



## Farm to School Grants: Frequently Asked Questions

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Are you applying for a grant to advance Farm to School in a BC or Ontario school? If so, this document provides answers to frequently asked questions. Please note, this is a **living** document. As new questions arrive they will be added to the bottom of this sheet. Check the **date posted** to make sure you are working with the most recent version.

**Question: What is the aim of this stream of grant funding?**

**Answer:**

This Farm to School grant is designed to **build on existing activities** to get more healthy local foods in the minds and on the plates of students in British Columbia and Ontario Schools. The funds may be used to support activities that engage the school and broader community in growing, purchasing, preparing and serving healthy local foods in a salad bar service at school.

**Question: Who can apply for this grant?**

**Answer:**

All primary, middle, secondary, public and private schools in urban, rural, and remote communities in British Columbia and Ontario may apply. While we are unable to offer translation services/support for this particular grant stream, we do welcome proposals from First Nations, Metis, and French, and other communities whose first language may not be English.

**Question: Which schools are best suited for this grant opportunity?**

**Answer:**

This grant opportunity is **best suited**<sup>1</sup> for schools that:

- Are already championing Farm to School activities and need some additional capacity to bring more healthy, local, sustainable food to the minds and plates of students through a salad bar service. By farm to School activities we mean growing, buying, cooking, preserving, and serving healthy local foods at school (ie. The school may already have a garden, a greenhouse a cafeteria. Students may already be engaged in growing cooking and serving foods). For more information about Farm to School, please access our “What is Farm to School?” factsheet.

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<sup>1</sup> While your school may not meet all of the criteria on this “best suited” list, please do not let this list alone dissuade you from sending in an application. We are open to receiving all proposals. There may be some wonderful factors about your school and community that we have not thought of that would make your proposal strong and a great candidate for inclusion

- Are prepared to work towards implementing a salad bar service featuring healthy, local, foods by January 2017 with the support of the grant.
- Operate their own meal service and the food service lead is keen to integrate the salad bar service into that service.
- Have built or have identified and are ready to build community partnerships with farmers, community organizations, and/or other members of the local food system in order to grow, source, buy, prepare and serve healthy local foods in a salad bar at school.
- Have a plan in mind to operationalize/ improve the their proposed Farm to School salad bar program.

***Question: Can our school apply if we received a Farm to School BC grant in the past?  
Can we apply if we have received a Whole Kids Foundation grant in the past?***

***Answer***

Yes. Schools who have received Farm to School BC funding or Whole Kids Foundation funding in the past are eligible to apply to scale up their programs. If a salad bar featuring healthy local foods does not exist in their program, schools may apply for this funding to include a healthy local foods salad bar service. If a school garden or green house or cooking club exists, the grant funding may be used to bring local healthy foods from those programs into the school cafeteria to be served in a salad bar. If a salad bar already exists, schools may apply to support activities to scale up the amount of local sustainable foods on their salad bars, and/or the frequency of service etc...

***Question: Who Qualifies as a Co Applicant?***

***Answer:***

The co-applicant must be a community partner who can provide additional expert technical support to the school community to help them realize their program vision and goals AND to ensure the proposed program is tied to and supports work that is happening relating to the sustainability of the local food system. Typically, this person is a representative of a not for profit community organization that has a mandate to support sustainable regional food systems.

***Question: Can a representative of a health authority or a government funded organization step forward to be the Co-Applicant?***

***Answer:***

Yes, a representative from a health authority or government organization can be the co-applicant. However it must be clear in the proposal that the co-applicant will play a key role to facilitate connections between the school and local food suppliers, and to facilitate capacity building within the school so that the school community is better able to source, procure and serve healthy local foods in a salad bar service.

Please note, if a representative of a government organization steps forward to be the co-applicant grant funds cannot be used to pay for this person's services.

***Question: Can more than one school pair up to submit a single application?***

***Answer:***

Yes, schools may pair up to submit a ***cluster application***. Such applications will be looked upon favourably, if applicants can articulate how the pairings can help to expedite the achievement of the vision and goals, while maximizing the use of resources.

***Question: Is there a maximum amount that we can apply for if we submit a cluster grant?***

***Answer:***

If two schools jointly apply, they will be eligible for a maximum of \$20,000 (up to \$10,000 each). If three jointly apply, they will be eligible for a maximum of \$30,000. The maximum amount for any cluster grant cannot exceed \$30,000.

