

Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program: Request for Applications (RFA)



Released: Dec. 4, 2024

Application Due:

Jan. 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.

No late submissions will be accepted.



**Department of
Education &
Workforce**

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Summary

BACKGROUND

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (“the Department”) is excited to announce an opportunity for sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to support the development of and pilot a new Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program (“the Program”). The Program is funded through the 2024 Patrick Leahy Farm to School State Agency Grant awarded to the Department by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The objective of the Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant, State Agency track, is:

To improve access to local foods in eligible Child Nutrition Program (CNP) sites through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local sourcing and agricultural education efforts.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Program is to educate and prepare children from pre-kindergarten through 5th grade to grow and harvest school grown produce safely while increasing the confidence of school officials that fruits and vegetables grown on site can be safe for consumption, thereby increasing children’s access to school grown foods for both educational and wellness purposes.

The Program will adapt the [Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Course](#), currently used by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) in their adult Produce Safety Alliance trainings, for preK-5 students. The Program will include a Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Garden Safety Toolkit, corresponding picture book, Farm to School (K-5th grade) Garden Safety Toolkit, complimentary videos, and a series of farm to school standard operating procedures (SOPs) for bringing produce from the field to cafeterias and classrooms. The Program’s toolkits, materials, and videos will provide produce safety lessons on the following six topic areas:

- 1) Introduction to Produce Safety
- 2) Student Health and Hygiene
- 3) Soil
- 4) Wildlife
- 5) Water
- 6) Harvest Handling and Sanitation

CHILD NUTRITION ENGAGEMENT

To ensure the Program meets the desired goal of increasing school grown foods in child nutrition programs, the Department will select two National School Lunch Program (NSLP) sponsors and two Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsors to help in the development of the Program and to assess the created materials and resources. Selected sponsors, or “piloting organizations,” will each contribute a minimum of two individuals to

participate in a Produce Safety Workgroup that will create the Program’s toolkits and materials, ensuring they are appropriate for Ohio’s young gardeners and relevant to child nutrition food service operations. Selected sponsors will then pilot the Program with their students, providing feedback on the results.

FUNDING

Selected NSLP sponsors will receive an award of up to \$10,000 and selected CACFP sponsors will receive an award of up to \$5,000 to support the required activities in developing and piloting the Program. A cash match is not required.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance to pilot the Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program will begin from the date of award to April 30, 2026. However, an awarded sponsor may not need the entire period of performance to complete the pilot program and may close out early. An awarded sponsor may be terminated from the grant at any time during the period of performance if the organization falls out of good standing or is terminated from the NSLP or CACFP.

TIMELINE AND DEADLINES

Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program Events	Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program Dates
RFA Released	Dec. 4, 2024
RFA Technical Assistance Webinar *	Dec. 18, 2024 at 9 – 10 a.m. ET
RFA Closes	Jan. 24, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. ET
Award Notification and Announcement	March 2025
Award Term Begins	March 2025
Award Term Ends	April 30, 2026

** The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is committed to providing access and inclusion and reasonable accommodation in its services, activities, programs and employment opportunities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable laws. To request a reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please contact Katie Barnes, ADA coordinator, at ADAaccommodation@education.ohio.gov or (614) 387-2200 (voice) no later than three days before the scheduled webinar.*

CONTACT

Please contact Hannah Hart at Hannah.Hart@education.ohio.gov or 614-965-3741 with questions.

Requirements

ACTIVITIES

Selected organizations are required to contribute a minimum of two individuals to participate in the Produce Safety Workgroup, attend an in-person produce safety training, and pilot the Program to at least 30 students.

PARTICIPATE IN PRODUCE SAFETY WORKGROUP

The Produce Safety Workgroup will consist of Department staff, a Produce Safety Specialist from the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), invited farm to school stakeholders and a food service staff member, a classroom educator, and the school garden coordinator from each of the organizations. A Lead Produce Safety Specialist from ODA will serve as the subject matter expert and advisor to the workgroup. The workgroup will adapt the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Course to reflect the needs for preK-5 students and create content for a school garden produce safety toolkit for use in child care centers and elementary schools. Drafted toolkit materials will be finalized by the Department's Office of Communications and Outreach. The Department will contract with a creative agency to develop videos aligned to the lessons and topics of the training.

The selected sponsors must contribute at least one food service professional and one classroom educator to the Produce Safety Workgroup. Organizations must also provide their school garden coordinator if that individual is not already included as the educator or food service representative.

