



Cohort 4 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program Scoring Criteria – Track 3

Track 3: The California Farm to School Producer and Food Hub Grant

All questions require responses to be considered a complete application and to move on to technical review. The review criteria outlined below addresses scored questions the technical review committee will use when reviewing Track 3 applications. The review criteria also address questions that are not scored but do require specific responses for the application to move on to technical review.

A note about interviews: The CDFA Farm to School Team may hold virtual interviews with applicants of all tracks during the application review period if requested. Reviewers may request interviews with any or all application team members. Interviews will be used to clarify application question responses and will be considered in the scoring of the application questions addressed during the interview.

Section 1: Foundational Information

Not Scored

Section 2: Proposed Project (50 points)

- Q23i Letter(s) of Intent
 - *Eligibility: All producer applicants must include at least one project partner and food hub applicants must include at least three project partners from the eligible list. All sections of the letter of intent must be filled out. If these requirements are not met, then the application is ineligible.*
- Q25 Sustainability Plan: Provide a plan for sustaining the outcomes of this project after grant funding ends. Please include:
 - What are the expected school sales after the grant term ends and how do you plan to retain your relationships with schools?
 - If proposed, how will new infrastructure and equipment generate revenue or reduce costs?
 - If proposed, how will grant-funded educational initiatives be sustained beyond the duration of the grant project? If your application does not include educational initiatives, please put N/A

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- If proposed, how will grant-funded labor be sustained beyond the duration of the grant project? If your application does not include grant-funded labor, please put N/A
- What approaches or alternative markets would you consider that could provide financial stability with unexpected decreases in school demands?
- *Applicant's description of how they will sustain the outcomes of this project after grant funding ends on a scale of 0-10. 10 point responses answer all sub-questions fully, provide a clear layout of their plan to sustain their work, and provide a thoughtful and realistic response. 0 point responses are responses that do not answer the question in full.*
- Q26 Project Workplan: CDFA will review your attached project workplan using Cohort 4 Track 3 Farm to School Incubator Grant application review criteria
 - *Applicant's description of how workplan activities and tasks will achieve project goals on a scale of 0-20 points. 20 point responses address all required performance measures, provides a workplan that is complete, accurately addresses the goals chosen, is specific, achievable, and clear. 0 point responses do not address all required performance measures.*
- Q27 Project Budget: CDFA will review your attached project budget using Cohort 4 Track 3 Farm to School Incubator Grant application review criteria
 - *Applicant's identification and description of each proposed project cost on a scale of 0-20. 20 point responses fill out all sections of the budget line items and budget narrative completely, provides an overall budget that can reasonably achieve workplan activities, is specific, is achievable and is clear. 0 point responses do not provide a budget that can reasonably achieve workplan activities.*

Section 3: Producer Applicant Organizational Information (50 Points)

- Q28 Business History:
 - a. Describe your history farming / producing food.
 - b. Do you have a bookkeeping system (double entry of financial transactions)? If no, please include a bookkeeping budget in the project proposal.
 - c. *Applicant's description of their history on a scale of 0-15. 15 point responses answer both subquestions, clearly describe and demonstrate long standing and significant experience farming/producing food, and demonstrate experience with a bookkeeping system, inspiring confidence in their business capabilities. 0 point responses do not answer the question in full or do not demonstrate meaningful business experience.*
- Q29 Farm to School History: Please describe your operation's history establishing and maintaining farm to school relationships and your ability to reliably supply school food buyers.
 - a. *Applicant's description of their history establishing and maintaining farm to school relationships on a scale of 0-15. 15 point responses clearly describe*

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the organization's to form trusted partnerships, inspiring confidence in their farm to school related capabilities. 0 point responses do not answer the question in full.

- Q30 Types of food produced: If you are applying as a producer, what type(s) of food do you produce at your operation? Please check all that apply.
 - a. *Eligibility: If the applicant checked option "n", they do not currently produce food, the applicant is not eligible to apply*
- Q32 Farm to School Readiness Verification
 - a. *Eligibility: All applicants must attach all required verification documents to be eligible for this grant.*
 - b. Q32v GAP Certification or Food Safety Training Certification of Attendance
 - *5 points: Applicant's proof of GAP Certification and/or Food Safety Training Certification. GAP certificate must be current for the program year. GAP certificate alternates include status update on certification process including Farmer's Group Affidavit, Fresh Systems Letter of Good Standing, or memo detailing certification status. Food Safety Certifications must be from an approved program (PSA, LSFC, IFAI)*
 - *0 points: No proof of GAP Certification and/or Food Safety Training Certification*
- Q33 Visualization: Please upload up to 5 photos, diagrams, crop plans, etc. of your production and/or storage space that will highlight your ability to implement the project. If your project includes renovations, please include photos of current status of this infrastructure. For example, if project proposes to renovate a wash and pack station, please include photos of the current wash and pack station. Please attach a document describing each photo.
 - a. *Eligibility: All applicants must attach all required visualization photos and associated document to be eligible for this grant.*
- Q34 Current Climate Smart Agriculture Practices: Within the past 12 months at your operation, have you utilized: climate smart agriculture practices, climate smart agriculture production systems – like certified organic or transitioning to certified organic, or 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? If yes, please describe
 - a. *Climate smart practice use on a scale of 0-5. 5 point responses respond "yes" and include detailed description(s) of one or more climate smart agriculture practice. 0 point responses respond "no" or respond "yes" but do not describe climate smart agriculture practices.*
- Q35 Climate Smart Agriculture Practice Verification: Please respond "Yes" to all that apply and, if applicable, provide the requested documentation. Please note that only one "Yes" that the CDFA can verify is needed to receive points for this verification section. If you prefer not to answer, please check, "Prefer not to answer." NOTE: Please do not include any confidential information, such as social security number, on any of the documentation uploaded with your application.

