



Advancing Farm to School in Ontario and BC

Grant Guidelines

UPDATED JANUARY 18, 2016



Healthy, local, food on the minds and on the plates of all students

Farm to Cafeteria Canada is pleased to announce that we are working with the Social Planning and Research Council of BC, the Whole Kids Foundation, Sustain Ontario/Ontario Edible Education Network, and the Public Health Association of British Columbia/Farm to School BC to launch a new Farm to School grant program designed to bring the local harvest to BC and Ontario schools. These grants valued at up to \$10,000 are designed to build on and to further existing efforts to engage students and community in gardening, cooking, preserving, purchasing and serving healthy local foods in a salad bar at school.

This grant program has been made possible thanks to generous contribution from the Whole Kids Foundation, based in Austin Texas. At \$500,000 the Farm to School grant program represents the largest single investment by the Foundation in activity to get healthy, local, sustainable food on the plates and minds of Canadian students.

“Farm to Cafeteria Canada is thrilled to work with the Whole Kids Foundation, Sustain Ontario and the Public Health Association of BC/Farm to School BC to deliver these grants”, says Joanne Bays, National Manager of Farm to Cafeteria Canada. “There is a food revolution afoot in Canadian schools. Parents, teachers, students, and food service workers are clamouring for a fresh local crunch in school lunch and local farmers and fishers are eager to deliver. We are excited about the opportunity to continue to seed, feed, and watch this movement grow!”, says Bays.

“The opportunity to create significant improvement in the access to fresh, healthy vegetables available to children at school is truly at the heart of our work,” said Kim Herrington, School

Programs Director for Whole Kids Foundation. “The chance to offer support for school gardens, nutrition education, and training along with a salad bar that empowers student choice is a comprehensive approach to healthier school environments!”, says Herrington

We invite those interested in applying to become familiar with the guidelines on the following pages, to follow the recommended steps to prepare for the application process, and to watch the Farm to Cafeteria Canada website for the announcement and release of the grant application in January of 2016.

About Farm to School

Farm to School brings healthy, local food into schools, and provides students with hands-on learning opportunities that foster food literacy, all while strengthening the local food system and enhancing school and community connectedness. Farm to School empowers students and school communities to make informed food choices while contributing to vibrant, sustainable regional food systems that support the health of people, place and planet.

Farm to School activity may differ by school, but it is always directed towards a common aim - more healthy local foods on the plates and minds of all students. Farm to School models strive to include the following:

Healthy, local food in school: Schools source local food in many ways, including direct farmer relationships, through food distributors, schoolyard farms, or the harvesting of wild or traditional foods. When local food arrives in schools it is often served in the form of a salad bar, hot lunch program, tasting activity, fundraiser, or community celebration.

Hands-On Learning: Food literacy is a critically important component of Farm to School. Step into any school offering Farm to School and you will find students learning about food in the school garden, greenhouse, kitchen or classroom. They may also be getting ready for field trips to local farms, forests, and shores.

School and Community Connectedness: Farm to School is built upon strong relationships. Schools establish relationships with farmers, community members, and support organizations, tapping into local knowledge, passion, skills, and resources.

A Growing Movement

Farm to school is not a new idea – it is a best practice operating in communities across the continent. One of the first programs was developed in Santa Monica, California in 1997.¹ Their program sought to connect schools with local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local small farmers. By 2007, a national Farm to School Network was formed in the US².

¹ California’s Farm to School program <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/farmtoschool.asp> .

² Farm to School Network (US) www.farmtoschool.org

Farm to Cafeteria Canada

Canada has followed a similar path. One of the first Farm to School programs was established in Quesnel, BC in 2007. By 2011, Farm to Cafeteria Canada was established. This 3500 member strong pan Canadian non profit organization strives to advance efforts to bring local sustainable foods into all of Canada's public agencies. Farm to school, farm to healthcare, farm to campus are all a part of the national dialogue. Farm to Cafeteria Canada is proud to lead the national Farm to School movement.

Today Farm to School programs exist in every province and territory. In Ontario, Sustain Ontario is the lead provincial organization championing and linking Farm to School activity. In BC, the Public Health Association of BC/Farm to School BC is the lead organization championing and linking provincial Farm to School activity. Each of these organizations are members of Farm to Cafeteria Canada and the national Farm to School network hosted by Farm to Cafeteria Canada. Each organization is a principal partner with this Farm to School grant initiative.

Whole Kids Foundation™

Whole Kids Foundation, a Whole Foods Market foundation, is based in Austin, Texas, and operates as an independent, nonprofit organization. By empowering schools and inspiring families, the Foundation aims to help children reach optimal health through the strength of a healthy body fueled by nutritious food. For more information on the Foundation's programs including school gardens, salad bars and nutrition education for teachers, visit wholekidsfoundation.org.

