2026 Sustainable Food and Agriculture Grant Program Application Packet

Office of Sustainability, Climate Action, and Resilience

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Sustainable Food and Agriculture Grant Program Information

Background

In November 2016, voters approved the Sustainability Tax ballot initiative, to allocate a portion of sales and use tax revenue to fund countywide sustainability infrastructure and programs. Pending Boulder County Commissioner (BOCC) formal board approval of the 2026 budget, the allocation of $50,000 has specifically been set aside for this program. The goal of this funding opportunity is to provide Boulder County private and non-profit organizations the means to undertake environmental sustainability priorities that benefit Boulder County's food system. Soil health projects are no longer eligible under the Sustainable Food and Agriculture Fund. If you are looking for soil health funding, please see newly announced [Boulder County Soil Health Initiative.](#)

Categories of Funding

The Sustainable Food and Agriculture fund supports four broad categories:

1. Farmer/producer education, conferences, and workshops that focus on sustainable and regenerative agriculture demonstrations;
2. Farmer's market infrastructure;
3. Sustainable local food and crop processing;
4. Programmatic and resource support for frontline farm workers and organizations.

Eligibility Requirements and Criteria

Boulder County's Sustainable Food and Agriculture Funding 2026 is open to Boulder County private and nonprofit organizations.

To be eligible for funding, projects must follow all federal, state/local land use regulations and permit requirements. Project applicants must be registered as a business, an official non-profit organization, or a governmental entity. Projects must also be based within Boulder County boundaries.

If you have received a grant award from the Boulder County Sustainable Food and Agriculture Fund in the past, you must wait two years to be eligible for funding again. For example, if you received funding in 2024, you must wait until 2026 to reapply.

Funding Range

Grants will range from $10,000 - $25,000.

Project Categories and Examples

There are four categories in which applicants may apply. We will ask you which category your project is addressing, and it is okay if your project addresses multiple categories. The bulleted list below each category is an example of what could be included in the application.

Education and workshops

- Support for sharing best practices, farm demonstrations, soil health conferences, backyard soil science efforts.

Infrastructure

- Farmer's market infrastructure

- Coop infrastructure
- Storage and refrigeration
- Processing equipment

Local food and crop processing

- Innovative local processing ideas
- Food hub development
- Local food systems grant financing

Programmatic and resource support for frontline farm workers and organizations

- Support for the frontline farming community
- Initiatives to increase health and safety for frontline workers
- Education
- Nonprofit support and collaboration
- Project benefits people fitting the [USDA's definition of historically underserved producers](#)

Definitions

Frontline farm workers

Workers whose physical labor and presence is needed to run daily operations on a farm, food processing plant, or any other stage of food production.

Frontline farm organizations

Organizations that support frontline farm workers to work safely, promote safe workplace practices, and have access to essential resources. Organizations that work to create a socially just food system.

Ineligible Uses of Funds

Funds may not be used for the following purposes:
- Soil health improvements (please see Soil Health Initiative instead)
- Repayment of existing debt, or pre-existing tax liens or obligations
- Payment of organizational overhead exceeding 15% of proposed project budget
- Legal fees
- Loan or bank fees
- Subsidization of existing contracts
- Funds for start-up business
- Labor for existing programs
- Travel

Application and Funding Calendar

Dates are subject to change. Applicants will be notified in advance of any schedule changes.

Milestone	Date
Funding Application Issued	Dec. 8, 2025
Application Due	Jan. 7, 2026
Announcement of Awards	April 3, 2026
Project Start Date	May 4, 2026
End of Project Funding and Final Report Due	May 4, 2027

Application Instructions and Procedures

All submissions must be placed through the [Sustainable Food and Agriculture online application](#).

Applicants are advised to review the application packet in its entirety prior to preparing and submitting an application. If after reviewing the application materials you are uncertain whether a proposed project fits within the funding guidelines, please contact Tim Broderick at tbroderick@bouldercounty.gov, Dede Croissant at dcroissant@bouldercounty.gov

Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. MST on Jan. 7, 2026. Any application received after the deadline will not be considered.

General Conditions

All materials submitted will become the property of Boulder County and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds and any information submitted or generated is subject to public disclosure requirements.