The duties of the workgroup members are to:

- Draft toolkit information, activity pages, lesson plans, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs);
- Provide technical assistance on toolkit development;
- Ensure toolkits and SOPs reflect the diversity of garden types and cultural foods grown across Ohio;
- Assist in the development and contribute feedback on the lesson plans and educational components;
- Advise the contracted creative agency on the content and visual appeal of the topical videos;
- Develop program evaluation methods; and
- Attend monthly meetings to provide feedback and recommendations on the development of training program materials.

The Produce Safety Workgroup will meet virtually each month during the period of performance to discuss progress and provide feedback. A meeting schedule will be developed by the Department with input on availability from all workgroup members. Calls will be hosted via Microsoft Teams and be limited to 60 minutes with a meeting agenda provided

beforehand. The initial kickoff meeting may last longer than 60 minutes. Monthly meetings will continue during the summer months. Identified representatives to the workgroup should make every effort to attend all monthly meetings during the period of performance and should aim to notify the Department at least 24 hours prior to the meeting if they will be absent.

PRODUCE SAFETY TRAINING

Workgroup members will be required to attend an in-person session of the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training, hosted in Columbus, Ohio. This training will be led by ODA and last approximately four hours. Workgroup members will receive a training course manual and certificate of attendance. The date of the training will be decided with input on availability from all workgroup members.

The estimated monthly time commitment from workgroup members is one to five hours. Workgroup members may need to spend time outside of monthly meetings completing assigned tasks.

PILOT TRAINING PROGRAM

Selected sponsors will pilot the finished Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program at either one elementary school site or one child care center site. The pilot site must be identified in the application. Pilot sites must have an outdoor garden on location. The staff responsible for piloting the training program will be the identified food service staff member, classroom educator, and school garden coordinator participating in the Produce Safety Workgroup. Specific responsibilities of staff members within the selected sponsor's organization are left up to the school or center to determine. Organizations must pilot all toolkit activities and materials with a minimum of 30 students. To pilot the Program, identified organizations will:

- Use the Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Garden Safety Toolkit if a CACFP sponsor or the Farm to School (K-5th grade) Garden Safety Toolkit if a NSLP sponsor. Toolkits will contain, but are not limited to, the following resources:
 - Lesson plans;
 - Activity pages;
 - Outcome evaluations to assess and reinforce knowledge;
 - Six, 2-5-minute videos reinforcing the concept of the topic area;
 - Stickers, passports, or other child-friendly participation incentives; and
 - Food Safety Picture Book.
- Use the developed farm to school SOPs in their food service operations.
- Participate in process and outcome evaluation assessments via Microsoft Forms.
- Administer pre- and post-assessments to all participating students. Students will complete surveys via paper forms. Results may be reported to the Department via mail or digitally.

The estimated time commitment to pilot the training program is subject to change but is anticipated to require six to ten hours to test all toolkit activities and materials.

Eligibility

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Current NSLP or CACFP sponsors in good standing who have operated the NSLP or CACFP for at least one full school year prior to applying. Selected sponsors must remain in good standing during the period of performance to remain eligible for participation.
2. Applicants must currently operate an edible school garden.
 - a. Applicants must have operated an edible school garden for at least two full continuous school years prior to applying.
 - b. Applicants must plan to have the school garden in operation throughout the grant period.
 - c. The school garden must include an edible *outdoor* garden. A greenhouse may be considered an outdoor garden.
3. Applicants must currently employ or contract food service staff, classroom educator(s), and school garden coordinator(s) who manage, maintain, or use an edible school garden. The school garden coordinator position may also be the identified food service staff or classroom educator.
4. Applicants must be able to contribute a minimum of two different staff members to the Produce Safety Workgroup.
5. Applicants must provide a minimum of 30 students that will pilot the Program.
6. NSLP sponsor applicants must operate an elementary school that serves kindergarten through fifth grade students.
7. CACFP sponsor applicants must operate an independent or center based child care program that serves children three to five years old.

