u>not eligible</u> to apply to Track 2. • Private schools are <u>not eligible</u> to apply to Track 2. They are also <u>not</u> eligible to be a California School Food Authority project partner. However, private schools may participate in a Track 2 project as a contractor that provides technical assistance to the project partnership. • Skip to next section of RFA: 1.7 Allowable and Unallowable Costs.
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1.6c Eligibility and Exclusions – Track 3
The California Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Grant

Who can apply?	<p>Child care centers in California, defined here.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Farm to ECE technical assistance (TA) organizations, defined here.</p>
Additional Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 51% of the students that each project serves must be young children birth through age five (i.e., infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers). Projects may also include school-age children if they attend the ECE sites that the project will serve. • Child care centers: The CDFA encourages child care centers that do not meet the eligibility criteria to partner with a farm to ECE technical assistance organization to be included in their application. • Farm to ECE technical assistance organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farm to ECE technical assistance organizations are eligible to apply if their proposed project includes a partnership with at least two ECE sites in California (i.e., child care centers; family child care homes; and license-exempt family, friend, or neighbor settings). - Farm to ECE technical assistance organizations may support ECE sites that operate a variety of ECE programs, including but not limited to: Alternative Payment Program (including Migrant Alternative Payment Program), California State Preschool Program, Head Start and Early Head Start (including American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start), General Child Care and Development (including Migrant Child Care and Development), Early Start, Special Education Preschool, Title I Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and Home Visiting. - The CDFA encourages collaboration between farm to ECE technical assistance organizations. - Farm to ECE technical assistance organizations may be organizations that are based outside of California but serve California ECE providers (unless otherwise indicated in the list of eligible farm to ECE TA organizations). Such organizations must use any funding they may receive through Track 3 for project activities that support California ECE providers and farm to ECE programs in California. • Note about the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): While the CDFA encourages participation in the CACFP, participation is <i>not</i> a requirement to apply. However, please note that the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 requires licensed child care centers that serve meals and snacks to follow the CACFP meal patterns stated in federal law.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note about award distribution: The CDFA will aim to award a proportional number of child care centers and farm to ECE technical assistance organizations, based on the number of applications from each eligibility type. • California School Food Authorities are <u>not</u> eligible to apply to Track 3. • Private schools are <u>not</u> eligible to apply to Track 3. • Skip to next section of RFA: 1.7 Allowable and Unallowable Costs.
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1.6d Eligibility and Exclusions – Track 4
The California Farm to School Producer Grant

Who can apply?	<p>Food producers in California, defined here. Or Public-serving aggregation and distribution enterprises, defined here.</p>
Additional Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must apply in collaboration with at least one of the following entities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - California public school district, county office of education, charter school, or Tribal school (such as those administered through the Bureau of Indian Education) that is a School Food Authority (SFA) currently operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) - California child care center currently participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) • Note about Tribal schools: The CDFA acknowledges that Tribal governments and Tribal-based non-profit organizations may operate school meal programs outside of traditional USDA school meal programs like the NSLP. Beyond the eligibility criteria above, the CDFA will determine eligibility of Tribal schools as Track 4 project partners on an individual basis and encourages interested applicants to connect via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov. • Letter(s) of intent: Each of the School Food Authority or child care center entities that the applicant includes as a project partner must provide a letter of intent in the application. The letter of intent must be from the director of the entity’s school meal program. The letter must indicate a “good faith” intention to purchase the producer’s or enterprise’s California grown or produced food for school meals (does not need to be a commitment to purchase). Additionally, the letter may indicate a “good faith” effort to collaborate with the producer or enterprise to implement hands-on food education opportunities for youth that complement the producer’s or enterprise’s food sales to their organization. • Food producers and public-serving aggregation and distribution enterprises in California who are not able to provide a letter of intent are <u>not</u> eligible to apply to Track 4. However, they are eligible for free, non-competitive technical assistance from the CDFA Farm to School Team to begin building relationships with the school food market. Please email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov for support and to connect with your CDFA Farm to School Regional Producer Engagement Specialist. • School-operated gardens and school-operated farms are <u>not</u> eligible to apply to Track 4.

- **California School Food Authorities, school-operated gardens, and school-operated farms are not eligible** to apply to Track 4. However, third parties (such as individual contractors or non-profit organizations) that operate a farm on school property may apply to Track 4.
- **California-based:** The applicant's operation (where the proposed project will take place), physical business address, and business mailing address must be in California. Additionally, the owner(s)/leader(s) of the operation must be California residents.
- **One application per unique tax/business identification number:** Applicants must use their operation's legal business name in their application. The business name provided in the application is the entity to which the CDFA will extend a grant agreement if the project receives a grant award. Applicants are limited to one Track 4 grant application per unique tax/business identification number. Applicants who operate more than one business entity may submit separate Track 4 grant applications on behalf of each entity that has a unique tax identification number.
- **Note about sole proprietors:** Applicants who are sole proprietors must be 18 years of age or older to apply.
- **Applicants may not apply to fund start-up costs** for a new food production operation or new public-serving aggregation and distribution enterprise. Applicants must currently produce food or currently aggregate and distribute food to be eligible to apply. Please refer to [the CDFA Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training Program](#) and [the CDFA Farm to Community Food Hub Program](#) for additional resources.
- **Note about food safety:** The CDFA will expect Track 4 grant recipients to meet a level of food safety consistent with their farm or business operations and in accordance with USDA requirements and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) requirements, as applicable. Producer grant recipients that do not currently have a food safety plan in place must complete a Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training through Cornell University as a component of their Track 4 grant project. The training is approximately \$80. Track 4 grant recipients may use grant funds for costs to meet necessary food safety requirements for their projects (see [Allowable and Unallowable Costs - Track 4](#)) and should work with their school nutrition partners to determine what level of food safety they must meet to sell food to these partners.
- **Note about the funding priorities:** View the detailed application questions and review criteria for Track 4 on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program website](#) to see how the grant program will score the small to midsize food producer funding priority; veteran, socially disadvantaged, and/or limited-resource food producer funding priority; and climate smart agriculture funding priority in the Track 4 application.
- [Skip to next section of RFA: 1.7 Allowable and Unallowable Costs.](#)

[RFA continues on next page]

1.7 Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Please note that all costs must be **reasonable**. A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost.

