

2022 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program

Application Questions and Review Criteria – Track 4

Track 4: The California Farm to School Producer Grant (55 points available total)

The following is a preview of Track 4 application questions intended to provide potential applicants with an idea of what to expect; questions in the online application may slightly differ. Applicants may use the questions below to draft application responses before filling out the online application, but please note that all applicants must submit their responses through the online application portal.

The review criteria outlined below is what the external technical review committee will use when reviewing Track 4 applications.

Eligibility: no points available	
Application Questions	Review Criteria
 (1) Track 4 Eligibility: Please respond to the questions below to determine if you are eligible to apply to this track. (a) Are you a food producer in California? (i.e., a person, group of individuals, non-profit organization, or Tribal government entity 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, OR a California seafood harvester). If yes – which of the following best describes your operation? Please check all that apply. I am applying as one person I am applying as a group of individuals I am applying as a non-profit organization 	 Track 4 Eligibility: Eligible? Yes/No Applicant must answer yes to questions 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d to be eligible to apply. Funding Sources: Complete? Yes/No Applicant must respond to questions 2a and 2b for the CDFA to consider the application complete.

Application Questions	Review Criteria
- I am applying as a Tribal government entity	
 I am applying as a seafood harvester 	
(b) Are your operation, physical business address, and	
business mailing address located in California and	
do the owner(s)/leader(s) of your operation live in	
California?	
(c) Do you have an established relationship with at	
least one school nutrition services department?	
 (d) Do you want to increase production, processing, and/or distribution of whole or minimally processed 	
foods for the school food market and/or provide	
hands-on educational opportunities for youth that	
complement your food sales or donations to	
schools?	
If yes to all four, then you are eligible to apply to Track	
4!	
(2) Funding Sources:	
(a) Previous California Farm to School Incubator	
Grant Program project: Has your organization	
previously received a California Farm to School	
Incubator Grant? View the list of 2021 grant	
recipients. If yes – please provide the CDFA agreement number and describe how the proposed	
project supplements rather than replaces efforts	
funded by the 2021 grant as well as how additional	
grant funding will ensure project sustainability after	
the 2021 and 2022 grant terms end.	
(b) Support from other federal or state grant	
programs: Activities funded under the California	
Farm to School Incubator Grant Program cannot	
replace activities funded by another federal or state	
grant program. Have you submitted your project	
proposal to another federal or state grant program	

Application Questions	Review Criteria
or has another federal or state grant program funded your project proposal? If yes, please: - Identify the federal or state grant program(s) and the agency administering the program(s). - List the amount of grant funds requested or awarded by the program(s). - Describe how the proposed project supplements	
rather than replaces efforts funded by the other federal or state grant program(s).	

Project Title and Summary: no points available	
Application Questions	Review Criteria
(3) Project Title: Please provide the title of your proposed project.	 Project Title and Summary: Complete? Yes/No Applicant must respond to questions 3 and 4 for the CDFA to consider the application complete.
(4) Project Summary: Please provide a brief summary (2 to 5 sentences) of your proposed project, beginning with "[Business/Organization Name] will" [Word Limit = 50]	

Total Dollar Amount Requested: no points available	
Application Questions	Review Criteria
(5) Total Dollar Amount Requested: Please note that Track 4 applicants may request between \$5,000 and \$150,000.	Total Dollar Amount Requested: Complete? Yes/No Applicant must request within the applicable award range for the CDFA to consider the application complete.

Business/Organization Background: no points available	
Application Questions	Review Criteria
(6) Business/Organization Background:	Business/Organization Background: Complete? Yes/No

- (a) Legal business name: Please enter the legal business name of the organization, farm, or other entity that will serve as lead for the project and will receive grant funds if awarded. This name should match the name on the tax return that you file with the federal Internal Revenue Service for your operation. NOTE: The name you provide is the entity to which the CDFA will extend a grant agreement if your project receives a grant award.
- (b) **Contact information:** Please enter the contact information (name, position title, email address, and phone number) for the following three contacts. NOTE: Some or all of these contacts may be the same person.
 - Person Writing the Grant Application: that's you!
 - Main Contact for Grant Application: the person the CDFA should contact with any questions about the application and with notification about the application status
 - Grant Agreement Signing Authority: the person who would sign a grant agreement if your project receives a grant award
- (c) Tax identification number: What is your operation's unique nine-digit tax identification number? If your operation does not have a unique tax identification number, please provide the last four digits of your social security number (e.g., XXX-XX-1234) as your unique business identification number. NOTE: Applicants are limited to one Track 4 grant application per unique tax/business identification number.
- (d) **Address:** What is the business mailing address of your operation? What is the physical business address of your operation (if different from your mailing address)?
- (e) California-based: Do the owner(s)/leader(s) of your operation live in California?