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Ineligible applicants include the following:

- Individuals
- Sponsors of the CACFP operating home-based child care
- Sponsors of the CACFP that only serve children younger than three years old
- Sponsors of the NSLP that do not serve kindergarten through fifth grade students
- Sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
- Sponsors of the Special Milk Program only
- Community gardens or farms
- Private, for-profit, or non-profit organizations not sponsoring the NSLP or CACFP
- Sponsors with less than 30 age-appropriate students at the proposed site to receive the pilot program education

PRIORITIZATION/SELECTION

PRIORITIZATION:

Applications will be awarded one additional bonus point for every priority area they met during the quality review based on the following criteria:

1. Proposed sites serving a high proportion (40% or greater) of students from the following race/ethnicity groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native; Black; Non-Hispanic; Hispanic; Multiracial; and Pacific Islander.
2. Proposed sites serving a high proportion (50% or greater) of children who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
3. Proposed sites in [rural areas](#).
4. Anticipated Produce Safety Workgroup members with [Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training](#).
5. Proposed sites operating both an edible outdoor garden and edible indoor garden.

To receive the bonus points, applicants must include supporting documentation for meeting each selected priority area to their Additional Application Documents folder. Please note, applicants must not send students' personally identifiable information (PII). Applicants who do not provide supporting documentation for priority area(s) will not be considered for bonus points.

SELECTION:

1. Each application is for one identified garden site. Sponsors may submit more than one application; however, only one site per sponsor will be selected.
2. Two different NSLP sponsors and two different CACFP sponsors will be selected.

ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS

All costs proposed in the budget and detailed in the budget narrative must be allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable. Refer to [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles](#) for a detailed description of all allowable and unallowable costs.

All funds must be obligated by April 30, 2026, and liquidated by July 30, 2026, to be considered allowable.

ALLOWABLE

- Food safety and garden safety tools and supplies directly related to Program activities. Costs must be prorated for their use on Program activities.
- Classroom supplies, printing, copying, and postage needed to pilot the Program in the classroom or after school. Costs must be prorated for their use on program activities.
- Reasonable prorated salaries, wages, or fringe benefits for food service personnel, educators, and school garden coordinators:
 - Reimbursement can be provided to staff who are required to perform work outside of their regular contracted hours, and for the time in which the

individual is directly working on Program activities during their contracted hours. If an applicant budgets for labor costs of staff during their contracted hours, a signed statement from the school principal and school or district treasurer will be needed to verify the staff member will not receive dual funding for the same hours worked.

- Cost of travel to the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training.
- Cost of substitute teacher(s) to allow for staff to work on Program activities.
- Indirect costs (requires an approved rate).

UNALLOWABLE

- Any tools, supplies, or labor costs associated with maintaining, enhancing, or expanding an existing edible school garden that are not directly related to Program activities. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Garden tools
 - Large farm equipment
 - Raised-bed materials
 - Greenhouses
 - Hydroponic Towers
 - Seeds
 - Rain barrels
 - Kitchen tools or appliances used to process garden grown produce
 - Salaries, wages, or fringe benefits for any staff not participating in the Produce Safety Workgroup or engaged in activities to pilot the Program with children
- Equipment purchases. Equipment is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of one year or longer and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$10,000.
- Food
- Recurring operational expenses, including administrative and programmatic activities such as utilities, administrator salaries, and professional dues or memberships
- Costs associated with the initial licensure or renewal of teacher licensure, including costs of continuing education credits for professional development coursework completed at a college or university
- Computers or connectivity hardware
- All other transportation and travel expenses
- Bad debts, late payment fees
- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services

Note: These are not exhaustive lists.

How To Apply

APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be submitted via Microsoft Forms. All sections of the application must be completed before the application is submitted for review.

To complete the application, applicants must create a Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive digital folder in which additional documentation will be uploaded. Title the folder as follows: "IRN, Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program, Additional Application Documents." Once all documents are complete and uploaded into the folder, verify access to Hannah Hart at Hannah.Hart@education.ohio.gov. The folder web address will be shared in the Microsoft Forms application.

Applicants who are unable to access the Microsoft Form may request a paper copy of the application by contacting Hannah Hart at Hannah.Hart@education.ohio.gov.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Applications missing any of the following documentation will be considered incomplete and not eligible for further review:

1. Complete online [Produce Safety for School Gardens Pilot Program Application](#).
2. The Additional Application Documents folder web address must be shared in the application. The additional documents include:
 - a. Completed [Cost Estimate Plan](#).
 - b. Completed [Dual Funding Verification Letter](#) from the school principal and school or district treasurer to verify the staff member(s) is not receiving dual funding for the same hours worked (only required if applicant budgets for labor costs during contracted hours).
 - c. Priority Area documentation (if applicable).

