



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**FOR**

**NH Farm to School Local Food Incentive Pilot Program**

**RFA-2025-DEV-FARMTOSCHOOL**

**RELEASE DATE: January 22, 2025**

**CLOSING DATE: February 12, 2025**

NH Farm to School Local Food Incentive Pilot Program  
RFA-2025-DEV-FARMTOSCHOOL

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## 1. Purpose and Overview

### 1.1. Introduction

The New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food (DAMF) is pleased to announce the competitive solicitation process to award Farm to School Pilot Program grant funds to ten (10) New Hampshire school administrative units (SAUs). The purpose of this grant is to use the funds during the pilot to increase the use of NH products in school meal programs by enhancing collaboration between NH schools and NH producers.

During the 2024 Legislative Session, the New Hampshire Legislature passed House Bill 1678, establishing this local farm to school purchasing incentive pilot program. It requires the DAMF to competitively select 10 diverse SAUs to participate in the pilot. Participation includes purchasing qualifying products, submitting invoices, and receiving reimbursement for purchases of local, minimally processed food for school breakfast, lunch, or fresh fruit and vegetable programs. Technical assistance will be available to help connect SAUs with producers and support the procurement process. The requirements and procedures for the application and pilot program are established in NH RSA 425:2-c, [New Hampshire Farm to School Pilot Program](#).

The pilot will run from the remainder of the 2024/25 school year (Year 1) through the 2025/26 school year (Year 2). Grant awards will range from \$3,000 - \$25,000 per school year based on total student enrollment of the involved schools and may be adjusted in Year 2 based on each grantee expenditures in Year 1. Awards for Year 1 may be pro-rated based on the months remaining.

### 1.2. Key Information

#### 1.2.1. Qualified Applicants

To be eligible for this pilot program, applicants must be a school administrative unit that participate in the National School Lunch Program agree to participate for the duration of the two-year pilot program.

#### 1.2.2. Project Period

This project will run from the effective date of the fully executed grant agreement through June 30, 2026. It will include the remainder of the 2024/25 school year, Year 1, and the 2025/26 school year, Year 2.

### 1.3. Key Dates

Request for Applications Release Date:	January 23, 2025
Deadline for Questions:	February 3, 2025
Closing Date:	<b>February 12, 2025, 2:00 PM</b>
Notice of Award Date:	February 21, 2025
Projected Contract effective Date:	March 12, 2025, Governor & Council Meeting
Contract End Date	June 30, 2026

## 2. Statement of Work

### 2.1. Scope of Project

- 2.1.1. Selected Grantees will be expected to increase their use of NH products in school meal preparation by increasing volume and/or variety of products purchased and incorporated into the food served.
- 2.1.2. Grantees will be expected to provide baseline data demonstrating their current purchasing of NH products including product specific information, volume, and producer information which will be used to measure performance throughout the pilot.
- 2.1.3. Grantees will be expected to participate in monthly cohort meetings and collaborate with DAMF and New Hampshire Farm to School through the NH Food Alliance at the University of New Hampshire.
- 2.1.4. The objective is to use this pilot to learn how to better connect NH schools and NH producers including assessing means of communication, collaboration and access to appropriate products for schools. Engagement with the cohort and technical assistance will be key to achieving the goals of the pilot.

### 2.2. Eligible Food Purchases

- 2.2.1. All foods must originate in New Hampshire but may be processed in any of the New England states.

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2.2.2. Foods may be purchased from food hubs, directly from farms, or from conventional distributors so long as they originate from New Hampshire.

2.2.3. Eligible categories include:

Dairy	Eggs
Fish	Fruits
Pork	Vegetables
Beef	Cider
Poultry	Maple Syrup

2.2.4. Processed dairy, minimally processed proteins, and minimally processed produce shall be included.

### 3. Reporting.

The selected SAUs shall be required to provide annual reports summarizing participation in the pilot on forms approved by DAMF at the end of each school year.

### 4. Financial

#### 4.1. Reimbursement

Following submission of an approved invoice, grantees will be reimbursed for 33 percent of their qualifying purchases.

4.1.1. **Example:** Grantee's first purchase is for \$5,000 in qualifying NH products

Year 1 Award	\$10,000
Invoice #1	\$5,000 in qualifying NH Product purchases
Invoice #1 Reimbursement Amount (1/3 of Purchase Price)	$\$5,000 \times 33\%$ $= \$1,650$ *DAMF send payment to the SAU after approving the invoice
Remaining Year 1 Funds:	$\$10,000$ (Award Amount) – $\$1,650$ (Invoice 1 Qualifying Reimbursement) $= \$8,350$ Remaining Year 1 Funds

## 4.2. Invoices

The selected SAUs will be required to provide the following detailed information when submitting invoices including supporting documentation and attest to its accuracy:

- 4.2.1. Item purchased
- 4.2.2. Category of purchase (as described above)
- 4.2.3. Date of purchase
- 4.2.4. Price per unit
- 4.2.5. Number of Units
- 4.2.6. Total price paid
- 4.2.7. Producer/farmer
- 4.2.8. Whether the producer is organic/sustainable

## 5. Mandatory Questions

Applicants are required to answer the following mandatory questions in full including subparts. Sufficient detail should be provided to realistically demonstrate your organization's ability and commitment to participate and expend all awarded funds during the pilot.

