



**New Mexico Public Education Department
Student Success and Wellness Bureau**

2021-2022 Application for School Food Authority Purchase of New Mexico Grown Produce

Important Dates:

- Week of March 1, 2021: Application opens
- Wednesday, March 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. : Application due
- Wednesday, March 26, 2021: Awardees announced
- July 1, 2021: Funds available to spend
- June 18, 2022: Annual report due
- June 30, 2022: Deadline to expend funds
- July 2, 2022: Deadline to enter RfRs in OBMS

INTRODUCTION

This Request for Applications (RfA) is open to all New Mexico public schools, private schools, and school districts through applications made by a School Food Authority (SFA). All schools that operate the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are eligible for funding.

PURPOSE

The Public Education Department (PED) believes that farm to school is critical to Child Nutrition Programs in New Mexico. Fostering the link between schools and local farms or farm organizations so that freshly harvested local foods become a staple in New Mexico students' diets is the purpose of this funding.

FUNDING

Funding for the New Mexico Grown Local Produce Grant (New Mexico Grown) is made available through a recurring state appropriation. SFAs funded through this RfA will be allocated funds based on the quality of the application submitted. SFAs will be reimbursed

through standard mechanisms established by PED (See *Attachment A*).

PRIORITY FUNDING CRITERIA

Allocations will be scored and ranked according to the following criteria:

- 1) **Purchasing Plan:** A purchasing plan that regularly includes New Mexico-grown fresh fruits and vegetables, with local items promoted across the school year in both warm and cold-weather months, is preferred. Potential vendors, produce items, and projected quantities for purchases should be included. Applications that show a commitment to distributing purchases amongst multiple vendors and product types will receive extra points.
- 2) **Demonstrated Need:** The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch will be used to evaluate need.
- 3) **SFA Investment:** Demonstrated commitment to increase the impact of the SFA’s farm to school program through allocation of 21000 nonprofit service account funds or in-kind contributions is prioritized for funding.
- 4) **SFA-Wide Promotions:** A plan to facilitate SFA-wide participation in PED promotional programming, such as New Mexico Grown Week and/or “Nuevo Thursdays,” should be included in application materials.
- 5) **Fiscal Management:** Historical spending performance will be factored into the allocation of total points.
- 6) **Wellness Policy Integration:** All SFAs are required to have an updated Wellness Policy on file. SFAs that include information on the benefits of eating locally grown produce from farmers, school gardens or other New Mexico sources in their policy are preferred.

APPLICATION SCORING

Reviewers will score applications using the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
Purchasing Plan	30
Demonstrated Need	20
SFA Investment	15
SFA-Wide Promotions	15
Fiscal Management	15
Wellness Policy Integration	5
TOTAL	100

Total points are calculated using the SFA's enrollment :

	Enrollment (as of October 2019)	Least Amount of Funding - Does Not Meet Expectations	Mid-Range Amount of Funding - Meets Expectations	Highest Amount of Funding - Exceeds Expectations
1	0 - 250	< 50 points	Between 50 – 80 points	> 80 points
2	251-1,700			
3	1,701-6,999			
4	7,000-26,000			
5	> 26,000			

DESCRIPTION OF SCORING

- Does Not Meet Expectations: The applicant omitted a very large portion of the requested information, fails to provide information, provides inaccurate information, or provides information that is hard to understand.
- Meets Expectations: The applicant provides general but sufficient detail, adequately addresses the criteria questions, however some areas are not fully explained and/or questions remain. The application has some minor inconsistencies and weaknesses.
- Exceeds: The applicant provides specific and comprehensive information, and provides complete, detailed, and clearly articulated responses to address the questions. The description is well conceived and the ideas are fully developed.

MANDATORY CONDITIONS

All successful SFA applications in response to this RfA shall assure PED:

- 1) Food purchased is “local” as defined in this RfA;
- 2) Food is purchased from vendors on the PED “Approved Supplier Program List,” which certifies that the product originated on farms that practice sound food safety standards;
- 3) Food purchased will be “fresh” or “recently harvested” as defined in this RfA;
- 4) Local food purchases will be integrated into the SFA’s Child Nutrition Programs – NSLP, SBP or After School Snack Program – and not for community meals;
- 5) Invoices for reimbursement will be submitted via the Operating Budget Management System (OBMS) on a regular basis (reimbursement requests made for purchases over 30 days will be delayed indefinitely);
- 6) Invoices will include the farm address (point where produce is grown, not aggregated or packaged) and farm name;
- 7) A mandatory data request will be submitted to the PED prior to June 18, 2021.

DEFINITIONS

“Local” Grown and harvested within the geographic boundaries of the State of New Mexico;
“Fresh” Unprocessed or minimally processed;

“Produce” The yield of a vegetable or fruit crop;
“Recently harvested” Perishables are delivered within 48 hours of being harvested to the distribution warehouse or to school site

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The funding is solely for the purchase of New Mexico-grown fresh fruits and vegetables. All locally grown produce that meets USDA’s standards for inclusion in school meals – including shelf stable products such as dried pinto beans, posole, and chile – and cultural foods like chicos and corn meal (atole) are approved for purchase under this funding. The PED retains the right to expand the list of products deemed allowable throughout the duration of the grant cycle.

