



Working Together for

VITAL COMMUNITIES

2016 UPPER VALLEY FARM TO SCHOOL MINI-GRANT APPLICATION

OVERVIEW: Vital Communities is pleased to announce the **Upper Valley Farm to School Mini-Grant Application** for 2016.

These grants will help your school, afterschool program, or school-related wellness program launch projects related to farms, our agricultural heritage, farm products, food production, or local food consumption at the school itself.

A broad range of projects has received funding in recent years. Please see examples from past years and additional suggestions on pages 6-7. These grants are possible thanks to the Couch Foundation, the National Park Service, and the Wellborn Ecology Fund.

ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS: All public and private schools in the Vital Communities service area are eligible to apply (VitalCommunities.org/about). Lead applicants must be directly affiliated with school programs. School staff, including teachers, administrators, food service, facilities, and/or garden/farm to school coordinators, are ideal candidates. Only one grant will be provided per project, but schools can propose multiple projects for funding. We encourage collaborative projects with multiple grades.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Applicants must fill out the form below and submit it electronically to Beth Roy at Beth@VitalCommunities.org. We strongly encourage you to call Beth and discuss your project if you have any questions. Applications received by **February 19, 2016**, will get first consideration, and thereafter applications will be considered on a rolling basis. A large but limited number of grants is available, and eligible applications will be awarded on merit and geographical representation around the Upper Valley.

USE OF GRANT FUNDS: Grant funds may be used for a wide variety of farm-to-school related costs. Examples include field trips to local farms, food from a local farm, materials for gardens and garden activities, and stipends for farmers, teachers, or FTS coordinators. Funds could also be used in the cafeteria, to pay for training, supplies, or equipment. The grant requires a final presentation/display (see below for requirements for each state); please include the costs of the presentation, including travel, in your grant budget.

GRANT CRITERIA: New Hampshire and Vermont schools are subject to different grant criteria. To be eligible for farm-to-school mini-grants, teachers or coordinators must complete the following tasks:

FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOLS

1. **COMPLETE A FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT OR GOAL.** Describe your project, goal, research project, or other proposed activity in your mini-grant application.
2. **WRITE A NEWSLETTER ARTICLE** for the Upper Valley Farm to School Network newsletter about your completed project. Article must be submitted by May 27, 2016, be no longer than 300 words, and be accompanied by a few photos.
3. **CREATE A PRESENTATION OR DISPLAY EXPLAINING YOUR FUNDED PROJECT.** Develop a presentation or display that includes:
 - Poster with photos, articles, pictures, stories, etc.
 - Artifacts (pieces of equipment, displays of products, etc.)
 - Food samples or a hands-on activity to help explain your funded project
4. **PRESENT THE DISPLAY OR PRESENTATION AT AN EVENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

One adult and at least four students must present the project at a community event of your choosing. Examples include a table at the farmers' market, a display during school lunches, or a school-wide assembly.

 - Students must have a poster or display to present
 - Event must take place in the 2015-16 school year
 - The community event must be named in your grant application

FOR VERMONT SCHOOLS

1. **COMPLETE A FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT OR GOAL.** Describe your project, goal, research project, or other proposed use in your mini-grant application.
2. **WRITE A NEWSLETTER ARTICLE** for the Upper Valley Farm to School Network newsletter about your completed project. Article must be submitted by May 27, 2016, be no longer than 300 words, and be accompanied by a few photos.

3. CREATE A PRESENTATION OR DISPLAY EXPLAINING YOUR FUNDED PROJECT.

Develop a presentation or display about your funded project that includes:

- Poster with photos, articles, pictures, stories, etc.
- Artifacts (pieces of equipment, displays of products, etc.)
- Food samples for others to taste or a hands-on activity that helps explain your funded project

4. PRESENT THE DISPLAY AT THE JUNE 4 TREK TO TASTE IN WOODSTOCK, VERMONT.

One teacher (or alternate) and at least four students must attend the farm to school showcase at Trek to Taste from 10 am – 3 pm on June 4. (We encourage having “shifts” so that adults and students can also hike the trails and participate in other fun activities.)