### Question 1:

Describe in detail your organization's current use of NH products in your programs and include the approximate number of NH products and NH producers that are regularly used.

- (a) Include a description of your participation in any other farm to school programs in the past 5 years including planning grants and informal programs.
- (b) Explain why your organization is interested in participating in this pilot and what you seek to accomplish.

### Question 2:

Describe in detail how you plan to implement the pilot program including the schools that will be included in the pilot program and how your organization's use of NH products will expand if you are selected to participate in this pilot including potential challenges.

- (a) Please include how you plan to locate local products and procure local products, any necessary steps to ensure you can prepare and incorporate local products into your meal service.

(b) Include any anticipated barriers or challenges and how you will overcome them.

Question 3:

Provide the name and complete of each school identified to participate in the pilot program including name and location and describe the socio-economic environment for each school.

## 6. Response Submission Instructions

### 6.1. Applications

6.1.1. Applications shall be submitted on the application form identified as **Attachment A** and all questions must be answered completely.

6.1.2. Applications shall be submitted *electronically* to:

[Rebecca.W.Ross@agr.nh.gov](mailto:Rebecca.W.Ross@agr.nh.gov)

Subject line: RFA-2025-DEV-FARMTOSCHOOL

## 7. Vendor Questions

7.1. All questions from applicants about the application or the pilot should be sent via email to:

[Rebecca.W.Ross@agr.nh.gov](mailto:Rebecca.W.Ross@agr.nh.gov)

7.2. The subject of the email should include the following:

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7.3. Inquiries must be received no later than **February 3, 2025 (4:00PM)**.

## 8. Evaluation Process

### 8.1. Submission

8.1.1. All timely and complete proposals from qualified applicants with required documentation will be considered.

8.1.2. Late and incomplete submissions will not be considered.

## 8.2. Scoring.

Selection is a competitive process based on the merits of the application and support materials. The selection committee will review all qualifying applications based upon the below scoring criteria.

8.2.1. Applications will be scored based on the following criteria:

Response	Possible Score
Experience & Knowledge (Q1)	100
Proposed Plan (Q2)	300
Location and Socioeconomic Background (Q3)	100
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>500</b>

## 8.3. Agency Rights

DAMF reserves the right to:

- 8.3.1. Make independent investigation in evaluating proposals;
- 8.3.2. Request additional information to clarify elements of a proposal;
- 8.3.3. Waive minor or immaterial deviations from the RFA requirements, if determined to be in the best interest of the State;
- 8.3.4. Omit any planned evaluation step if, in the agency's view, the step is not needed; and
- 8.3.5. At its sole discretion, reject any and all proposals at any time.

## 8.4. Awards

- 8.4.1. The goal of the grant program is to award funds to one applicant from each county in the state. The DAMF will ensure that the recipients of grants represent a variety of school sizes, geographic locations, and socioeconomic backgrounds as required by RSA 425:2-c.
- 8.4.2. Award amounts will be based upon the total student population of the selected schools with a minimum award of \$3,000 per year.
- 8.4.3. Awards will be offered to the highest scoring applicant in each county. If not all counties are represented, additional awards may be made in other counties.



- 8.4.4. The Commissioner of DAMF will review the committee recommendations and be responsible for final award decisions. DAMF shall submit grant agreements to the Governor and Executive Council for approval

## 9. Confidentiality

Pursuant to RSA 21-G:37, the content of responses to this solicitation must remain confidential until the Governor and Executive Council have awarded a contract. The selected Vendor's disclosure or distribution of the contents of its solicitation response, other than to the Department, will be grounds for disqualification at the Department's sole discretion.

The information submitted in response to this solicitation (including all materials submitted in connection with it, such as attachments, exhibits, addenda, and presentations), any resulting contract, and information provided during the contractual relationship may be subject to public disclosure under Right-to-Know laws, including RSA 91-A. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any contract entered into as a result of this solicitation will be made accessible to the public online via the New Hampshire Secretary of State website.

## 10. Attachments

- 10.1. Attachment A - Application
- 10.2. Attachment B – Sample Grant Agreement

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