Sustain Ontario

Sustain Ontario is a province-wide, cross-sectoral alliance that promotes healthy food and farming. As an independent not-for-profit, Sustain Ontario coordinates collaborative action for the development of food systems throughout the province that are healthy, equitable, ecological and financially viable. Sustain Ontario's Edible Education Network brings together individuals and groups in Ontario that are doing great work to connect children and youth with healthy food systems. The network better enables these individuals and groups to share resources, ideas, and experience; work together on advocacy; and facilitate efforts across the province to get children and youth eating, growing, cooking, celebrating, and learning about healthy, local and sustainably produced food.

Public Health Association of BC / Farm to School BC

The Public Health Association of BC is a voluntary, non-profit, non-government organization whose mission is to preserve and promote the public's health. The Association works toward this mission through its activities in disease and injury prevention, health promotion, health protection, and advocacy for healthy public policy. Farm to School BC is an initiative administered by the Public Health Association of BC and supported by the Province of BC. Farm to School BC is a diverse and expanding provincial network that promotes, supports and links Farm to School activity, policy and programs across the province. Connect with Farm to School BC via their seasonal newsletter, social media platforms and website.

The Social Planning and Research Council of BC

SPARC BC is a leader in applied research, social policy, capacity building and community engagement. Our mission statement is to work with communities in building a just and healthy society for all. SPARCBC is Farm to Cafeteria Canada's fiscal sponsor agency.

Farm to School Grants: Guidelines For Applicants

Amount Available

Farm to Cafeteria Canada will provide a one-time grant to successful applicants from communities within British Columbia and Ontario. It is anticipated that a minimum of **twenty five** grants of up to \$10,000 each will be awarded to schools in Ontario and a minimum of **twenty five** grants of up to \$10,000 each will be awarded to schools in British Columbia.

Key dates ³

By January 15, 2016	Application Template released
On March 15, 2016	Proposals Due
By April 15, 2016	Grant Recipients Notified
By April 30, 2016	Orientation/Training Session Held
By May 30, 2016	Contracts Signed, Funds Transferred

All proposal deliverables must be fully complete by June 30, 2017.

What will be considered?

These grants valued at up to \$10,000 are designed to build on and to further existing efforts to engage students and community in gardening, cooking, preserving, purchasing and serving healthy local foods in a salad bar at school.

A selection committee including representatives from health, agriculture, education and community development sectors will assess the applications and select the proposals that will be funded. The committee will review proposals to determine the extent to which the proposed program meets the following criteria:

1) The proposed program contributes to the Farm to School vision

More healthy, local, food on the minds and on the plates of all students.

2) The proposed program *meaningfully* engages multiple diverse partners within the school and the broader community

A school based Farm to School team has been established to guide and support the project. Minimally this team includes the principal, the lead person overseeing existing food services in the school (if a meal service is provided at the school), one or more representatives from a community agency, a local food producer or local food distributor⁴, one or more teachers, one or more parents, and one or more students.

³ Please note these are tentative dates and subject to change without notice.

⁴ While farmers may find it difficult to attend all planning meetings, it is important to include the local food supplier in initial meetings.

The roles of team members have been defined in the application and are integral to the success of the initiative.

The budget reflects meaningful engagement of members external to the school.

3) The proposed program builds on *existing* food literacy, food access, local food procurement and food service activities underway at the school.

The proposal outlines existing food literacy, food access, local food procurement and food service activities. It also outlines how the Farm to School program will build onto these programs. We will be looking for evidence to demonstrate the people responsible for such programs have been engaged in the Farm to School proposal.

4) The proposed program is comprehensive, minimally including and linking the following components:

- ✓ Includes a salad bar⁵ service.
- ✓ Integrates the proposed salad bar service into the existing meal service (if a meal service exists). Engages existing meal service staff in the planning and implementation of the salad bar service (if a meal service exists).
- ✓ Demonstrates proposed salad bar service has full approval from the public health inspector or the environmental health officer.
- ✓ Engages at least one local food producer.
- ✓ Has a plan that ensures that the foods provided in the Farm to School program are as fresh, nutritious⁶, safe, and locally⁷ grown as possible.
- ✓ Has a plan to increase procurement of and consumption of local foods – particularly fruits and vegetables over the life of the project.
- ✓ Includes a food literacy component to engage students in classroom and experiential educational opportunities designed to enhance their knowledge about the local food system and their skills around growing, cooking, preserving, tasting healthy local foods **and/or** composting food wastes.
- ✓ Has a plan that ensures all children in the school have equitable access to the program regardless of means.

⁵ By salad bar we mean - a food service that enables students to serve themselves a meal from a selection of healthy, local foods that includes a wide variety of produce. Please note that we are open to variations on the traditional salad bar service model. For example, most Canadian salad bar programs are actually soup and salad bar combinations. Some schools offer a build your own submarine or build your own taco salad bar service.

⁶ By healthy or nutritious food we mean - Foods that are as fresh as possible; foods that are minimally processed and packaged; foods with minimal fats, simple sugars, and salt; foods that meet all provincial school health and safety guidelines. In BC this means food that complies with the [Guidelines for Food & Beverage Sales in BC Schools](#).