- [Skip to Track 1: The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 2: The California Farm to School Technical Assistance \(TA\) Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 3: The California Farm to Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 4: The California Farm to School Producer Grant](#)

1.7a Allowable and Unallowable Costs – Track 1

The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant

Please note that Track 1 applicants have the flexibility to determine which of the following allowable costs they would like to incorporate into their proposed project. Track 1 projects are **not** required to utilize grant funds for California food procurement costs and/or hands-on food education costs. However, even if not utilizing grant funds for these costs, all Track 1 projects must **both** (1) procure California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods for incorporation into school meals; **and** (2) engage students in hands-on food education opportunities that complement the school meal program’s California food procurement efforts. All Track 1 applicants must demonstrate in the application how both (1) and (2) are components of their proposed project.

Track 1: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
No cap	<p>CA Food Procurement Costs (for school meals and/or for student education):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For school meals: Procurement of California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods (from vendors including but not limited to food producers, distributors, food hubs, and school gardens/farms) for utilization in school meals (including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)). Grant recipients must follow USDA procurement and food safety regulations. • For student education: Procurement of California grown or produced, <i>whole or minimally processed</i> foods for hands-on food education opportunities that engage students. Activities may engage families of students as well.
No cap	<p>Hands-on Food Education Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to engage students in hands-on food education opportunities that complement the school meal program’s California food procurement efforts. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant recipients may use grant funds to develop <i>new</i> hands-on food education opportunities if they do not yet exist and to coordinate them with the school meal program.

Track 1: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CDFA encourages evidence-based educational programming that connects with the school nutrition services program, welcomes innovative ideas for new educational programming that connects with the school nutrition services program and encourages evaluation of such new educational programming, and encourages the integration of hands-on food education across grade levels to promote sequential knowledge acquisition and skill building. Grant recipients may engage families of students in hands-on food education opportunities. Consumables, ingredients, and other items for hands-on food education that are not reusable are allowable (e.g., ingredients and utensils for taste tests or lessons). Ingredients that are <i>not</i> California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed are allowable as supplies if used in a hands-on food education activity that <i>features</i> California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods (must demonstrate this in invoice submission). Items for hands-on food education that are reusable are also allowable. Refer to Sections 303(26), 324.1, and 324.2 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations for a definition of equipment and guidance regarding equipment property records and disposition. Additionally, refer to Section 330.1(c)(1) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations if equipment or infrastructure costs will benefit both grant project activities and non-grant project activities.
No cap	<p>Farm to School Staff/Labor Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time associated with managing and implementing the farm to school project. Labor costs associated with procuring, processing, and serving California grown or produced foods for utilization in school meals. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff costs may include a farm to school coordinator, FoodCorps service member(s), etc. Labor costs may include paying school food service workers or other project participants who are employed by the grant recipient for their time to participate in farm to school professional development (e.g., trainings, workshops, conferences). Applicants should acknowledge investments in staffing/labor in the Sustainability Plan section of the application.
No cap	<p>School Kitchen Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School kitchen infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to support utilization of California grown or produced foods in school meals. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples: school kitchen vehicles that aid in delivery/distribution of California grown or produced foods; school kitchen cold storage, processing, and scratch cooking equipment to store, process, and scratch cook these foods; school kitchen equipment and supplies to conduct farm to school professional development / staff trainings

Track 1: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Sections 303(26), 324.1, and 324.2 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations for a definition of equipment and guidance regarding equipment property records and disposition. Additionally, refer to Section 330.1(c)(1) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations if equipment or infrastructure costs will benefit both grant project activities and non-grant project activities.
No cap	<p>Travel Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for travel necessary for the performance of the grant award are allowable subject to Section 322 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations (including but not limited to: field trips to or visits from farms or other food producers that grow or produce food for the school meal program, travel related to project collaboration and implementation, and travel to and from trainings that are necessary for the performance of the grant award). <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that reimbursement for travel within California shall not exceed the maximum allowable rates and amounts established by the California Department of Human Resources. Travel costs may include transportation, lodging, and meals.
No cap	<p>Contractual Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor or consultant services for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives are allowable subject to Sections 319, 320.1, 320.2, and 320.3 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A contractor is an entity that undertakes a contract to perform an activity. The term contractor includes consultants (e.g., farm to school curriculum consultants). <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants who include contractors in their Budget must also include those contractors in the Project Team section of the application. Please note that grant recipients distributing funds to contractors must ensure that contractors follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds.
No cap	<p>Other Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives that the previous budget categories do not cover. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Other Costs” include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration fees for trainings and conferences Stipends for individual project participants who are not employed by the grant recipient. Mini grants Publication and printing costs Please note that mini grants may fit under Contractual Costs depending on an organization’s internal procedures. Grant recipients distributing funds via mini grants must ensure that mini grant recipients follow all allowable and

Track 1: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<p>unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CDFA may consider “Other Costs” not listed above that align with the funding purpose. Please email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov to see if a cost may be allowable in this category.
Up to 30% of direct costs	<p>Indirect Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As defined in Section 303(a)(36) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations.

Track 1: Unallowable Costs	
% of award	Description
0%	<p>California produced fluid milk and fluid milk substitutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CDFA will not reimburse California produced fluid milk, including fluid milk substitutes, as part of Track 1. Although they are important components of a healthy diet for California’s school children and for our state economy, schools already procure these products from within the state.
0%	<p>General CDFA unallowable costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to (1.b), (2), (3.a.iv), (6), (7), (9), (10), (13.b), (14), (17), (19), (22.b), (24), (26), and (27.a.ii) of the CDFA List of Allowable and Unallowable Items of Cost.
0%	<p>Consumables related to food production that are not reusable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, feed for animals or water for irrigation.
0%	<p>Any costs incurred before or after the grant term.</p>
0%	<p>Any costs outside of the project scope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that prior approval from the CDFA is required for any changes to an approved project scope of work or budget once the agreement is fully executed. Failure to obtain prior written approval from the CDFA may result in disallowance of costs incurred.