Review Criteria

- Applicant must respond to each question in this section for the CDFA to consider the application complete.
 Please note that these responses will not receive scores.
- To be eligible to apply, applicant's operation (where the proposed project will take place), physical business address, and business mailing address must be located in California and the owner(s)/leader(s) of the operation must be California residents.
- NOTE: The CDFA will consider county location when making award determinations to distribute grant awards geographically across California to the extent possible.

Application Questions	Review Criteria
- Dairy	
- Whole grains	
 Foraged or wild-harvested food 	
 We do not yet produce food 	
- Other (please specify)	
(k) Current market(s) for food sales/donations: Where	
do you currently sell or donate the food you produce?	
Please check all that apply.	
- Via a farm stand	
- At farmers markets	
 Via community supported agriculture (CSA) 	
- Directly to one or more restaurants	
 Directly to one or more school districts 	
 To one or more distributors or wholesalers 	
- To one or more food hubs	
 We do not yet sell or donate food 	
- Other (please specify)	

Relationships with School Nutrition Services Departments: 5 points available	
Application Questions	Review Criteria
 (7) Partners (at least one required): To be eligible to apply to this funding track, applicants must intend to sell or donate California grown or produced, whole or minimally processed food to any one or more of the following entities in California and/or intend to implement hands-on educational opportunities for youth (that complement the applicant's food sales/donations to schools) in partnership with any one or more of the following entities in California: Public school district that is a School Food Authority (SFA) and operates the National School Lunch Program, Seamless Summer Option, and/or School Breakfast Program 	 Partners:/5 points Applicant must respond to question 7a and name at least one eligible public school district, county office of education, directly funded charter school, and/or center-based program for children for the CDFA to consider the application complete. 5 points: In question 7b, applicant clearly describes their relationship with each entity named in question 7a and demonstrates a strong partnership or a clear potential for building a strong partnership with at least one of these entities. 3 point: In question 7b, applicant somewhat clearly describes their relationship with each entity named in

- County office of education that is a School Food Authority (SFA) and operates any of the above programs
- Directly funded charter school that is a School Food Authority (SFA) and operates any of the above programs
- Center-based program for children participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
- (a) Please name each public school district, county office of education, directly funded charter school, and/or center-based program for children with which you are partnering through this project (at least one required).
- (b) Please briefly describe your relationship and history building a partnership with each partner named in question 7a. If you have previously sold/donated food to them and/or implemented educational opportunities for youth together in the past, please include a description of that collaboration in your response. [Word Limit = 300]
- (8) Established relationship(s) with at least one school nutrition services department: Please upload at least one letter of intent from a school nutrition services director (or equivalent district-wide/organization-wide decision-maker who oversees and coordinates the school meal program) at any of the entities you named in question 7a above with which you intend to collaborate, indicating a "good faith" intention either to purchase/accept your whole or minimally processed food for school meals and/or to collaborate with you to implement hands-on educational opportunities for youth that complement your food sales/donations to their organization. Please use the letter of intent template provided in the online application portal and on the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program website. NOTE: Only one letter of intent is

Review Criteria

- question 7a and demonstrates a somewhat strong partnership or some potential for building a strong partnership with at least one of these entities.
- 0 points: In question 7b, applicant does not describe their relationship with each entity named in question 7a OR applicant unclearly demonstrates a partnership or potential for building a strong partnership.

Established relationship(s) with at least one school nutrition services department: Complete? Yes/No

 Applicant must submit a complete letter of intent with all required information from at least one school nutrition services director (or equivalent districtwide/organization-wide decision-maker who oversees and coordinates the school meal program) at any of the entities named in question 7a.