Once all steps have been completed, the program contact will receive an email within two business days confirming all application documents have been received.

Note: The Department is not responsible for any technical or logistical problems resulting in the Department not receiving the application on time. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the submission is received before the deadline. Once the application is submitted, applicants will receive a confirmation email from the Department.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications are due by **11:59 p.m. ET on Jan. 24, 2025**. *No late applications will be accepted after the deadline.*

Application Review

REVIEW PROCESS

TECHNICAL REVIEW

All submitted applications will undergo a technical review by Department staff to ensure the application is complete and meets all basic requirements. The Technical Review Rubric can be found in [Appendix A](#). Applications that do not meet these requirements will be considered incomplete and removed from further consideration.

QUALITY REVIEW

A panel of reviewers composed of Department staff will evaluate all eligible applications based on the criteria in the Quality Evaluation Rubric found in [Appendix B](#). All applications will be scored by a total of three reviewers and averaged to determine a final score. The two top-scoring applications from NSLP sponsors and the two top-scoring applications from CACFP sponsors will be invited to participate. If a tie between applicants occurs, the three reviewers will have a consensus meeting and determine which applicant will be awarded. If the two top-scoring applications for either program are submitted from the same sponsor, only the highest-scored application will be awarded, and the next highest-scored application from a different sponsor will be awarded.

APPLICANT NOTIFICATION

All applicants will be notified of their award status in March 2025. A notice of award email will be sent to the identified grant contact named in the application. The notice of award must be signed by the Superintendent/Authorized Representative and the Treasurer/Fiscal Representative. Selected sponsors will have seven business days to return the signed notice of award to the Department. If a sponsor does not return the signed notice of award in seven days, the award offer will be invalid, and the next highest scoring applicant will be awarded.

RECORDKEEPING AND FUND REIMBURSEMENT

FUND REIMBURSEMENT

Awardees will request and receive reimbursement to their food service accounts through the Claims Reporting and Reimbursement System (CRRS) throughout the grant period. The Department cannot pre-pay for any Program expenses. The individual responsible for submitting a claim in CRRS must be listed in the application. Program purchases must be made from the organization's food service account. Journal entries should be used within the organization's accounting system to establish documentation of expenses. Please note that it may take up to 10 business days after approval of the claim to receive reimbursement to the food service account.

Awardees will be required to provide the following documentation upon expenditure and request for reimbursement:

- Invoices, purchase orders, and receipts detailing item(s) purchased, including shipping & handling or any additional fees.
- Time and effort logs, if requesting reimbursement for time spent on the pilot program during contracted work hours. See [Time and Effort Log Template](#) for guidance.

Only allowable costs will be reimbursed. See [Allowable and Unallowable Costs](#). If an awardee is unsure whether a cost is allowable contact Hannah Hart at Hannah.Hart@education.ohio.gov prior to purchase.

RECORDKEEPING

Awardees shall retain grant files and supporting documentation for a term of three (3) years plus the current fiscal year. Program sponsors must make these files available for review by the USDA or the Department upon request.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Additional Considerations

ACCOMMODATIONS

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is committed to providing access and inclusion and reasonable accommodation in its services, activities, programs and employment opportunities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable laws. To request a reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please contact Katie Barnes, ADA coordinator, at ADAaccommodation@education.ohio.gov or 614-387-7716 (voice) no later than December 9, 2025.

AWARD NOTICE

The Department is not obligated to make any award as a result of this RFA. Unless an applicant receives a signed award document with terms and conditions, any contact from Department staff should not be considered as a notice of an award.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The Department requires all panel reviewers to sign a conflict of interest and confidentiality form to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect the application review and evaluation process. Names of applicants submitting an application will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the maximum extent possible. The identities of the reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire process and the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

FUNDING SOURCE

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Definitions

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

A federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating child care centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (CNP)

A suite of programs that offer food and nutrition assistance for children. These programs are administered at the federal level by the USDA.

CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENT AND REPORTING SYSTEM (CRRS)

The online platform used by sponsors enrolled in USDA child nutrition programs through the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce to submit required data and apply for meal reimbursements.

CLASSROOM EDUCATOR

A teacher licensed by the State Board of Education to work in an Ohio school or district. This position may also oversee or participate in the school garden program.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE)

Educational programming designed for children during their preschool years (birth to age 5).

EDIBLE SCHOOL GARDEN

A garden space where children can learn about and participate in the growing and harvesting of fresh produce that can be used in child nutrition programs.