[Skip to next section of RFA: 1.8 Reporting and Evaluation](#)

1.7b Allowable and Unallowable Costs – Track 2 The California Farm to School Technical Assistance (TA) Grant

Track 2: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
No cap	<p>CA Food Procurement Costs (for student education):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods for utilization in hands-on food education activities. Activities may

Track 2: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	engage families of students as well. Grant recipients must follow procurement and food safety regulations applicable to their programs.
No cap	<p>Infrastructure, Equipment, and Supplies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure, equipment, and supplies for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples: vehicles that aid in transportation/distribution of California grown or produced foods for school meals, cold storage and processing equipment to store and process these foods for school meals, and other school-based and/or producer infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to support farm to school procurement and/or education Consumables, ingredients, and other items for hands-on food education that are not reusable are allowable (e.g., ingredients and utensils for taste tests or lessons). Ingredients that are <i>not</i> California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed are allowable as supplies if used in a hands-on food education activity that <i>features</i> California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods (must demonstrate this in invoice submission). Items for hands-on food education that are reusable are also allowable. Refer to Sections 303(26), 324.1, and 324.2 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations for a definition of equipment and guidance regarding equipment property records and disposition. Additionally, refer to Section 330.1(c)(1) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations if equipment or infrastructure costs will benefit both grant project activities and non-grant project activities.
No cap	<p>Farm to School Staff Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing for project planning, coordination, facilitation, and/or implementation. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff costs may include paying project participants who are employed by the grant recipient for their time to participate in professional development (e.g., trainings, workshops, conferences) related to farm to school. Applicants should acknowledge investments in staffing in the Sustainability Plan section of the application.
No cap	<p>Travel Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for travel necessary for the performance of the grant award are allowable subject to Section 322 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations (including but not limited to: field trips to or visits from farms or other food producers that are part of the project, travel related to project collaboration and implementation, and travel to and from trainings that are necessary for the performance of the grant award). <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that reimbursement for travel within California shall not exceed the maximum allowable rates and amounts established by the California Department of Human Resources. Travel costs may include transportation, lodging, and meals.
No cap	Contractual Costs:

Track 2: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor or consultant services for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives are allowable subject to Sections 319, 320.1, 320.2, and 320.3 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A contractor is an entity that undertakes a contract to perform an activity. The term contractor includes consultants. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants who include contractors in their Budget must also include those contractors in the Project Team section of the application. Please note that grant recipients distributing funds to contractors must ensure that contractors follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds.
No cap	<p>Other Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives that the previous budget categories do not cover. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Other Costs” include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration fees for trainings and conferences Stipends for individual project participants who are not employed by the grant recipient. Mini grants Publication and printing costs Please note that mini grants may fit under Contractual Costs depending on an organization’s internal procedures. Grant recipients distributing funds via mini grants must ensure that mini grant recipients follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds. The CDFA may consider “Other Costs” not listed above that align with the funding purpose. Please email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov to see if a cost may be allowable in this category.
Up to 30% of direct costs*	<p>Indirect Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As defined in Section 303(a)(36) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Applicants from the University of California or California State University must follow their established policy. Please note that for projects with a non-profit fiscal sponsor, fiscal sponsorship fees may be allowable as an indirect cost, if charged consistent with the sponsored organization’s established policies. Fiscal sponsorship fees are <i>not</i> allowable as a direct cost.

Track 2: Unallowable Costs	
% of award	Description
0%	Food Procurement Costs (for school meals):

Track 2: Unallowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of California grown or produced, <i>whole</i> or <i>minimally processed</i> foods for utilization in <i>school meals</i> is unallowable.
0%	California produced fluid milk and fluid milk substitutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CDFA will not reimburse California produced fluid milk, including fluid milk substitutes, as part of Track 2. Although they are important components of a healthy diet for California’s school children and for our state economy, schools already procure these products from within the state.
0%	General CDFA unallowable costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to (1.b), (2), (3.a.iv), (6), (7), (9), (10), (13.b), (14), (17), (19), (22.b), (24), (26), and (27.a.ii) of the CDFA List of Allowable and Unallowable Items of Cost.
0%	Consumables related to food production that are not reusable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, feed for animals or water for irrigation.
0%	Any costs incurred before or after the grant term.
0%	Any costs outside of the project scope. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that prior approval from the CDFA is required for any changes to an approved project scope of work or budget once the agreement is fully executed. Failure to obtain prior written approval from the CDFA may result in disallowance of costs incurred.

[Skip to next section of RFA: 1.8 Reporting and Evaluation](#)

1.7c Allowable and Unallowable Costs – Track 3 The California Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Grant

Please note that Track 3 applicants have the flexibility to determine which of the following allowable costs they would like to incorporate into their proposed project. Track 3 projects are **not** required to utilize grant funds for California food procurement costs and/or hands-on food education costs. However, even if not utilizing grant funds for these costs, all Track 3 projects must **both**: (1) procure California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods for incorporation into meals/snacks and/or food boxes for young children; **and** (2) engage young children in hands-on food education opportunities that complement the meal program’s and/or food box program’s California food procurement efforts. All Track 3 applicants must demonstrate in the application how both (1) and (2) are components of their proposed project.

Track 3: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
No cap	CA Food Procurement Costs (for meals/snacks/food boxes and/or for student education): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For meals/snacks/food boxes: Procurement of California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods (from vendors including but not limited to producers, distributors, food hubs, Community Supported Agriculture providers, and farmers markets) for utilization in meals, (including

