



Farm to School Community Grant

Request for Proposals (RFP) Application Package

Application Deadline:
Thursday, March 1st, 2012, at 5pm



Contact Information:

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Special thanks to the **South Carolina Farm to School Program** for providing a template for this RFP.

The South Carolina Farm to School Program is a collaborative partnership between

South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control

South Carolina Department of Agriculture

South Carolina Department of Education

Clemson University's Youth Learning Center

Part 1: General Information

A. Organization/Program Background

ASAP'S Growing Minds Farm to School Program

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that helps create and expand local food markets that will preserve our agricultural heritage, give everyone access to fresh, healthy food, and keep our farmers farming. Our mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. Our work focuses on three primary programmatic areas:

- 1) **Capacity Building** encompasses community organizing; workshops, trainings, resource development; business planning, surveying, research; and mentoring.
- 2) The **Local Food Campaign** involves the production of the *Local Food Guide*, Appalachian Grown™ branding, and activities furthering local food access, awareness, education, and outreach.
- 3) **Healthy Communities** focuses on the education of children and families to promote access and wellness, experiential education to excite kids about fresh local food and connect them to their agricultural heritage, and increasing the amount of locally grown food served in institutional cafeterias.

While ASAP's Growing Minds Farm to School Program is often associated with our healthy community focus, it is implemented through capacity building and strongly supported by our overall Local Food Campaign. Growing Minds has been developing and implementing Farm to School programming in Western North Carolina since 2002 and has expanded from a school garden program to a holistic Farm to School program with an education focus.

ASAP provides resources and training to a wide range of community stakeholders to encourage and sustain Farm to School efforts: seeds for school gardens, mini-grants for farm field trips, lesson plans, chef connections for classroom cooking, a lending library of children's literature and curriculums, cafeteria promotions, volunteer recruitment, and training for chefs, teachers (preschool and K-12), farmers, cafeteria staff, and parents.

B. Introduction

Farm to School Community Grant

Farm to School's focus on local food- and farm-based instruction and activities connects children, teachers, cafeteria workers, parents, Child Nutrition Directors, chefs, farmers, and community members to the region's agriculture. This place-based strategy is key to developing healthy relationships with food while enriching the overall educational experience. This grant is designed to offer communities the training and support needed to

implement successful Farm to School programs, creating positive food environments for children.

Grantees will receive:

- \$3,000 to create or expand a Farm to School program at an elementary school
- Farm to School, training, and technical assistance
- Opportunity to attend ASAP's Farm to School Institute
- Local food and farm promotional materials
- Educational resources and activities

C. Definition of Terms Used

Farm to School - Farm to School is sometimes narrowly defined as: "Local food served in school cafeterias." But ASAP's broader holistic definition also includes hands-on experiential education components, including school gardens, farm field trips, and local food cooking classes. Farm to School is place-based strategy that benefits children's health and education while simultaneously providing market opportunities for local farms and economic benefits for communities.

Local food – For this project, local food will be defined as food grown with a 100-mile radius of Asheville and/or certified Appalachian Grown.

Healthy food environment - Healthy food environments model healthy eating behaviors, provide children with positive healthy food experiences, and provide children with greater access to fresh, locally grown food.

School garden –For this project, a school garden can be defined as a container, a raised bed, or an in-ground vegetable garden.

D. Eligible Applicants

Public elementary schools that meet the criteria below are eligible to apply. While local food may be purchased for a whole school system, each application must serve one school only. Multiple schools within a district may submit applications, but no more than one school per district will be funded.

To be eligible, a school must meet all of the following requirements:

- a. Located in one of the following WNC counties: Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, McDowell, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, or Yancey
- b. Participate in the National School Lunch/Breakfast Programs
- c. Have an ADM (Average Daily Membership) that is 50% or more eligible for free and/or reduced-price lunch
- d. Have at least 100 students enrolled

E. Number, Range and Size of Awards

ASAP will award three Farm to School Community Grants, with each grant totaling \$3,000, with funding from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of North Carolina. In addition to these funds to create or expand a Farm to School program, grantees will also receive Farm to School training and technical assistance, the opportunity to participate in ASAP's Farm to School Institute, local food and farm promotional materials (including posters, recipe cards, and stickers), and educational resources/activities.

F. Grant Funding Period

The funding period will run March 15, 2012 – June March 15, 2013. All funds must be expended during the grant period.