***Question: We are considering applying for a cluster grant, but we cannot figure out who should be the lead applicant and/or how the funds should be administered. Do you have advice?***

***Answer:***

The funds we have to offer must go directly to schools. The lead applicant must be a principal of a vice principal or someone of equivalent decision making authority who works within the cluster of schools applying for the grant. (A school board trustee or a school board staff person cannot take on the role of lead applicant.) Typically the lead applicant would be responsible for providing general oversight for the whole project - ensuring deliverables are met in a timely manner. This person could take on receiving and administering the funds for the whole project (in which case a single budget sheet would be filled out). OR separate budgets for each school could be submitted in one cluster package. In the later scenario each school would be responsible for receiving and administering their own funds.

***Question: If several schools submit a cluster application, does each school still need to earmark \$1500 to enable 1-2 leads from each school participate in 1-2 provincial training sessions organized by F2CC?***

***Answer:***

Yes

***Question:***

***Is there a maximum amount that can be spent on equipment?***

***Answer:***

Yes. No more than 50% of the budget can be used to purchase equipment.

***Question:***

***Is there a maximum amount of schools that can submit a cluster grant application?***

***Answer:***

While any number of schools may wish to submit a proposal for a cluster grant, we recommend that no more than 3 schools team up for any one application. This is because we know it will be very challenging to meet the vision, and goals of this grant program when the maximum budget is \$30,000 and this funding must be divided up amongst more than 3 schools. If there are a large number of schools within a particular region who wish to pair up to submit a cluster proposal, we recommend submitting more than one cluster proposal.

***Question:***

***Are there a maximum number of schools that may apply per region?***

***Answer:***

There is no maximum to the number of schools that may apply per region. We will be awarding \$225K in grants to schools in ON and \$225K to schools in BC. The maximum amount available per school is \$10,000. We estimate that will work out to 25 grants in ON and 25 grants in BC. Geographic equity is one of the criteria we shall apply to the final selection of grant recipients.

***Question: Do schools need to purchase foods from local farms/local food producers/suppliers of locally produced foods for their salad bar service?***

***Answer:***

Yes, to be eligible for this grant, schools must source and purchase foods from local farms/local food producers/local food suppliers for use in their proposed salad bar program. Supporting local farms/local food producers and the local food economy is an important aim of a Farm to School program.

***Question: Instead of procuring local food can a school plan to grow the food in their school garden for use in the salad bar service?***

***Answer:***

While a school garden complements a Farm to School program, and is a strong addition to Farm to School programs (increasing food literacy and increasing access to food that students have grown themselves in school meals), it is not synonymous to nor a substitute for a local farm/local food producer/supplier. Schoolyard farms or schoolyard market gardens that operate as a business producing and selling food qualify as farms.

***Question: I haven't signed up for a food safe course yet. Can I just demonstrate that I've completed the course prior to January 1, 2017 – which is when our salad bar service will launch?***

***Answer:***

That is a good question for your Environmental Health Officer (EHO) or Public Health Inspector (PHI). Please ask and then follow his/her recommendations. We will require a letter from your

PHI or EHO as part of your applications package. Within it he/she should note that they are aware of your plans, plus any recommendations re food safety. If any additional food safety training is required it should be included in the recommendations in the letter.

The selection committee will be looking at those recommendations and then at your proposal/work plan. We will want to see that you have addressed any recommendations from your PHI or EHO in your work plan.

If food safe training is required, then as part of your application package you will need to produce a receipt that at least one person has signed up for the training AND that the session will occur before the launch of your salad bar service.

***Question: What kinds of projects are you looking to fund?***

***Answer:***

There is no cookie cutter approach - Farm to School salad bar programs come in all shapes and sizes.

Models tend to differ by the way food is distributed to the school:

- Farm to school
- Farm and school garden to school
- Farm to food delivery service to school
- CSA to schools
- Co-op of farmers to school
- Farm to farmers market to School
- Farm to grocery store to school
- Farm to kitchen/caterer to school
- Farm to pantry/kitchen to school

And models tend to differ in the salad bar service:

- Farm to school salad bar (featuring healthy local salad ingredients).
- Farm to school soup and salad bar (featuring healthy local produce PLUS a warm soup/stew).
- Local foods to school feast bar (featuring traditional foods - including as much fruits and veggies as possible).
- Farm to school to veggie wrap bar (featuring an assortment of healthy local veggies that can be made into a wrap).

The important thing to remember is SMALL is beautiful. Don't propose something too large or complex. Provide a well thought out plan that demonstrates you will be building on existing activities to get more healthy local foods into a salad bar service at school

***Question: How do I connect with local food suppliers?***

***Answer:***

That is a question for your community partner – typically a non government organization (NGO) that has as part of their mandate – sustainable regional food systems. Your local farmers market association is an NGO with this mandate. A local Farmers Institute or a local organic growers association or an urban farming group would have this mandate. You might ask local grocers that who supply local foods. Whole Foods Stores certainly have this mandate.

In Ontario, there are a number of websites set up to connect buyers with local producers. One of these is available at <https://ontariofresh.ca>.