Track 3: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<p>the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)), snacks, and/or food boxes. Grant recipients must follow procurement and food safety regulations applicable to their programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For student education: Procurement of California grown or produced, <i>whole or minimally processed</i> foods for hands-on food education opportunities that engage young children. Activities may engage families of children as well.
No cap	<p>Hands-on Food Education Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to engage young children in hands-on food education opportunities that complement the meal program's and/or food box program's California food procurement efforts. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant recipients may use grant funds to develop <i>new</i> hands-on food education opportunities if they do not yet exist and to coordinate them with the meal program and/or food box program. • Grant recipients may engage families of young children in hands-on food education opportunities. • Consumables, ingredients, and other items for hands-on food education that are not reusable are allowable (e.g., ingredients and utensils for taste tests or lessons). Ingredients that are <i>not</i> California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed are allowable as supplies if used in a hands-on food education activity that <i>features</i> California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed foods (must demonstrate this in invoice submission). • Items for hands-on food education that are reusable are also allowable. • Refer to Sections 303(26), 324.1, and 324.2 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations for a definition of equipment and guidance regarding equipment property records and disposition. Additionally, refer to Section 330.1(c)(1) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations if equipment or infrastructure costs will benefit both grant project activities and non-grant project activities.
No cap	<p>Farm to ECE Staff/Labor Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time associated with managing and implementing the farm to ECE project. • Labor costs associated with procuring, processing, and serving California grown or produced foods for utilization in ECE meals, snacks, food boxes, and/or student education. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff costs may include a farm to ECE coordinator, garden coordinator, etc. • Staff/labor costs may include paying ECE food service workers or other project participants who are employed by the grant recipient for their time to participate in farm to ECE professional development (e.g., trainings, workshops, conferences). • Applicants should acknowledge investments in staffing/labor in the Sustainability Plan section of the application.
No cap	<p>ECE Kitchen Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE kitchen infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to support utilization of California grown or produced foods in meals, snacks, and/or food boxes.

Track 3: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: vehicles that aid in delivery/distribution of California grown or produced foods; cold storage, processing, and scratch cooking equipment to store, process, and scratch cook these foods; supplies to prepare food boxes; supplies to create and distribute farm to ECE kitchen kits to ECE providers • Refer to Sections 303(26), 324.1, and 324.2 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations for a definition of equipment and guidance regarding equipment property records and disposition. Additionally, refer to Section 330.1(c)(1) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations if equipment or infrastructure costs will benefit both grant project activities and non-grant project activities.
No cap	<p>Travel Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs for travel necessary for the performance of the grant award are allowable subject to Section 322 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations (including but not limited to: field trips to or visits from farms or other food producers that grow or produce food for the farm to ECE program, travel related to project collaboration and implementation, and travel to and from trainings that are necessary for the performance of the grant award). <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please note that reimbursement for travel within California shall not exceed the maximum allowable rates and amounts established by the California Department of Human Resources. • Travel costs may include transportation, lodging, and meals.
No cap	<p>Contractual Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor or consultant services for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives are allowable subject to Sections 319, 320.1, 320.2, and 320.3 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A contractor is an entity that undertakes a contract to perform an activity. The term contractor includes consultants. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants who include contractors in their Budget must also include those contractors in the Project Team section of the application. • Please note that grant recipients distributing funds to contractors must ensure that contractors follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds.
No cap	<p>Other Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives that the previous budget categories do not cover. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Other Costs” include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Registration fees for trainings and conferences - Stipends for individual project participants who are not employed by the grant recipient. - Mini grants - Publication and printing costs

Track 3: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that mini grants may fit under Contractual Costs depending on an organization's internal procedures. Grant recipients distributing funds via mini grants must ensure that mini grant recipients follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds. The CDFA may consider "Other Costs" not listed above that align with the funding purpose. Please email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov to see if a cost may be allowable in this category.
Up to 30% of direct costs*	<p>Indirect Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As defined in Section 303(a)(36) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Applicants from the University of California or California State University must follow their established policy. Please note that for projects with a non-profit fiscal sponsor, fiscal sponsorship fees may be allowable as an indirect cost, if charged consistent with the sponsored organization's established policies. Fiscal sponsorship fees are <i>not</i> allowable as a direct cost.

Track 3: Unallowable Costs	
% of award	Description
0%	<p>California produced fluid milk and fluid milk substitutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CDFA will not reimburse California produced fluid milk, including fluid milk substitutes, as part of Track 3. Although they are important components of a healthy diet for California's school children and for our state economy, these products are typically already procured from within the state.
0%	<p>General CDFA unallowable costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to (1.b), (2), (3.a.iv), (6), (7), (9), (10), (13.b), (14), (17), (19), (22.b), (24), (26), and (27.a.ii) of the CDFA List of Allowable and Unallowable Items of Cost.
0%	<p>Consumables related to food production that are not reusable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, feed for animals or water for irrigation.
0%	<p>Any costs incurred before or after the grant term.</p>
0%	<p>Any costs outside of the project scope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that prior approval from the CDFA is required for any changes to an approved project scope of work or budget once the agreement is fully executed. Failure to obtain prior written approval from the CDFA may result in disallowance of costs incurred.

[Skip to next section of RFA: 1.8 Reporting and Evaluation](#)

1.7d Allowable and Unallowable Costs – Track 4
The California Farm to School Producer Grant

Track 4: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
No cap	<p>Farm to School Infrastructure, Equipment, and Supplies Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase production, processing, and/or distribution capacity to sell California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed food to schools; and/or • To establish or enhance the use of climate smart agriculture practices, production systems, other regenerative strategies, and/or sustainable pest management when producing whole or minimally processed food to sell to schools; and/or • To establish new or expand existing hands-on food education opportunities for students, School Food Authority staff, and/or center-based CACFP operator staff that complement the applicant’s existing or project-related food sales to schools, such as field trips, producer visits to the cafeteria or classroom, etc. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluid Milk: Please note that while California produced fluid milk is not an allowable <i>purchase</i> in the other funding tracks, using grant funds to <i>produce</i> fluid milk for schools is an allowable cost in Track 4. • Infrastructure Examples: (this is not an exhaustive list; the CDFA will consider other items that align with the funding purpose) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greenhouses, high tunnels, fencing - Improvements to existing buildings or facilities (e.g., building retrofit, adding storage/processing space) - Electrical systems - Grading or paving of roads or driveways - Plumbing, drainage, venting - Technology improvements such as fees for providing broadband or fiber-optic systems and fees for software systems - Rental costs of real property - Capital expenditures for buildings, with prior written approval from the CDFA - Purchase of agricultural land (farmland), or monthly/annual lease payments is allowable for up to 75% of total grant funding requested and requires prior written approval by the CDFA - Other producer infrastructure to support sustainable production, processing, and/or distribution for school meals • Equipment and Supplies Examples: (this is not an exhaustive list; the CDFA will consider other items that align with the funding purpose) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeds, fruit/vegetable/herb starts or seedlings, fruit trees - Seeders, transplanters, cultivators - Conveyors for moving and handling product - Washing stations - Blanchers, peelers - Sorting and sizing bins, product bins and totes - Coolers, cooler walls, refrigeration units, and freezers