FARM TO SCHOOL

While individual farm to school programs vary based on their unique vision, community, and geographic region, the state of Ohio defines farm to school programs as combining: (1) child nutrition programs buying Ohio grown or produced foods for use in meal programs, (2) educational activities that connect classroom learning with cafeteria meals, and (3) hands-on food education opportunities in school gardens, on farms, in culinary classes, in settings that celebrate traditional foodways, and through other experiential learning pathways.

FOOD SERVICE STAFF

A position that manages, oversees, or prepares meals for children attending an elementary school or child care center. The position may also oversee or participate in the school garden program. Common positions may include food service director, food service manager, food service assistant, or other.

GOOD STANDING

Good standing means the status of a program operator that meets its Program responsibilities, is current with its financial obligations, and, if applicable, has fully implemented all corrective actions within the required period of time.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (NSLP)

A federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (ODA)

The state of Ohio agency that identifies and addresses the needs of produce growers and enforces the Produce Safety Rule. ODA provides farm produce safety consultations and provides Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training courses across the state.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE (THE DEPARTMENT)

The state of Ohio agency that administers all federal (USDA) child nutrition programs.

PRODUCE SAFETY ALLIANCE GROWER TRAINING COURSE

An adult training course developed by Cornell University that covers seven modules that focus on understanding produce safety risks during production, harvest, and post-harvest activities. The training is based on a Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).

RURAL AREA

An area where a school or child care center is located and meets the definition of rural for the Summer Meal Programs according to [7 CFR 225.2](#). Organizations must use the [USDA Rural Designation Map](#) to determine if their location is considered rural.

SCHOOL GARDEN COORDINATOR

A position that works closely with food service staff or classroom educators to facilitate and support garden-based education and manage the school garden.

SPONSOR

The managing organization that assumes financial and administrative responsibility for program operations of the CACFP or NSLP.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS)

A set of detailed step-by-step instructions that describe how to carry out any given process.

Appendix A – Technical Evaluation Rubric

The following selection criteria must be evident in a successful application. Any application not meeting any of the technical criteria will not be considered for funding.

Technical Criteria	Yes	No	Comments
Applicant Information is complete and answers Questions 1-7			
All Eligibility Criteria is met			
Cost Estimate Plan is complete			
A food service staff member, classroom educator, and school garden coordinator are identified. The school garden coordinator may also be the food service staff or classroom educator.			
Documentation from the school principal and school or district treasurer to verify staff members will not receive dual funding for the same hours worked (only required if applicant budgets for staff labor costs during contracted hours)			
All application sections are complete			

Appendix B – Quality Criteria and Review Rubric

Each application that has met the technical review will have a quality review completed. The following quality criteria will be scored by a minimum of three staff reviewers from the Department of Education and Workforce. Application reviewers will evaluate each application and award points based on the following criteria.

In sections where qualitative evaluation is necessary for reviewers, the applicant’s response will be evaluated on a scale of “0” points to “4” points, with the ability to earn a minimum of 0 points and a maximum of 4 points. Where qualitative evaluation is necessary, the below rating characteristics will be used.

QUALITY CRITERIA

Staffing Summary (24 points): Complete Section 4 of the application, detailing the staff that will participate in the program and their experience in conducting activities similar to the program activities.

Pilot Organization Summary (12 points): Complete Section 5 of the application, detailing the organization’s technology resources, capacity, and plan to assign program roles and responsibilities.

School Garden Summary (4 points): Complete Section 6 of the application, detailing the current landscape of the organization’s school garden program and current garden produce safety policies or procedures in place.

Cost Estimate Plan (8 points): Complete Section 7 of the application, detailing anticipated costs and why the funds being requested are necessary to complete program activities. The narrative must adequately justify expenses and estimated costs.

RATING CHARACTERISTICS

Not Addressed (0 points): No response provided.

Poorly Developed (1 point): The response is significantly incomplete and missing crucial information.

Adequately Developed (2 points): The response meets most of the established criteria but requires additional information or explanation.

Well-Developed (3 points): The response meets the established criteria but requires additional information or explanation.

Fully Developed (4 points): The response provides a clear and realistic picture of how program activities will be achieved and how the program will operate smoothly under the organization.