- Class must have a poster or display to present at a table at the showcase.
- Class must prepare food samples for 100 people to taste or a hands-on activity that helps explain your funded project.

VITAL COMMUNITIES UPPER VALLEY FARM TO SCHOOL
MINI-GRANT APPLICATION 2016

Teacher/ Coordinator Name:

School/ Town/ State:

Grade/ Group/ Club:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Awards will be sent by check. Please provide the name and address of the appropriate check recipient.

Project topic:

(For VT Schools) If you are providing food samples for Trek to Taste, what will you bring? (Note: We know that June 4 is a long way off, so if you decide to revise this plan later, simply check in with us in advance of the event):

(For NH Schools) – At what community event will your group present your project (name and date)?

Please indicate the amount of grant funds requested (\$250 maximum) _____

Would you like to setup a meeting with Vital Communities' Farm to School Coordinator to discuss or plan other farm to school activities at your school?
Yes ___ No ___

Examples of Past Funded Mini-Grant Projects

- Third- and fourth-grade students grew and learned about herbs, and they made herb crackers with pesto to serve.
- Fifth- and sixth-grade students visited a sugar house and presented to the whole school on what they learned about maple syrup production and grading. They brought samples of different grades of syrup to school.
- Students in grades 3-8 visited a local farm to learn about cold frames and grew salad greens in their school cold frames. The school's cold frames were built by community members, teachers, and students in February and were sited outdoors later in April. Students taste-tested the different salad greens, and used the results to create a popular salad for their school salad bar and served the salad at Trek to Taste.
- Fourth graders worked with Dartmouth College's Growing Change program to plant a school garden. They brought a spring crop to serve at Trek to Taste.
- Fourth-grade students in the new Here We Grow afterschool activity grew salad greens with grow lights and learned about how light affects plant growth. They brought salad samples to Trek to Taste.
- Kindergarteners grew spinach in the school's raised-bed gardens for a taste test and school lunch, and they brought a spinach sample to Trek to Taste.
- Fifth graders studied community dietary needs, including hunger and access to healthy food, with the nonprofit organization InspiringKids. In their culminating "Community Day," they made casseroles featuring local ingredients to donate to the Haven. They also made an extra casserole for Trek to Taste.
- Fourth graders hatched chicks, learned about the nutrition and anatomy of eggs, and visited two local farms to learn about raising chickens. They brought deviled eggs to Trek to Taste.
- First graders tasted different kinds of cheese and learned about cheese making. Then they made their own cheese. They visited Billings Farm and learned about dairy farming, and completed a nonfiction reading unit on dairy. They served homemade ricotta cheese at Trek to Taste.

- Students in an after-school program visited Green Mountain Flour's bakery to learn about milling flour and baking bread. At Trek to Taste, they served samples of Green Mountain Flour bread, which is made with local grains.
- Students in grades 3-7 completed an afterschool unit on dairy. They visited Howvale Farm twice, and learned to make butter, yogurt and ricotta cheese. They brought homemade yogurt to Trek to Taste.
- Third and fourth graders built a three-bin compost system and studied soil properties. They brought greens grown in the school hoop houses in soil fortified with the school's compost.
- Fifth- and sixth-grade students researched the difference between locally produced eggs and mass produced eggs, studied how chickens live in each environment, the nutritional value of eggs produced in different ways, and visited a local farm that produces eggs. They served a frittata at Trek to Taste.
- Students in grades 7-12 learned about growing and milling grains by visiting Green Mountain Flour and planted their own grains. They made pizza using local flour and toppings for Trek to Taste

Other potential uses of the funds include:

- Purchase kitchen, garden, or classroom equipment to further your programming
- Pay for field trip costs such as food, transport, farmer stipends, or admission tickets
- Purchase local foods to use for classroom or cafeteria activities
- Provide professional development funds for staff