Track 4: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grading and inspection equipment - Tractors - Distribution vehicles, refrigerated vehicles, or other equipment necessary for transporting whole or minimally processed foods to school districts - Compressors - Packing, wrapping, labeling, and packaging equipment - Meat processing and packing equipment and supplies - Sanitation and food safety equipment such as water filtration systems and/or byproduct waste management and treatment systems - Pasteurizer equipment - Creamery or dairy product processing and packaging equipment - Livestock care, feeding, or slaughter equipment (NOTE: livestock to produce food products like meat, eggs, and dairy is also an allowable cost) - Seafood harvesting equipment (e.g., fishing vessels) - Aquaponics or aquaculture equipment related to processing produce or fish - Equipment that helps to maintain the identity and traceability of products - Computing equipment - Renewable energy production equipment - Other producer equipment and supplies to support sustainable production, processing, and/or distribution for school meals • Consumables, ingredients, and other items for hands-on food education that are not reusable are allowable (e.g., ingredients and utensils for taste tests or lessons). Items for hands-on food education that are reusable are also allowable. • Refer to Sections 303(26), 324.1, and 324.2 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations for a definition of equipment and guidance regarding equipment property records and disposition. Additionally, refer to Section 330.1(c)(1) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations if equipment or infrastructure costs will benefit both grant project activities and non-grant project activities.
No cap	<p>Farm to School Staff/Labor Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing/labor dedicated to farm to school activities. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: staff/labor costs to produce and/or process whole or minimally processed food for schools; aggregate and distribute whole or minimally processed food to schools; manage administration related to selling whole or minimally processed food to schools; implement hands-on food education activities that engage students from partner schools; install infrastructure or equipment that will increase production, processing, and/or distribution capacity to sell whole or minimally processed food to schools; implement climate smart agriculture practices, production systems, other regenerative strategies, or sustainable pest management when producing whole or minimally processed food to sell to schools; and/or participate in professional development (e.g., trainings, workshops, conferences) related to any of these activities

Track 4: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that staff/labor costs must be directly related to farm to school activities. Applicants should acknowledge investments in staffing/labor in the Sustainability Plan section of the application.
No cap	<p>Farm to School Certification, Licensure, Insurance, and/or Food Safety Planning Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs related to pursuing and attaining certification, licensure, or insurance that the producer needs to sell whole or minimally processed food to schools. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples: food safety certification or licensing fees, trainings related to pursuing food safety certification/licensure, organic certification fees, liability insurance policy fees Please note that utilizing grant funds to develop a food safety plan if it directly relates to the farm to school project is an allowable cost. Producer grant recipients that do not currently have a food safety plan in place must complete a Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training through Cornell University as a component of their Track 4 grant project. The training is approximately \$80. The cost of this training is an allowable cost. Costs such as incorporation fees, business license fees, and other costs related to organizing a business or similar entity are unallowable.
No cap	<p>Travel Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for travel necessary for the performance of the grant award are allowable subject to Section 322 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations (including but not limited to: visits to or field trips from partner schools, travel related to distributing whole or minimally processed food to partner schools, travel related to project collaboration and implementation, and travel to and from trainings that are necessary for the performance of the grant award). <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that reimbursement for travel within California shall not exceed the maximum allowable rates and amounts established by the California Department of Human Resources. Travel costs may include transportation, lodging, and meals.
No cap	<p>Contractual Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor or consultant services for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives are allowable subject to Sections 319, 320.1, 320.2, and 320.3 of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A contractor is an entity that undertakes a contract to perform an activity. The term contractor includes consultants. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants who include contractors in their Budget must also include those contractors in the Project Team section of the application. Please note that grant recipients distributing funds to contractors must ensure that contractors follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds.

Track 4: Allowable Costs	
% of award	Description
No cap	<p>Other Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for the purpose of achieving the grant project objectives that the previous budget categories do not cover. <p>Additional Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Other Costs” include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration fees for trainings and conferences Stipends for individual project participants who are not employed by the grant recipient. Mini grants Publication and printing costs Please note that mini grants may fit under Contractual Costs depending on an organization’s internal procedures. Grant recipients distributing funds via mini grants must ensure that mini grant recipients follow all allowable and unallowable cost parameters of this program as well as financial reporting requirements such as documenting how they used the funds. The CDFA may consider “Other Costs” not listed above that align with the funding purpose. Please email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov to see if a cost may be allowable in this category.
Up to 30% of direct costs	<p>Indirect Costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As defined in Section 303(a)(36) of the CDFA Grant Administration Regulations.

Track 4: Unallowable Costs	
% of award	Description
0%	<p>General CDFA unallowable costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to (1.b), (2), (3.a.iv), (6), (7), (9), (10), (13.b), (14), (17), (19), (22.b), (24), (26), and (27.a.ii) of the CDFA List of Allowable and Unallowable Items of Cost.
0%	<p>Consumables related to food production that are not reusable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, feed for animals or water for irrigation.
0%	<p>Any costs incurred before or after the grant term.</p>
0%	<p>Any costs outside of the project scope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that prior approval from the CDFA is required for any changes to an approved project scope of work or budget once the agreement is fully executed. Failure to obtain prior written approval from the CDFA may result in disallowance of costs incurred.

[Skip to next section of RFA: 1.8 Reporting and Evaluation](#)

1.8 Reporting and Evaluation

The CDFA will require grant recipients of the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program to complete the following reporting and evaluation components.