The County reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modifications of the application, to accept or reject any or all applications received, to grant full or partial funding of any request, and/or to cancel all or part of this solicitation at any time prior to awarding funds. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis, and no requests will be considered outside the standardized application and review process. There is no appeals process for applications not accepted for funding.

Application Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a select application review committee made up of Boulder County Office of Sustainability, Climate Action, and Resilience (OSCAR) staff.

During the review process, staff may contact the applicant for additional information or clarification. However, an expression of interest by staff should not be construed as an indication of forthcoming funding approval. Applicants are advised to make their submittal as clear as possible.

The advisory committee will make their recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners, who will make final decisions about award approvals. It is expected that awards will be announced in April 2026 following Board of County Commissioners approval.

Application Evaluation Criteria

All submitted applications which follow the Sustainable Food and Agriculture requirements will be evaluated according to the following criteria.

- Equity – Applicant's project demonstrates consideration to equity. How your project benefits people fitting the [USDA's definition of historically underserved producers](#).
- Impact – Measurable impact to priority areas: farmer education, infrastructure, local food and crop processing, and programmatic and resource support for frontline farm workers and organizations frontline. In addition, the effects beyond a project's operation or organization.
- Outputs – Clear and successful output prediction in categories such as: pounds of food processed, revenue generated, number of frontline farm workers supported, number of events held, hours spent educating, and number of people educated.

- Organizational Capacity - Applicants are qualified to implement project and achieve stated objectives.
- Financial Viability - Applicants demonstrate sound fiscal management. Project budget is realistic and cost effective.

Funding Awards

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review process. For successful applicants, funds will be available for expenditure only after a service contract between Boulder County and the applicant is signed and executed. Funds must be expended during the grant period of 12 months Boulder County will not be liable for any project costs incurred prior to the legal execution of the contract, unless mutually agreed upon in writing. Unused funds are not available for other uses under this agreement.

Boulder County reserves the right to revoke any funding award for which a contract is not executed, due to delays on the part of the applicant, within two (2) months of the award. Funded programs/projects must be initiated within three (3) months of execution of the contract, or funds may be withdrawn, unless specific written approval is granted for delays due to extenuating circumstances.

Reports, Monitoring, and Payment Schedule

Boulder County reserves the right to monitor funded projects and to receive timely and pertinent information on status and progress. A schedule for report submittals or other necessary documentation will be established in consultation with Boulder County staff. Failure to submit reports shall invalidate the applicant for further funding requests for three years and may result in fund withdrawal.

Note: Funds will be reimbursed based on proper documentation of receipts and invoices billed specifically to the individual or organization that is listed within the signed contract. Typically, reimbursement checks take four to six weeks to arrive to the grantee. Funds must be used in accordance with the final budget upon which the application was based. All publicity or promotional materials concerning the project must recognize boulder county funding including news releases, feature stories, public service announcements, brochures and product literature produced during the term of this Agreement.

2025 Sustainable Food and Agriculture Fund Application Questions

Below are the application questions. You may use this to draft your answers as Wufoo does not save your work in progress. Applications will only be accepted via [Sustainable Food and Agriculture online form](#). **Please be aware, no attachments will be accepted. This includes Letters of Support.**

Contact Questions

1. Applicant Name
2. Applicant Email
3. Business Address:
4. Have you applied to the Boulder County Sustainable Food and Ag Fund previously? (Please note, if you have received funding previously, you must wait 2 years before applying again. For example, if you received funding in 2024, you will be eligible for funding in 2026).
   a. Yes
   b. No

Project Questions

1. Category you are applying for (please check all that apply):
   a. Education
   b. Market Infrastructure
   c. Food Processing
   d. Frontline Farm Worker Support
2. Summarize your project in 1 sentence.
3. In 300 words or less, please describe what you would like to accomplish and how you believe this funding will help you achieve success.
4. Please describe in 250 words any impacts from your project that would benefit people fitting the [USDA's definition of historically](#) underserved farmers/ranchers. Identify the percentage of funds that would benefit the historically underserved farmers/ranchers (for example, nonprofits that use a percentage of funds for administrative/overhead should identify the percentage of administrative/overhead costs).
5. Number of acres expected to be impacted through the project:
6. Number of frontline farm workers expected to be supported:
7. Number of people expected to be educated:

Budget Questions

1. Amount requested: What will you spend funds on? Please describe expenditures and estimated cost per item.