QUALITY REVIEW RUBRIC

Review Criteria: Staffing Summary	Not Addressed	Poorly Developed	Adequately Developed	Well Developed	Fully Developed
Describe experience managing and maintaining the school garden program.					
Describe experience with school garden and produce safety training and education.					
Describe experience creating classroom materials.					
Describe experience participating in a workgroup.					
Describe experience developing evaluation methods.					
Describe experience writing and implementing SOPs.					

Review Criteria: Pilot Organization Summary	Not Addressed	Poorly Developed	Adequately Developed	Well Developed	Fully Developed
Describe technology resource available.					
Describe capacity to complete grant activities.					
Describe plan to assign pilot program roles					

and responsibilities to staff.					
Describe preliminary plan for piloting anticipated toolkit activities and materials with a minimum of 30 students.					

Review Criteria: School Garden Summary	Not Addressed	Poorly Developed	Adequately Developed	Well Developed	Fully Developed
Describe edible school garden program and garden produce safety measures in place.					

Review Criteria: Cost Estimate Plan	Not Addressed	Poorly Developed	Adequately Developed	Well Developed	Fully Developed
Describe how labor costs will be tracked and monitored.					
Budget narrative adequately justifies expenses and estimated costs.					

Total Points Earned (no priority area bonus points)	/52
Bonus Points: For every priority area an applicant meets, one bonus point will be awarded. This allows for a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 5 additional points. To receive points, applications must be supported by documentation that shows how the priority area is met.	/5
Total Score:	/57

Appendix D – Dual Funding Verification Template

(Letterhead of Sponsor)

Brian Jones

(Date)

Chief Fiscal Officer

25 South Front Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215-4183

IRN (6 digits)

To Brian Jones, Chief Fiscal Officer,

(Sponsor name) provides this letter to indicate our intention to apply to the Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program (the Program) and to budget for labor costs of participating staff during their contracted hours. The following staff members from (Name of Elementary School or Childcare Center) plan to support the development of and pilot the Program:

- Staff Member Name, Title
- Staff Member Name, Title
- Staff Member Name, Title

Although staff anticipate working on activities for the Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program during their contracted hours, the same hours will not be billed twice. The hours worked will be prorated and billed to the Program. The hours worked on the training program will be documented on time and effort logs and submitted to the Department of Education and Workforce via the Claim Reimbursement and Reporting System (CRRS) before receiving reimbursement. (Sponsor Name) and the identified staff members understand reimbursement could take up to 10 days from expense approval.

(Sponsor Name) is eager to participate in the pilot program and believes the Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program will equip Ohio students and educators with the knowledge and resources to plant, harvest, prepare, and enjoy safe local produce. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(Signature – School Principal or Childcare Director Name)

(Title)

(Sponsor Name)

Signature – District or Childcare Center Treasurer Name)

(Title)

(Sponsor Name)

Appendix E – Application Questions

Applicant Information

1. Program Primary Contact Full Name
2. Program Primary Contact Title
3. Program Primary Contact Phone Number
4. Program Primary Contact Email Address
5. Name of School Food Authority (SFA) or Childcare Center
6. IRN of SFA or Childcare Center
7. Name of Anticipated Site – Elementary School or Childcare Center
8. Address of Anticipated Site - Elementary School or Childcare Center
9. Name of Superintendent or Authorized Representative
10. Name of Treasurer or Fiscal Representative
11. Name of Individual Responsible for Submitting a Claim in the Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System (CRRS)

Eligibility

12. I have the authority in my organization to apply for the grant. (Yes/No)
13. I am an Ohio SFA or childcare center that sponsors the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and currently have an active IRN in the Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System (CRRS) account. (Yes/No)
14. My organization has operated the NSLP or CACFP for one full school year. (Yes/No)
15. My organization sponsors the NSLP at an elementary school site. Does the elementary school serve children in kindergarten through 5th grade? (Yes/No)
16. My organization sponsors the CACFP at an independent or center-based child care site. Does the child care center serve children ages 3 to 5 years old?
17. My organization serves a minimum of 30 students that will receive the pilot training program. (Yes/No)
18. My organization is in good standing with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (Good standing means the status of a program operator that meets its Program responsibilities, is current with its financial obligations, and, if applicable, has fully implemented all corrective actions within the required period of time). (Yes/No)
19. Provide organization's Unique Entity ID (UEI) number. This is the 12-character alphanumeric value assigned by SAM.gov.
20. My organization currently operates an edible school garden program. (Yes/No)
21. My organization has operated an edible school garden program for at least two full school years prior to completing this application. (Yes/No)
22. My organization plans to have the school garden in operation throughout the grant period. (Yes/No)
23. My organization's edible school garden program includes the operation of an edible outdoor garden. (Yes/No)
24. How did you hear about the Produce Safety for School Gardens Pilot Program? Check all that apply.