Beginning Interview	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The whole farm to school project team listed in the application will participate in an interview with CDFA staff between the point the project is selected for funding and the time their project begins. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the project plan, confirm roles, and provide early technical support to awarded projects.
Pre-Survey	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a pre-survey to the CDFA at the beginning of the grant term, after the grant agreement has been fully executed, to summarize and quantify pre-project farm to school activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pre-survey may request baseline metrics including but not limited to: current California food procurement practices (for Tracks 1 and 3); current hands-on food education impacts (for Tracks 1 and 3); current food sales to schools and use of climate smart agriculture practices (for Track 4); and current collaboration strategies (for Track 2).
Financial Reporting	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit monthly or quarterly invoices to the CDFA (utilizing a template that the CDFA will provide) along with documentation to demonstrate proof of payment, detailing spending to be reimbursed for actual allowable costs incurred. If eligible and approved for an Advance Payment, submit regular invoicing in accordance with Advance Payment regulations. <p>Tracks 1 and 3 ONLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the invoicing process described above, when invoicing for California grown or produced food procurement costs, the CDFA will require Track 1 and 3 grant recipients to submit a food procurement worksheet that includes a range of procurement metrics such as item name, item amount and cost, market channel, vendor name, name of farm or producer (if known), etc.
Farm-Level Data	<p>Tracks 1, 2, and 3 ONLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If applicable, grant recipients must request farm-level data and velocity reports from distributors to help track the farm-level impacts of farm to school project activities. Additionally, Track 1 and 3 grant recipients procuring California grown or produced foods with grant funds must make efforts to include farm-level data when completing the CDFA food procurement worksheets. The CDFA Farm to School Evaluation Team will provide support and additional guidance for these requests to relieve the reporting burden on grant recipients.
Quarterly Check-in Surveys	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit quarterly check-in surveys to the CDFA summarizing farm to school project progress, successes, and challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quarterly check-in surveys may request metrics including but not limited to: California food procurement practices (for Tracks 1 and 3); hands-on food education impacts (for Tracks 1 and 3); food

	sales to schools and use of climate smart agriculture practices (for Track 4); and collaboration strategies (for Track 2).
Quarterly Grantee Office Hours (optional)	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CDFA encourages grant recipients to attend at least one virtual CDFA Farm to School Grantee Office Hours session each quarter to check in with CDFA staff and engage in peer-to-peer learning with fellow grant recipients.
Final Interview	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a final interview with the CDFA after the grant term concludes to discuss project successes, challenges, and other relevant information.
Annual Procurement Check-in	<p>Tracks 1 and 3 ONLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit data to the CDFA annually regarding California food procurement practices for the duration of the grant and the following year after the end of the project term. This includes all Track 1 and 3 grant recipients, as all must incorporate California food procurement into their projects, even if they decide not to use grant funds for this procurement.
External Program Evaluation	<p>All Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in external evaluation activities for the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program. A CDFA representative or external designee will work with grant recipients to address questions and gather necessary evaluation data. Program evaluation will demonstrate the impact of the grant program and will support efforts to develop future Farm to School Grant Programs. Please note that a CDFA representative or external designee may invite applicants who do not receive a grant to participate in a working group as part of the external evaluation for the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program.

2.0 Additional Program Information

2.1 Indigenous Applicants

Please note the following and reach out to cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov with any questions:

- The California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program will set aside up to 10% of all available grant funding for awards for Tribal governments and Tribal-based non-profit organizations.
- The CDFA encourages applications from eligible entities in Tribal communities with projects related to forest-to-school, river-to-school, and/or ocean-to school and projects that work with youth in schools to revitalize Indigenous intergenerational learning processes around traditional foodways and traditional ecological knowledges to support food security and food sovereignty for future generations.
- The CDFA encourages applications from eligible California food producers who use Indigenous food production practices.
- Please also see the funding priorities described in the [Purpose](#).

- For the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program, the maximum indirect cost rate is up to 30% of direct costs.

2.2 Previous Grant Recipients

If an entity previously received a grant award and entered into a grant agreement with the CDFA through the 2021 or 2022 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program (view the list of [2021 grant recipients](#) and [2022 grant recipients](#)), please note the following:

- **Eligibility:** If the entity meets the eligibility criteria (see [Eligibility and Exclusions](#)), then it is eligible to apply. Please note that the CDFA will consider past performance in the grant program when reviewing applications. Previous grant recipients must be up-to-date with all grant reporting requirements to be eligible for consideration. Additionally, applicants must clearly describe how the proposed project will *supplement* (i.e., enhance or expand) but not *replace* the existing project and how the additional grant funding will ensure project sustainability after the grant terms end. The proposed project budget must reflect how the 2023-24 grant funds would *supplement* but not *replace* the previous/existing grant funds.
 - **Supplement:** May apply to continue funding the same project activities after completing the previous project, begin funding new project activities that build upon existing project activities, and/or use funding to add new elements to existing project activities.
 - **Replace:** May *not* apply to fund the same project activities that the 2021 or 2022 award is already funding during the overlapping grant time period (i.e., no double dipping).
 - View the Previous Grant Recipients Decision Tree [to be released in final RFA] for further clarification around “supplement but not replace.”
- **Grant Term:** If the entity also receives a grant award in 2023-24, they may choose to do either or both of the following options and should make their choice clear when completing the project timeline portion of the application:
 - **Overlap Spending:** Spend grant funds from the multiple awards *simultaneously*, during the time when the grant terms overlap, given that the organization is able to account for and report on both grant awards simultaneously and ensure that there is clear delineation between and non-duplication of the use of funds for each project; **and/or**
 - **Stagger Spending:** Spend grant funds from the 2023-24 award *after* spending all previous grant funds and completing the previous project(s), with the understanding that the grant term for the 2023-24 award will still end on the same date as those who overlap spending.

Please note that all grant recipients must complete their project and spend their grant funds by the end of the grant term stated in their grant agreement.

3.0 Application, Review, and Notification

3.1 How to Apply

The CDFA will not accept late applications. Grant applicants must complete and submit applications electronically via the online AmpliFund grant application portal. Applicants must create a user account in AmpliFund to apply.

Access the 2023-24 AmpliFund grant application portal for this program below:

- Link to be released in final RFA

The AmpliFund grant application portal utilizes a question-and-answer format. Applicants must answer all required application questions. Bullet points are acceptable. Applicants must also submit any required documents and letters of support via the AmpliFund grant application portal. The CDFA will only consider submitted applications if applicants have responded to all required application questions and submitted all required documents and letters of support.