⁷ By local food we mean - Foods produced as close to the school as possible . Local may vary over the season. When regional food supplies are exhausted, provincial food supplies are considered local.

- ✓ Is environmentally friendly by focusing on the reuse of materials, reduction of waste, recycling, and composting.

5) The proposed program is feasible

We know it is unrealistic to expect a school to start from scratch and to establish and evaluate a comprehensive program that includes all of the above components by June 30 2017. *We will be looking for proposals from schools that already have some of this activity underway - schools that seek a bit of additional funds to enhance that activity.*

6) The proposed program is innovative

Offering healthy local foods in a salad bar in Canada during the school year can be a challenging task. Is your school community up to it? We will be looking for proposals that identify assets they may build on to create a salad bar meal service or to get more healthy local foods into their existing service. We will be looking for proposals that identify anticipated barriers and innovative realistic solutions to overcome barriers.

During the decision making process the committee will also reflect upon the extent to which the **group of programs** they identify to participate in this initiative will:

- ✓ Build on the strengths of the Farm to School movement in Ontario and British Columbia.
- ✓ Support the sustainability of regional Farm to School networks and food systems.
- ✓ Promote cultural diversity, and socio-economic and geographic equity in the landscape of schools engaged in Farm to School activity in Ontario and BC.

Who May apply?

Funding is available for rural and urban, elementary, middle or secondary schools in Ontario and in British Columbia. We encourage First Nations, private and public schools to apply.

Strengthening relationships between the school community, local farms, and community partners who are eager to see the vision “more healthy, local, sustainable food on the plates and minds of all students” is an integral aspect of this initiative. Therefore, Farm to Cafeteria Canada will only consider applications signed by representatives from these sectors.

The **Lead Applicant** The lead applicant must be the school Principal, Vice Principal or someone with equivalent decision making authority at the school. The principal’s role must be defined in the proposal and that role must be integral to the success of the program.

One Co-Applicant 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 the sustainability of the local food system. If you wish to clarify that your co-applicant qualifies, please contact the Canadian Farm to School Grants Project Manager, Farm2schoolgrantsCanada@gmail.com The Co-Applicant’s role must be defined in the proposal and must be integral to the success of the program.

Use of Funds

The funds can be used for:

Training, partnerships and personnel

- ✓ Community partnerships – bringing community members to the table to support: program planning, education training related to food literacy aspects of the proposal; sourcing and procuring local foods; education and training related to food service aspects of the proposal, etc..
- ✓ Honorariums to support initial on-site coordination of the project, including coordination of the food preparation and service component of the program, communications and promotion of the initiative (within the school), supporting an evaluation of the initiative.
- ✓ Training purposes. Each participating school is expected to support the participation of least one program lead⁸ in a minimum of 2 training sessions. Training may occur via webinar or they may be face-to-face meetings. The first session, an orientation/training session will be held by April 30 2016.

Equipment, modifications and material costs

- ✓ Kitchen equipment at the school such as refrigerators, freezers, salad bar units, food warmers, food processors, soup pots, dishes cutlery, storage bins, cutting boards, knives, soap and towel dispensers, etc.
- ✓ Equipment and material costs for the growing of food such as seed, soil, lumber, garden tools, composting unit, green house materials, etc.
- ✓ Minor costs to modify the school space for food service.
- ✓ Food costs for the initial startup week.

Project promotion

- ✓ Communications and/or promotional materials.

The funds cannot be used for:

- ✓ Ongoing food costs – participants must pay for the meals.
- ✓ Ongoing costs to pay the people responsible for coordination, food production, processing, preparation, education, etc. Such costs must be recovered from the program itself or provided through other sources.
- ✓ Supporting programs in schools outside of the region.
- ✓ Post secondary institutions, preschools, community centres, or child care centres.

⁸ Ideally the lead applicant, the co-applicant, and the farm to school coordinator will attend.

Ready, Set, Go!: Six Steps to Prepare For the Application

1) Find out more about Farm to School:

- ✓ Visit the Farm to Cafeteria Canada website – become a [member](#)
- ✓ Put your school on the national [School Food Map](#)
- ✓ View the new national [Farm to School Video](#)
- ✓ Download and read the [Farm to School Fact sheet](#)
- ✓ Download and read the new national [Farm to School storybook](#)
- ✓ Download and read [A New Crunch in School Lunch: The BC Farm to School Guide](#)

2) Organize a visioning meeting of potential Farm to School team members early in the New Year. (check out the list of recommended team members)

3) Articulate the vision and goals of your Farm to School program.

4) Determine who wants to be a part of the core committee.

5) Begin to draft a project plan (be sure to attend to the criteria outlined in this document).

6) Keep an eye on [the Farm to Cafeteria Canada website](#) for the release of the official application

Questions? Please email Farm to Cafeteria Canada – Canadian Farm to School Grant Project Manager: Farm2schoolgrantsCanada@gmail.com