Transportation costs are an allowable expenditure and should be included in the final price per unit agreed to by your SFA and applicable vendors. SFA administrative expenses do not qualify as an allowable expense.

COVER PAGE

Amount Requested \$ _____

School Food Authority (SFA) Name:
SFA Contact Person:
Phone Number (including area code):
Email:
SFA Address:
Total number of sites in your SFA:
Number of sites in the SFA that are covered by this application:
If applicable, please list the names of the sites that <u>will not be</u> covered by this application:
Total enrollment (as of October 2019):
Number of unduplicated students projected to be served:
% of students on Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) as demonstrated in the SFA's October 2019 NSLP data.
How was your district participating in the NSLP for SY 2019-20? (Check all that apply)
Standard Provision 2 CEP

GRANT NARRATIVE

1.	<p>What local produce do you plan to purchase with this grant?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please list all products of interest, and specify which months you will purchase each produce item.• Please specify farmers, distributors, or cooperatives that you will work with to procure these items.• Please specify total projected use (clarify case size or poundage and frequency of ordering in your response if necessary).
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2.	<p>Briefly explain how you will promote the use of New Mexico-grown produce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will you promote the use of New Mexico-grown produce so that students, school staff, and parents are knowledgeable of, and engaged with, the importance of fresh, local fruits and vegetables?• How will you engage school and district leadership?
3.	<p>We are prioritizing SFAs that can commit to investing a matching amount no less than 20% of the total funds awarded by this grant (i.e. if your SFA is requesting \$1,000 then an additional \$200 should be matched). Explain if – and how – your SFA will meet this benchmark.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What budget sources these funds will be secured from?• What is the projected match amount in dollars?• Specify whether the match will be in additional product purchased, staff time allocated to developing your SFA’s farm to school program, seed and soil for a school garden program on campus, etc.

<p>4.</p>	<p>Timely processing of RfRs is essential to the efficiency of the program. How will you assure that reimbursement requests are submitted via OBMS on a regular basis?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your SFA had challenges with submitting RfRs regularly in SY 2020, please explain how you will troubleshoot this issue with your Business Manager.
<p>5.</p>	<p>Will your SFA participate in the suggested promotional programs available through this grant? Please check all that apply and explain your ideas for implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> New Mexico Grown Week option 1 (September 27, 2021 – October 1, 2021) <input type="checkbox"/> New Mexico Grown Week option 2 (October 4, 2021 – October 8, 2021) <input type="checkbox"/> New Mexico Thursdays (1 x month locally sourced item on the menu)

6.	<p>Does your SFA's Wellness Policy include the benefits of eating locally grown produce? If yes please copy and paste the language included in the policy, and if no please provide possible language to include in your 2021-2022 school year policy.</p>
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ASSURANCES

The SFA assures the Public Education Department (PED) that it will not purchase any produce grown or harvested outside of the State of New Mexico with funds provided by the New Mexico Grown Local Produce Grant.

The SFA assures the Public Education Department (PED) that it will not seek reimbursement for purchase of New Mexico-grown vegetables or fresh fruit from the United States Department of Agriculture through the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program if it has already sought reimbursement under the New Mexico Grown Local Produce Grant.

This SFA assures that food purchased with New Mexico Grown Local Produce Grant funds is from vendors on the PED “Approved Supplier Program List,” which certifies that the product originated on New Mexico farms that practice sound food safety standards.

This SFA certifies that food purchased with New Mexico Grown Local Produce Grant funds is harvested recently and/or fresh. Minimally processed products like dried pinto beans, posole, chile, chicos, and corn meal are allowable purchases.

This SFA certifies that New Mexico-grown vegetables and fresh fruits purchased with New Mexico Grown Local Produce Grant funds will only be used in the NSLP, SBP, ASSP, or other Child Nutrition Programs, and not for use in community meals.

I certify that, if awarded, _____ (SFA name) will comply with the stated regulations, principles, and assurances.

Name and title of authorized representative

Phone

Email

Signature and title of authorized representative

Date

ATTACHMENT A
REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

1. The Student Success & Wellness Bureau will prepare award letters for successful awardees and submit them to PED's fiscal bureau for review and approval. Award letters will provide grant requirement details and appropriate fiscal award information.
2. SFAs are required to budget awards in the PED Operating Budget Management System (OBMS).
3. Bureau of Indian Education schools not currently registered in OBMS will receive guidance regarding the registration procedure for OBMS. All grantees are required to register in OBMS to receive reimbursement through this grant.
4. PED's program and fiscal bureaus will verify proposed budgets through OBMS.
5. SFAs submit requests for reimbursement (RfR) in OBMS with appropriate supporting documentation as identified in step no. 2.
6. The Student Success & Wellness Bureau reviews approvals for each RfR; upon program approval, RfRs travel to fiscal for two additional levels of review. Upon final approval of the RfR, a voucher is created in SHARE and submitted to DFA for payment processing.
7. The OBMS workflow process for step nos. 5 and 6 averages around 30 days for RfRs with required supporting documentation.
8. PED reserves the right to rescind unspent funds starting February 1, 2022.