Computer System Recommendations:

To ensure proposals are submitted successfully, the CDFA strongly encourages all applicants to comply with the computer system recommendations provided by AmpliFund. The CDFA cannot guarantee that the AmpliFund system will be compatible with other browsers or operating systems. Use of other browsers or operating systems may limit the ability of CDFA staff to provide applicants with technical assistance, should any issues arise. AmpliFund recommends that applicants:

- Use Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari
- Avoid using an iPad, iPhone, or similar mobile device
- Save work often; the system will time out after a period of time and any unsaved work will be lost

For questions about the AmpliFund system, please contact the Office of Farm to Fork via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov.

3.2 Grant Application and Review Criteria

The application process for each funding track consists of one application phase. There is a separate set of application questions and review criteria for each track.

- [Skip to Track 1: The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 2: The California Farm to School Technical Assistance \(TA\) Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 3: The California Farm to Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Grant](#)
- [Skip to Track 4: The California Farm to School Producer Grant](#)

3.2a Grant Application and Review Criteria – Track 1

The California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant (120 points available total)

Applicants to Track 1 must complete an application containing the following components. Applicants may use the table below as an application checklist. The technical review committee will score each Track 1 application as outlined below. View the detailed application questions

and review criteria for Track 1 on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Website](#).

Track 1 – Application Sections	Points Available
Foundational Information	No points available
Funding Formula + Dollar Amount Requested	No points available
Project Team	No points available
Project Team + Organizational Commitment	15 points
Community Need	35 points
Project Title + Summary	No points available
Procurement Work Plan + Budget	30 points
Education Work Plan + Budget	30 points
Project Viability (Additional Budget/Sustainability)	10 points
Additional Applicant Information	No points available
Total	120 points

[Skip to next section of RFA: 3.3 Review Process](#)

3.2b Grant Application and Review Criteria – Track 2 The California Farm to School Technical Assistance (TA) Grant (100 points available total)

Applicants to Track 2 must complete an application containing the following components. Applicants may use the table below as an application checklist. The technical review committee will score each Track 2 application as outlined below. View the detailed application questions and review criteria for Track 2 on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Website](#).

Track 2 – Application Sections	Points Available
Foundational Information	No points available
Dollar Amount Requested	No points available
Audience	No points available
Project Team + Letters of Support	No points available
Project Team + Organizational Commitment	15 points
Community Need	25 points
Farm to School Experience	15 points
Project Title + Summary	No points available
Technical Assistance Work Plan	35 points
Project Viability (Budget/Sustainability)	10 points
Additional Applicant Information	No points available
Total	100 points

[Skip to next section of RFA: 3.3 Review Process](#)

3.2c Grant Application and Review Criteria – Track 3
The California Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Grant
(110 points available total)

Applicants to Track 3 must complete an application containing the following components. Applicants may use the table below as an application checklist. The technical review committee will score each Track 3 application as outlined below. View the detailed application questions and review criteria for Track 3 on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Website](#).

Track 3 – Application Sections	Points Available
Foundational Information	No points available
Dollar Amount Requested	No points available
Project Team + Letters of Support	No points available
Project Team + Organizational Commitment	15 points
Community Need	25 points
Project Title + Summary	No points available
Procurement Work Plan + Budget	30 points
Education Work Plan + Budget	30 points
Project Viability (Additional Budget/Sustainability)	10 points
Additional Applicant Information	No points available
Total	110 points

[Skip to next section of RFA: 3.3 Review Process](#)

3.2d Grant Application and Review Criteria – Track 4
The California Farm to School Producer Grant
(95 points available total)

Applicants to Track 4 must complete an application containing the following components. Applicants may use the table below as an application checklist. The technical review committee will score each Track 4 application as outlined below. View the detailed application questions and review criteria for Track 4 on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Website](#).

Track 4 – Application Sections	Points Available
Foundational Information	20 points
Dollar Amount Requested	No points available
Project Team + Letters of Intent	No points available
Project Team + Organizational Commitment	15 points
Business History + Farm to School History	10 points
Project Title + Summary	No points available
Farm to School Work Plan	15 points
Production Practices and/or Aggregation/Distribution Practices	25 points
Project Viability (Budget/Sustainability)	10 points

Additional Applicant Information	No points available
Total	95 points

3.3 Review Process

The CDFA will conduct an initial administrative review of applications to determine if they meet all eligibility and application requirements. During the administrative review, the following may result in disqualification of a grant application:

- Absence of a response to one or more required questions or an incomplete response to one or more required questions (view the detailed application questions and review criteria for each funding track on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Website](#))
- Missing, blank, or unreadable content
- Requests for more than the maximum award amount for the applicable funding track
- Applications that do not comply with the eligibility requirements for the applicable funding track, outlined in [Eligibility and Exclusions](#)
- Applications that do not comply with the allowable and unallowable costs for the applicable funding track, outlined in [Allowable and Unallowable Costs](#)
- Misrepresentations in the application
- The entity does not agree to do all of the required reporting and evaluation activities for the applicable funding track if awarded a grant (see [Reporting and Evaluation](#))
- The entity applied to multiple funding tracks
- The entity previously received a grant award through this grant program and their past performance is not acceptable and/or they are not up-to-date with all grant reporting requirements.
 - Please note that the CDFA understands that the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors beyond grant recipients' control may present challenges for project implementation and cause project delays.
- The entity previously received a grant award through this grant program and the proposed 2023-24 project *replaces* rather than *supplements* their existing project

Applicants who receive a notice of disqualification from the CDFA as a result of the initial administrative review may appeal the disqualification (see [Appeal Rights](#)).

Applications that pass the initial administrative review will receive an interagency technical review to evaluate the merits of the application. The interagency technical review will utilize the review criteria on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Website](#).

The CDFA reserves the right to ask applicants clarifying questions about their applications.

The CDFA reserves the right to utilize both technical review scores and alignment with program goals to determine awards.

3.4 Call for Interagency Technical Reviewers

The interagency technical review committee for the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator

Grant Program will consist of individuals from California state agencies who have expertise related to the funding track(s) they review. Individuals who are interested in participating in the interagency technical review process as a technical reviewer should email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov. Please note that applicants to the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program may **not** participate in the technical review process.