Application Questions	Review Criteria
required, but you may upload up to five total letters of	
intent if desired.	
TOTAL	/5 points

Description of Food Production History and Farm to School Vision: 2 points available	
Application Questions	Review Criteria
(9) Food Production History: Please briefly describe your history with food production. [Word Limit = 200]	 Food Production History: Complete? Yes/No Applicants must respond for the CDFA to consider the application complete.
(10) Farm to School Vision: Please briefly describe your vision for your business/organization regarding farm to school. [Word Limit = 200]	 NOTE: The CDFA will prioritize applicants who demonstrate an ability to produce food for schools. Farm to School Vision:/2 points 2 points: Applicant clearly describes their vision for their business/organization regarding farm to school. 1 point: Applicant somewhat clearly describes their vision for the business/organization regarding farm to school. 0 points: Applicant provides an unclear description of their farm to school vision.
TOTAL	/2 points

Application Questions	Review Criteria
(11) Making the Case: Please describe why this project is	Making the Case:/3 points
important. Are there any needs, gaps, or challenges your business/organization and/or community has experienced that this grant will help address? [Word Limit = 200]	 3 points: Applicant clearly makes the case for why the project is important and describes significant needs, gaps, or challenges, clearly demonstrating that each is significant. Needs, gaps, or challenges may include but
(12) Project Narrative: Please tell us about your proposed	are not limited to: food insecurity rate, obesity rate,
project. If your project includes plans to increase your	natural disasters such as wildfires, impacts of the
production, processing, and/or distribution of whole or	COVID-19 pandemic, CalEnviroScreen 4.0 percentile,

minimally processed foods for the school food market, please describe these plans. If your project includes plans to provide hands-on educational opportunities for youth, please describe these plans and how these educational opportunities for youth complement your food sales or donations to schools. [Word Limit = 750]

(13) **Timeline:** Please list your project activities and when you plan to implement them. Please include your estimated time frame for implementing food sales/donations to schools and/or hands-on educational opportunities for vouth in partnership with schools. NOTE: Actual implementation of food sales/donations and/or educational opportunities does not need to occur during the grant term as long as all spending of grant funds occurs during the grant term.

Review Criteria

- Healthy Places Index, historical and/or systemic injustices, limited resources, etc.
- 2 points: Applicant somewhat clearly makes the case for why the project is important and describes community needs, gaps, or challenges, somewhat clearly demonstrating that each is significant.
- **0 points:** Applicant unclearly makes the case and/or unclearly describes community needs, gaps, or challenges.

Project Narrative: /10 points

- 10 points: Applicant clearly describes a feasible project that will increase production, processing, and/or distribution of whole or minimally processed foods for the school food market and/or that will provide hands-on educational opportunities for youth that complement the applicant's food sales/donations to schools.
- 5 points: Applicant somewhat clearly describes a feasible project that will somewhat clearly do one or both of the above.
- **0 points:** Applicant provides an unclear and/or unfeasible description OR applicant describes a project that will do none of the above.

Timeline: /2 points

- 2 points: Applicant clearly lists their project activities and when they plan to implement them, including an estimated time frame for implementing food sales/donations to schools and/or hands-on educational opportunities for youth. All information clearly aligns with the Project Narrative.
- 1 point: Applicant somewhat clearly lists their project activities and when they plan to implement them, including an estimated time frame for implementing food sales/donations to schools and/or hands-on educational

Application Questions	Review Criteria
	 opportunities for youth. All information somewhat clearly aligns with the Project Narrative. 0 points: Applicant unclearly lists their project activities OR the information does not align with the Project Narrative.
TOTAL	/15 points

Application Questions	
(14) Funding Priority: engage students from underserved	
communities: Applicants do not need to enter any	
information for this question. For this question, the CDFA	
will use <u>ed-data.org</u> to look up the Unduplicated Pupil	
Count of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals,	
English Learners & Foster Youth in the eligible public	
school district(s), county office(s) of education, directly	
funded charter school(s), and/or center-based program(s)	
for children that you named in question 7a above. NOTE:	
The CDFA will look at county-wide data for center-based	

Healthy, Equitable, Resilient Food System: 25 points available

(15) Funding Priority: priority populations: Are any of the schools that your project will serve (see question 7a) located among priority populations, according to this map? If you prefer not to answer, please check, "Prefer not to answer." If yes, please provide the name and address of at least one school your project will serve that is located among priority populations. NOTE: To receive full points for this question, you only need to provide the name and address of one school your project will serve that is located among priority populations that the review committee can then verify with the map. To use the map,

programs for children, as ed-data.org does not include

data for center-based programs.