- a. Items of Interest email or EdConnection article from the Department of Education and Workforce
- b. Email from my Education Program Specialist
- c. The Department of Education and Workforce Website
- d. A Department of Education and Workforce Webinar
- e. Word of mouth
- f. Other

Priority Areas

25. Does your proposed site serve a high proportion (40% or greater) of students from the following race/ethnicity groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native; Black; Non-Hispanic; Hispanic; Multiracial; and/or Pacific Islander? Proportions of students may be combined from the listed groups to meet the 40% threshold. (Yes/No)
26. Does your proposed site serve a high proportion (50% or greater) of children who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch? (Yes/No)
27. Is your proposed site in a rural area? To determine visit: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/rural-designation> (Yes/No)
28. Does your organization have staff who will participate in the Produce Safety Workgroup and who have also undergone the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training? (Yes/No)
29. Does your proposed site operate both an outdoor edible garden and indoor edible garden? (Yes/No)

Staffing Summary

30. Full Name of Food Service Staff Member
31. Title of Food Service Staff Member
32. Food Service Staff Member Phone Number
33. Food Service Staff Member Email Address
34. Full Name of Classroom Educator
35. Title of Classroom Educator
36. Classroom Educator Phone Number
37. Classroom Educator Email Address
38. Full Name of School Garden Coordinator
39. Title of School Garden Coordinator
40. School Garden Coordinator Phone Number
41. School Garden Coordinator Email Address
42. Identify and describe any or all of the listed staff members' experience and responsibilities managing and maintaining the organization's school garden program. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
43. Identify and describe any or all of the listed staff members' experience with school garden/produce safety education and training. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
44. Identify and describe any or all of the listed staff members' previous experience creating classroom materials. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, includes spaces)

45. Identify and describe any or all of the listed staff members' previous experience and responsibilities participating in a workgroup. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
46. Identify and describe any or all of the listed staff members' previous experience developing evaluation methods. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
47. Identify and describe any or all of the listed staff members' previous experience writing and implementing standard operating procedures (SOPs). (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)

Pilot Organization Summary

48. Describe the organization's technology resources that will allow students to view the anticipated toolkit videos. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
49. Describe the organization's capacity to carry out the expectations of this grant. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
50. Describe your organization's plan to assign roles and responsibilities to each identified staff member based on the requirements of grant recipients outlined in the RFA. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)
51. Describe your organization's preliminary plan for piloting the anticipated toolkit activities and materials with a minimum of 30 students.

Edible School Garden Program Summary

52. Describe your organization's edible school garden program and any garden produce safety measures or procedures currently in place. (Maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces)

Cost Estimate Plan

53. Please confirm that you must provide access to the Cost Estimate Plan with your application for it to be considered complete.
 - a. A completed Cost Estimate Plan will be available to the Department prior to the RFA deadline of Jan. 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET.
54. Does your Cost Estimate Plan include labor costs of staff during their contracted hours? (Yes/No)
55. Please confirm that you must provide access to a signed statement from the school principal and school or district treasurer to verify the staff member will not receive dual funding for the same hours worked *if* you budgeted for staff labor costs during their contracted hours.
 - b. A signed statement from the school principal and school or district treasurer will be available for the Department to access prior to the RFA deadline of Jan. 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET.
56. Share URL address to Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive folder:
57. Describe how labor costs for food service staff, classroom educators, and school garden coordinators will be tracked and monitored. If anticipating an internal transfer of funds to reimburse classroom educators or school garden coordinators, identify the staff positions that will require the internal transfer and the staff positions that will initiate and ensure funds are allocated appropriately.
58. Amount of total funding requested.

Additional Documentation

59. Please confirm that you must provide access to priority area documentation for it to be considered part of the application.

- a. Documentation of priority area status will be made available to the Department prior to the RFA deadline of Jan. 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET (if applicable).

60. Share URL address to Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive folder:

Certification

61. By typing my name below, I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information in this application is correct. The applicant designated below hereby applies to the Produce Safety for School Gardens Training Program for the purpose described in the Request for Applications (RFA). I also certify that my organization is not suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal funds.