3.5 Notification and Feedback

The CDFA will notify all applicants via email regarding the status of their grant applications.

- **Grant Applications Due:** Estimated March 2024
- **Review Process:** Estimated Spring 2024
- **Award Notification and Announcement:** Date to be released in final RFA

Non-selected applicants may request feedback from the CDFA to identify the strengths and weaknesses of submitted applications. This information may be useful when preparing future grant proposals. The CDFA reserves the right to provide this feedback orally or in written format. Please note that in order to receive feedback, non-selected applicants must request feedback within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a notification about their grant application status from the CDFA. The CDFA will provide additional information about feedback requests to non-selected applicants in the grant notification email.

3.6 Appeal rights

Any discretionary action taken by the Office of Farm to Fork may be appealed to the CDFA Office of Hearings and Appeals within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a notice of disqualification from the CDFA. The appeal must be in writing and signed by the responsible party named on the grant application or his/her authorized agent. It must state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting documents and a copy of the Office of Farm to Fork decision being challenged. The submission must be sent to the California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Hearings and Appeals, 1220 N Street, Suite 315, Sacramento, CA 95814 or emailed to CDFA.LegalOffice@cdfa.ca.gov. If submissions are not received within the time frame provided above, the appeal will be denied.

4.0 Assistance and Questions

Questions

The CDFA cannot assist in the preparation of grant applications; however, for general assistance and questions related to the Farm to School Incubator Grant Program process, please contact the CDFA Office of Farm to Fork via email at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov.

The CDFA Office of Farm to Fork will anonymize and summarize the questions and answers online on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program website](#) so that all potential applicants may benefit from submitted questions and answers. To ensure a response from the CDFA, please submit questions according to the timeline below. The CDFA will post answers online according to the same timeline.

Submit questions by:	CDFA will provide answers by:
Dates to be released in final RFA	Dates to be released in final RFA

Q&A Zoom Sessions

During the application period, the CDFA Office of Farm to Fork will conduct a series of Q&A Zoom Sessions about the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Request for Applications. Each session will include an overview of the grant program and time for questions and answers. They will occur on the following dates via Zoom. To register for each webinar, please follow the Zoom registration links below. The CDFA Office of Farm to Fork will record each webinar and post the recording on [the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program website](#).

When	Where	Registration Link
Dates to be released in final RFA	Zoom	To be released in final RFA

5.0 CA Public Records Act

CA Public Records Act:

All grant applications and project information submitted by farm to school grant applicants and/or grant recipients to the CDFA is subject to public disclosure. The California Public Records Act states that every citizen has the right to inspect and/or obtain a copy of any public record [Government Code section 7920.000 et seq.]. The CDFA Legal Office shall determine if the public record requested is exempt from disclosure. Public records must be disclosed unless exempt under the Government Code or other applicable law.

CDFA Privacy Policy:

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/privacy.html>

6.0 Other Grant Opportunities

For a comprehensive list of CDFA grant programs, please visit <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants/>. For a complete list of California grant and loan programs, please visit the State Library's California Grants Portal: <https://www.grants.ca.gov/>.

Other CDFA grant programs include:

[Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training Program](#)

This program will help support and improve new or existing beginning farmer training programs and agricultural apprenticeship programs, strengthen networks, and develop strategies to overcome barriers, including but not limited to education and training programs, land access, capital and equipment for production and marketing of crops with a focus on prioritizing direct assistance to historically underserved groups to ensure the transition to farm ownership is successful.

[Biologically Integrated Farming Systems Program](#)

The Biologically Integrated Farming Systems (BIFS) grant program is designed to provide outreach of innovative, biologically integrated plant-based farming systems that reduce chemical pesticide inputs.

California Agriculture License Plates

A competitive solicitation process awards CalAgPlate grant program funds that promote agricultural education and leadership activities for students at K-12, post-secondary, and adult education levels.

California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP)

The California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) encourages the purchase and consumption of healthy, California-grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and nuts by nutrition benefit clients. Housed within the Office of Farm to Fork, the program provides monetary incentives for the purchase of California grown fruits and vegetables at Certified Farmers Markets and small businesses. CNIP provides competitive grant funding to organizations to provide incentives to nutrition benefit shoppers, support program operations and outreach.

Community Food Hub Grant Program

CDFA's Farm to Community Food Hub Program will provide planning and implementation grants to mission driven food hubs throughout the state of California.

Fertilizer Research and Education Program

The Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP) funds and facilitates research and outreach to advance the environmentally safe and agronomically sound use and handling of fertilizing materials. FREP serves growers, agricultural supply and service professionals, extension personnel, public agencies, consultants, and other interested parties.

Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program (HRGP)

Through this program, CDFA funds energy efficient-refrigeration units in corner stores, small businesses and food donation programs in low-income or low-access areas throughout the state to stock California-grown fresh produce, nuts and minimally processed foods. The purpose of the program is to improve access to healthy food choices for underserved communities, while supporting small businesses and promoting CA-grown agriculture.

Proactive Integrated Pest Management Solutions Program

The Proactive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Solutions grant program is designed to anticipate which exotic pests are likely to arrive in California and to identify and test IPM strategies that can be rapidly implemented if the pests become established in California.

Safe Animal Feed Education Program (SAFE)

The Safe Animal Feed Education (SAFE) program of California uses outreach, education, and a comprehensive Voluntary Quality Assurance program to lead the nation in ensuring a safe and wholesome supply of commercial feed.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Each year, CDFA conducts a two-phase competitive solicitation process to award funds to projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Specialty crops include fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).

Specialty Crop Multi-State Program

This program is offered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. The SCMP competitively funds projects to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through collaborative,

multi-state projects that address regional or national-level specialty crop issues, including food safety, plant pests and disease, research, crop-specific projects addressing common issues, and marketing and promotion.

Urban Agriculture Grant Program

CDFA's Urban Agriculture grant will help urban farmers and community-based organizations by 1) funding urban food system infrastructure (land access, capital equipment purchases, facilities, etc.); 2) supporting jobs, internships, and professional development opportunities, ensuring youth from all backgrounds have access to paid positions developing urban food systems; and 3) backing experienced technical assistance providers to mentor, train, and support urban farmers and community-based organizations.

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