Review Criteria

Funding Priority: engage students from underserved communities*: __/2 points

- After taking the average across all eligible partner entities named in question 7a:
- 2 points: Unduplicated Pupil Count of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals, English Learners & Foster Youth is greater than 50%.
- 1 point: Unduplicated Pupil Count of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals, English Learners & Foster Youth is between 10 to 50%.
- 0 points: Unduplicated Pupil Count of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals, English Learners & Foster Youth is less than 10%.
- *NOTE: In Track 4, the CDFA is using the Unduplicated Pupil Count of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals, English Learners & Foster Youth as a proxy for determining if the project is engaging students from underserved communities.

Funding Priority: priority populations: __/2 points

 2 points: Applicant answers yes; applicant provides the name and address of at least one school the project will serve that is located among priority populations. The review committee is able to verify with the map that at

follow these steps: (1) Type in the addresses of schools that your project will serve; (2) Look at the color of the map – pink and blue stripes, solid pink, solid blue, solid yellow, or yellow stripes indicate a priority population.

- (16) Funding Priority: small to midsize producers: What was your operation's average annual gross cash farm income during the previous three-year period?
 - Less than \$250,000
 - \$250.000 to \$499.999
 - \$500,000 to \$750,000
 - More than \$750.000
 - Prefer not to answer
- (17) Funding Priority: veteran, socially disadvantaged, and/or limited-resource producers: Is your operation at least 50% owned by producer(s) who belong to one or more of the following groups? Please check all that apply. If you prefer not to answer, please check, "Prefer not to answer."
 - Veterans (i.e., 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)
 - African Americans
 - Native Indians
 - Alaskan Natives
 - Hispanics
 - Asian Americans
 - Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders
 - Women
 - LGBTQ+ people
 - Limited-resource farm households (according to this tool)

Review Criteria

- least one school the applicant identifies in question 15 is located among priority populations.
- **0 points:** Applicant answers no OR applicant checks "Prefer not to answer" OR applicant answers yes but the review committee is unable to verify with the map that at least one school the applicant identifies in question 15 is located among priority populations.

Funding Priority: small to midsize producers: __/7 points

- **7 points:** Applicant's average annual gross cash farm income at their operation during the previous three-year period is no more than \$750,000.
- 0 points: Applicant's average annual gross cash farm income at their operation during the previous three-year period is more than \$750,000 OR applicant checks "Prefer not to answer."

Funding Priority: veteran, socially disadvantaged, and/or limited-resource producers: __/7 points

- **7 points:** Applicant's operation is at least 50% owned by producer(s) who belong to one or more of the priority groups listed in question 17.
- 0 points: Applicant's operation is not at least 50% owned by producer(s) who belong to one or more of the priority groups listed in question 17 OR applicant checks, "Prefer not to answer."

Funding Priority: climate smart agriculture:

- Description: /2 points
 - **2 points:** Applicant responds yes and provides a clear description.
 - **0 points:** Applicant responds no OR applicant responds yes but provides an unclear description.
- Verification: __/4 points
 - 4 points: Applicant responds "Yes" to at least one of the five options. The CDFA can verify at least

- None of the above
- Prefer not to answer

(18) Funding Priority: climate smart agriculture:

- (a) **Description:** 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, and/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 briefly describe. [Word Limit = 200]
- (b) **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."
 - 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 <u>USDA Organic Integrity</u> Database.
 - Is your operation currently participating in a transitional organic program? If yes – please upload documentation to demonstrate this from your organic certifier.
 - 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 (SWEEP)? If

Review Criteria

one of these options through the verification method described in each option.

0 points: Applicant does not respond "Yes" to any
of the five options OR applicant responds "Yes" to
at least one of the five options but the CDFA is
unable to verify at least one of the options through
the verification method described in each option.

Looking Forward: __/1 point

- 1 point: Applicant responds yes and clearly describes a plan to begin to utilize or continue to utilize climate smart agriculture practices, climate smart agriculture production systems, or other regenerative strategies.
- **0 point:** Applicant responds no OR applicant responds yes but provides an unclear description.