G. Program Requirements

To be selected for the Farm to School Community grant, each grantee must agree to do all of the following activities:

1. Develop a Farm to School Team of teachers, administration, food service, parents, local agencies, and community members that agree to participate in training, implementation, and evaluation. The Farm to School Team is a project implementation team that works under the directions of the Team Leader to assist in completing the project tasks and activities. The team is expected to meet as needed at the direction of the Team Leader (at least twice, at the beginning and end of the project) and participate as part of a regional learning community through quarterly conference calls. The Team Leader will be responsible for managing the project and facilitating the implementation of the procurement, promotion, and education plans. This Team Leader will be the main contact with ASAP, communicating information to the Team and be responsible for submitting the required reports to ASAP. Grantees will be required to participate in reporting and evaluation efforts, which may include tracking meal participation rates, the source of locally grown food products, cafeteria purchases of local products, Farm to School publicity, student quotes and photographs, and Farm to School classroom activities or lesson plans. Three representatives from this team must attend the 2012 Farm to School Institute.
2. The Child Nutrition Director will make a concerted effort to work with local distributors and farmers to increase the amount of locally grown food served in the school cafeteria, featuring at least two local items a month** that fit within the child nutrition budget and nutritional guidelines.

**We understand that some communities are more limited than others by a lack of certified vendors. ASAP can assist grantees in identifying GAP certified farms and working with approved vendors to source more local product, but grantees need to ensure that their CND is on board to make a concerted effort with menu planning, promotions and working with the community team to do the best they can to try to feature two local items a month. **

3. Promote positive food environments at schools and in the community, including featuring local items on the school menu, displaying promotional materials, and participating in activities such as meet the farmer events, taste tests, etc.
4. Integrate Farm to School into school instruction. At a minimum, grantees will:
 - a. Implement two Farm to School lessons per month (can include local food cooking and gardening)
 - b. Plan one farm field trip per year
 - c. Establish or revitalize a school vegetable garden

H. Required Reporting

Grantees will be required to submit to ASAP a mid-point and year-end project report, in addition to quarterly expenditure reports to receive reimbursement for expenditures up to \$3,000 (reporting templates will be provided). In addition, grantees will be required to participate as part of a learning community, including quarterly conference calls, to gather information pertaining to the impact of the program, share lessons learned, and explore ways to expand the program to include more of the broader community.

I. Review and Selection Process

Each application will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility. Only complete, eligible applications will be read and scored. Grants will be awarded based on application scores as well as an attempt to spread them out geographically between the high country, western, and central counties.

J. Timeline

Date	Activity/Action
January, 2012	RFP; develop school Farm to School Team
March 1st, 2012	5 pm deadline for receipt of applications
March 15st, 2012	Approximate time for notifications of awards
Spring, 2012	Farm to School training, menu planning begins, project promotion and community meeting
Summer, 2012	Continued training, planning and promotion
Fall, 2012	Farm to School Institute; project implementation; community engagement; classroom activities; local food procurement and cafeteria promotions
Winter, 2012-2013	Continue project implementation, sustainability planning
March 15st, 2013	Deadline for grantee final reports to ASAP

K. Deadline and Submission Procedures

1. Only complete applications that adhere to all guidelines and directions will be reviewed and considered for funding.
2. Applications must be original in content. Applications that are plagiarized from the Internet, other grants, or resources will not be considered for funding.
3. Applications will not be returned, so please keep a copy for your records.
4. Applications must be submitted electronically, attached to an email sent to Molly Nicholie at molly@asapconnections.org.
5. Applications that are faxed, mailed, or hand-delivered in hard (paper) copy will not be accepted.
6. All applications must include all signatures on the partner page. Signed forms should be scanned into PDF format and added to the electronic submission copy.
7. Applications must be received no later than **5pm, Thursday, March 1st, 2012**.

Part 2: Application Overview, Content and Instructions

Carefully adhere to font, format, page limit, and organizational requirements. Only narrative that adheres to these requirements will be considered for funding.

A. Application Overview

- Application Cover Page (page 12 of this RFP)
- Narrative
 - Summary
 - Description of Location, Students, and Need
 - Project Description
 - Procurement Plan
 - Promotion Plan
 - Education Plan
 - Partnership and Collaboration
- Partner Signature Page (page 13 of this RFP)
- Appendices
 - Letters of Commitment

B. Application Narrative Format

Length of Narrative	Maximum of 8 pages for the narrative only; page limit does not apply to any other part of the application
Required Font/Font Size:	Times New Roman/Font Size 12
Margins:	1" on all sides
Page Numbers:	Insert page numbers in the bottom right position
Spacing	All narrative pages must be double-spaced. Charts and tables can

be single-spaced.

Each section must be clearly identified. Sections may not be combined. Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

C. Application Narrative Content

1. Summary (not scored)

In one double-spaced paragraph, concisely describe the school to be served and the key activities to be implemented with the grant funds. Identify local partners and briefly describe their role in the project.

2. Description of Location, Students, and Need (10 points)

- Identify the site to be served, including the county in which the site is located, the student enrollment, and grade levels or ages of children, and the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
- Identify and describe the students to be served through this Farm to School program.
- Provide evidence to support the need for the Farm to School program.
- Explain the goals of your project and the benefits resulting from Farm to School that students, their families, and their community will experience.