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- a. Is your operation currently registered as organic with the CDFA or currently certified organic? If yes, the CDFA will verify organic registration through the State Organic Program and will verify organic certification through the USDA Organic Integrity Database.
- b. Is your operation currently participating in a transitional organic program? If yes – please upload documentation to demonstrate this from your organic certifier.
- c. Has your operation participated in the CDFA Healthy Soils Program (HSP), CDFA Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP), CDFA Dairy Digester Research and Development Program (DDRDP), and/or CDFA State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEET)? If yes – the CDFA will verify this through the Office of Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability (OARS).
- d. Has your operation participated in the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG), and/or NRCS Conservation Incentives Contract (CIC)? If yes – please upload documentation of your contract with NRCS for any one of these programs.
- e. Within the past 12 months, has your operation received conservation technical assistance (CTA) from a CTA provider (including but not limited to a UC Cooperative Extension, Resource Conservation District, NRCS office, or other CTA provider) to implement climate smart agriculture practices, climate smart agriculture production systems– like certified organic or transitioning to certified organic, or other regenerative strategies? If yes – please upload a signed letter, stamped letter, or your intake form from your CTA provider to demonstrate the relationship.
- f. *5 points: applicant provides verification of one of the above practices*
- g. *0 points: applicant does not provide verification for one of the above practices*
- Q36 Funding Priority: What was your operation’s average annual gross cash farm income during the previous three-year period?
 - *5 points: Less than \$350,000*
 - *4 points: \$350,000 to 999,999*
 - *3 points: \$1 million to \$1,999,999*
 - *2 points: \$2 million to \$4,999,999*
 - *0 points: More than \$5 million*
 - *0 points: Prefer not to answer*

Section 4: Food Hub Applicant Organizational Information (50 Points)

1. Q38 Business History (20 Points): Describe your organizational history as a food hub, such as when your food hub operation started, what objectives or values guide your operation, and what type of producers you serve

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- a. Applicant's description of their business history on a scale of 0-20. 20 point responses clearly describe and demonstrate long standing and significant experience as a values-aligned food hub, inspiring confidence in their business capabilities. 0 point responses do not answer the question in full or do not demonstrate meaningful business experience.*
2. Q39 Farm to School History (15 Points): Please describe your operation's history establishing and maintaining farm to school relationships and your ability to reliably supply school food buyers. For example, describe your experience coordinating sales between multiple producers and schools, existing school customers, your ability to manage substitutions and your track record of increasing CA grown products in school meals. If you implement farm to school education, please include a description in your response.
 - a. Applicant's description of their history establishing and maintaining farm to school relationships on a scale of 0-15. 15 point responses clearly describe the organization's history of farm to school programming and of reliably supplying school food buyers, inspiring confidence in their farm to school related capabilities. 0 point responses do not answer the question in full.*
3. Q40 Farm to School Readiness Verification
 - a. Eligibility: All applicants must attach all required verification documents to be eligible for this grant.*
4. Q41 Types of food aggregated/distributed: If you are applying as a food hub, what type(s) of food do you aggregate and distribute? Please check all that apply.
 - a. Eligibility: If the applicant checked option "n" or "o", that they do not currently aggregate and distribute source identified food OR that they aggregate and distribute foods that they are not able to source identify, then the applicant is not eligible to apply*
5. Q42 Visualization: Please upload up to 5 photos, diagrams, plans, etc. Of your aggregation space and distribution vehicle(s) that highlight your ability to implement the project. If your project includes renovations or upgrades, please include photos of current status of the infrastructure/equipment. For example: if project proposes to add a lift gate for an existing truck, please include a photo of the current truck without the lift gate. Please attach a document describing each photo.
 - a. Eligibility: All applicants must attach all required visualization photos and associated document to be eligible for this grant.*
6. Q43 Current Climate Smart Agriculture Practices: Complete and upload the Food Hub Producer Sourcing Network Document
 - a. Eligibility: at least ten producers must be included in the table and must be aware they are included and have agreed to participate to be eligible to apply*
 - b. 10 points total:*
 - *5 points: At least five of the included producers use one or more climate smart agriculture practices and/or are certified organic*
 - *5 points: At least five of the included producers are small or midsize producers*

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- *0 points: none of the included producers utilize climate smart agriculture practices or are small to midsize producers*
7. Q44 Funding Priority: How many employees do you have?
- a. *5 Points: Less than 50 employees*
 - b. *0 Points: 50 employees or more*

Section 5: Additional Applicant Information

Not Scored