Application Questions	Review Criteria
yes – the CDFA will verify this through the CDFA Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation. 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 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. 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 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. Prefer not to answer (c) Looking Forward: Do you plan to begin to utilize or continue to utilize climate smart agriculture practices, climate smart agriculture production systems, or other regenerative strategies? NOTE: Track 4 grant recipients may use grant funds to establish or enhance the use of climate smart agriculture practices, production systems, and other regenerative strategies when producing whole or minimally processed food to sell or donate to schools. If yes – please briefly describe your plan. [Word Limit = 200]	Review Criteria
TOTAL	/25 points

Project Reporting and Evaluation: no points available			
Application Questions	Review Criteria		
 (19) Project Reporting and Evaluation: Do you agree to do all of the following if awarded a grant? Please note that the reporting and evaluation activities below are required of all Track 4 grant recipients in this program. Please email cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov if you have any questions about these activities. Pre-Survey: Submit a pre-survey to the CDFA at the beginning of the grant term to summarize and quantify pre-project farm to school activities Regular Financial Reporting: Submit regular financial reporting that documents project costs to the CDFA Quarterly Check-ins: Submit quarterly check-ins to the CDFA summarizing project progress, successes, and challenges Final Interview: Participate in a final interview with the CDFA after the grant term concludes to discuss project successes, challenges, and other relevant information External Program Evaluation: Participate in external evaluation activities conducted by a CDFA representative or external designee for this grant program 	Applicant must agree for the CDFA to consider the application complete, as these are required activities of this grant program.		

Project Viability: 8 points available		
Application Questions	Review Criteria	
(20) Budget/Narrative: Please complete and upload the	Budget/Narrative:/8 points	
budget worksheet provided in the online application portal	8 points: Applicant's budget clearly aligns with the	
and on the California Farm to School Incubator Grant	Project Description section, includes all requested	
Program website. Please ensure that your proposed		

project costs are allowable according to the Track 4 Allowable and Unallowable Costs section of the RFA. NOTE: Please email the CDFA for support at cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov if you are unable to utilize the Microsoft Excel format of the budget worksheet.

- (21) **Grant Administration and Accounting:** If you receive an award, who within your business/organization will handle grant administration and accounting and what process does your business/organization plan to implement to handle grant administration and accounting? [Word Limit = 100]
- (22) **Program Income:** Program income is gross income earned as a result of the grant award during the grant duration. Program income includes but is not limited to income from fees for services performed and income from the sale of commodities or items fabricated under the grant award. Will your proposed project generate program income? If yes please describe the source/nature of the program income, estimate the total dollar amount of program income, and explain how you will reinvest the program income into the grant project and spend it on allowable project costs. [Word Limit = 100]
- (23) **Sustainability Plan:** In what ways will your business/organization sustain this project beyond the duration of the grant term? Also, if your Budget includes staffing costs, please acknowledge these investments in staffing here and discuss any plans to sustain those roles after the grant term ends. [Word Limit = 200]

Review Criteria

- information for each line item, and provides clear reasonings for each spending category.
- 4 points: Applicant's budget somewhat clearly aligns with the Project Description section, includes all requested information for each line item, and provides clear reasonings for each spending category.
- 2 point: Applicant's budget somewhat clearly to clearly aligns with the Project Description section and includes all requested information for each line item, but provides only somewhat clear reasonings for each spending category.
- 0 points: Applicant's budget does not align with the Project Description section and/or is missing information or reasonings about proposed project costs.

Grant Administration and Accounting: Complete? Yes/No

 Applicant must respond to question 21 for the CDFA to consider the application complete.

Program Income: Complete? Yes/No

 Applicant must respond to question 22 for the CDFA to consider the application complete.

Sustainability Plan: /2 points

- 2 points: Applicant clearly describes how their business/organization will sustain the project beyond the duration of the grant term. If the Budget includes staffing costs, applicant acknowledges this and clearly discusses any plans to sustain those roles after the grant term ends.
- 1 point: Applicant somewhat clearly describes how their business/organization will sustain the project beyond the duration of the grant term. If the Budget includes staffing costs, applicant acknowledges this and discusses any plans to sustain those roles after the grant term ends.
- **0 points:** Applicant unclearly describes how their business/organization will sustain the project beyond the

Application Questions	Review Criteria
	duration of the grant term and/or if the Budget includes staffing costs, applicant does not acknowledge this or discuss any plans to sustain those roles after the grant term ends.
TOTAL	/8 points

(24) **(Optional) Is there anything else you would like to share with us?** Please note that answering this question or leaving it blank will not impact scoring. [Word Limit = 100]

GRAND TOTAL __/55 points