3. Project Description (60 points)

Present the program details for the school's Farm to School activities. Make sure to include a procurement, promotion and education plan, as well as anticipated barriers/solutions, a timeline, and a plan for sustaining the core elements of the school's Farm to School program after this grant ends.

a) Procurement Plan- Explain how the school/school system will work to increase purchases from local sources (directly from a farmer, through a distributor, etc.) using proper procurement practices. Include how the school will identify vendors of locally grown foods and how it will be distributed. Local food purchased as part of this project must be part of the existing Child Nutrition budget, not subsidized by this grant or other external funds. Each month, the school menu must strive to feature at least two locally grown fruits or vegetables. Explain how local produce will be included in the school menu and how this will be communicated to students, teachers, families and communities.

b) Promotion Plan – How will you use local food and farm promotions to create a positive food environment? Promotions may include featuring local products/farms or Farm to School educational activities on the school web site, through PTO/PTA meetings, writing an article for the school newsletter and/or local newspaper, creating a community event, etc. How will the greater community be notified of and/or engaged in your Farm to School project?

c) *Education Plan* – Farm to School is not only about sourcing local products, but also reconnecting children with where their food comes from through cooking with local food, school gardens, and farm field trips. Explain how the school will integrate these educational components into the standard course of study and classroom activities. Make sure to include how your school will implement at least two Farm to School lessons per month, plan one farm field trip per year, establish or revitalize a school vegetable garden, and how activities will create links between the classroom, families, communities, and the school cafeteria.

4. Partnership and Collaboration (30 points)

Creating a Farm to School Team ensures that this project is community driven and supported, as well as lays the ground work for long term sustainability. The Farm to School Team is a project implementation team that works under the directions of the Team Leader to assist in completing the project tasks and activities. Required members, including internal and external partners, are in bold type below. Additional team members can include any of the other partners listed below. Identify your Team Leader and members of your Farm to School Team and describe how they will work together to implement this project.

Additional partnerships: Identify any other partner who will provide support and commitment to the Farm to School project. Examples include partnerships with organizations or individuals to provide items or additional resources to implement program plans and activities.

Letters of commitment and support may be included in the application package. **Required partners are in bold.**

Internal (school) partners:

- **Child Nutrition Director (CND)**
- **Principal**
- **Teachers (3 grade levels minimum)**
- **Parents**
- Cafeteria Manager
- School Councilor
- Other School Administrators
- Custodian
- School Nurse

External (community) partners:

- **Farmer**
- **Community volunteers**
- **Local businesses**
- **Cooperative Extension or Health Department**
- Hospital
- Retirement home/center
- Head Start
- Area preschool
- Chef/Restaurant
- Superintendent
- School Board Member
- Elected official
- College/University
- Community College
- High school ag or culinary program
- School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)
- Local nonprofit
- Distributor
- Student

D. Application Budget

While the budget is not assigned points as part of the application review, it is a critical component of the entire application. No application with an incomplete budget will be funded.

The funds requested must not exceed \$3,000. Farm to School funds are to be used only to implement the Farm to School project. Funds may not be used to support personnel/benefits or purchase food to be served as part of cafeteria school meals.

With this application, please submit a spreadsheet outlining your project budget. Make sure the totals are complete and consistent and that a justification is included for all expenses. The budget must provide clear evidence that the expenditures are appropriate and justified to support the activities in the project. Expenditures should be reasonable and adequate to complete the project. Round numbers up (do not include cents). Include formulas you used to calculate the cost of each line item – for example, tomato plants (5 flats x 11.79/flat = \$59).

All applicants must plan and budget funds to cover local food and supplies for team and/or community meetings, as well as travel costs. Travel should include detail expenditures associated with transporting students (e.g. farmers market visits, farm field trips), as well as personnel travel to mandatory/required grant meetings.

Application Cover Page
2012-2013 Farm to School Community Grant

School Name _____

School Address _____

Enrollment (Oct 2011) _____ Grade levels _____ County _____

Meals offered (circle all that apply): SBP NSLP After-School Snack

Free/reduced-price meal data as of October 2011: Average Daily Membership %: _____

% of students eligible for free meals: _____ % eligible for reduced-price meals: _____

Contact Information

Contact Person/Farm to School Team Leader _____

Title/Position _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Mailing Address _____

City, Zip Code _____

Signature of Contact Person: _____

Project Partners

Certification: I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information and data contained in this application are true and correct. We have reviewed this application and attest to the information provided. If selected, we agree to implement the program as outlined. Further, we agree to participate as part of the Farm to Farm to School Team, including planning, activities, meetings, and evaluation.

All of the following information and 10 signatures are required

Name of Child Nutrition Director	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Principal	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Teacher and Grade level	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Teacher and Grade level	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Teacher and Grade level	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Parent	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Farmer	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Community Volunteer	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Local Business	Signature	Date	E-mail
Name of Cooperative Extension or Health Dept. Representative	Signature	Date	E-mail