



COLORADO
Department of Education

Funding Opportunity

Program Information Webinar

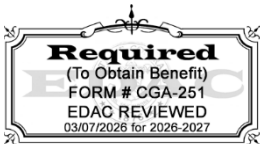
Recorded Application Informational webinar available on [CDE's Source Local Foods Webpage](#).

Program Materials Due: Friday, May 22, 2026, at 4 pm

The non-competitive application will open in GAINS on Monday, March 30, and close on Friday, May 22 at 4 pm

Local Food Program Non-Competitive Application

Pursuant to C.R.S 22-82.9-205
Administered by the School Nutrition Unit



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Note: The following version of the non-competitive application is intended as a reference document for instructions and program planning purposes.

Program materials for the non-competitive application for the Local Food Program must be submitted through [GAINS](#).

Submission of program materials either in hard copy or via e-mail will not be accepted.

The non-competitive application will open in GAINS on Monday, March 30, and close on Friday, May 22, at 4 pm.

[More information about GAINS is available on CDE’s website.](#)

Local Food Program

Program Materials Due: Friday, May 22, 2026, at 4:00 pm

Introduction and Purpose

The Local Food Program (LFP) offers eligible Child Nutrition Sponsors funding for the purchase of Colorado grown, raised, or processed products. The purpose of this grant program is to support **small and mid-sized** Colorado producers, while in return fostering nutrition education, bolstering nutrition activities in the state, and supporting Colorado producers, farmers and food manufacturers. This Colorado state funded grant program exists to:

- Provide funding to eligible school nutrition operators for the procurement of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products to be used in federal Child Nutrition Programs.
- Support implementation of Local Food Program requirements by utilizing a set percentage of the allocated funding for:
 - 1) the mandatory advisory committee made up of students and parents (up to 12%)
 - 2) allowable costs associated with the administration of the Local Food Program (up to 10%)

Colorado products must be served to students in the School Breakfast Program and/or National School Lunch Program. It is the General Assembly's intent that these grant funds be used primarily to support **small and medium sized farms and ranches**.

Farm to School programs enrich communities with fresh, healthy food and support local producers by changing food purchasing practices. It is the intent of the LFP for students to gain access to healthy, local foods while strengthening Colorado's economy. Farm to School and programs like the LFP can increase equitable financial opportunities, market growth, and customer diversification for local producers while simultaneously providing kids and teens access to nutritious, high quality, local food so they are ready to learn and grow.

[Under House Bill 22-1414](#), the Colorado legislature declared that healthy school meals are "necessary for all students for effective learning and should support Colorado's food systems, including local farmers and ranchers". The bill summary states that, "any participating school food authority that creates a parent and student committee to advise on food purchasing (advisory committee) is eligible to receive a local food purchasing grant (grant) to purchase Colorado grown, raised, or processed products for school meals". The act establishes the amount of the grants, limits on how the grant money may be spent, and the required membership of the advisory committee. The Colorado Department of Education must annually review a sample of the invoices for purchases made using grant money to ensure compliance with purchasing requirements.

The intent of this funding is to encourage local purchases and offset the cost of Colorado grown, raised, and processed products. The amount of funding is dependent upon the number of school lunches served two school years prior (school year 2024-25) multiplied by the amount forecasted by the Legislative Council Services. For school year 2026-27, the award amount is \$0.25 per lunch served in school year 2024-25. The minimum amount a sponsor can receive is \$5,000. Sponsors are not required to request the full funding amount and can request less funding if applicable to their program and their ability to utilize the funds. Grant funding must accrue to the sponsor's nonprofit school food account and must be used within the designated calendar year. Funding will accrue into the sponsor's non-profit food service account once at the beginning of the program year. Any funding that is not used by June 30, 2027, must be returned to CDE.

See **Appendix A** for the Rules for Administration of this program.

Definitions

The following definitions have been designated as such for the purposes of this program.

- “Colorado grown, raised, or processed product” means all fruits and vegetables, grains, meats, and dairy products, *except liquid milk*, grown or raised in Colorado and minimally processed products or value-added products that meet the standards for the [Colorado Proud](#) designation. (The product does not have to carry the Colorado Proud logo or be listed as Colorado Proud but must be grown, raised, or processed within CO.)
 - Raw proteins such as chicken, bison, and beef that are produced, processed, or manufactured in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud Designation are allowable.
 - Raw fruits and vegetables that are produced or grown in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud Designation are allowable.
 - Raw or minimally processed items transported across state lines and processed within Colorado - resulting in a change to their inherent characteristics - and then sold within Colorado are allowable.
- “Minimally processed products” means raw or frozen fabricated products that retain their inherent character, such as shredded carrots, shredded cheese, or diced onions; and dried products such as beans and flour. It does not include any products that are heated, cooked, or canned.
 - Whole grain-rich flours and other whole grain-rich products that are grown, milled, processed, or manufactured in Colorado are allowable. In alignment with the USDA, whole grain-rich means that at least 50 to 100% of the grains in the product are whole grains, and the remaining grain, if any, must be enriched.
- “Value added processed products” means products that are altered from their unprocessed or minimally processed state through preservation techniques, including cooking, baking, or canning. For example:
 - Yogurt and dairy products that are produced, processed, or manufactured in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud Designation are allowable.
 - Pre-cooked items such as tamales, sausages, sauces, chips and breads that are produced, processed, or manufactured in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud Designation are allowable.
- “Sponsor” means a school district, charter school, Board of Cooperative Services that operates a public school, a facility school, or [Residential Child Care Institution](#) that operates Child Nutrition Programs and the Local Food Program.

Note: CDE staff will work with sponsors to identify food products that meet the program values of “Colorado grown, raised, minimally processed and value-added processed foods” and will review food procurement purchases made with grant funds to make sure it is in alignment with these values.

Eligible Applicants

Child Nutrition Sponsors that are operating Healthy School Meals for All and serve the National School Lunch Program are eligible to opt-in for this opportunity. A sponsor is:

- A School District
- A Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)
- A Charter School authorized by a School Food Authority
- Residential Child Care Institutions and Facility Schools

Sponsors are ineligible to apply for the program if they do not operate Healthy School Meals for All at any sites under the sponsor’s authority. Sponsors must be operating Healthy School Meals for All at some level within the district/site.

Charter Schools*:

Charter schools who participate in the Child Nutrition Programs through a charter-specific School Food Authority (ie, Charter School Institute or Charter Choice Collaborative) may apply for the Local Food Program individually (or at the charter network level, if all sites are operating under the same SFA). The charter school is considered the SFA only for the purposes of opting in and determining eligibility and each individual charter site must apply using GAINS. A charter school’s SFA will be the fiscal agent, if funded.

*Note: this flexibility to allow for individual charter applications is pending approval in the 2026 legislative session. Charter schools who meet the eligibility defined above are encouraged to apply for grant funds individually. If flexibility is not approved in the legislative session, charter-specific SFAs will be granted an application extension to allow time to coordinate an application at the SFA level.

Note: Opt-in materials will not be accepted from individual non-charter schools and must be authorized and submitted through the SFA.

Sponsors that have received funds from the Local Food Program Pilot may opt-into this current funding opportunity and in their narrative responses must describe current grant activities and services and demonstrate how, if funded, capacity to provide activities and services will be expanded, augmented, or sustained. Past expenditure of funds and quality of program implementation will also be considered.

Eligible sponsors will be required to provide details on the administration and creation of the mandatory advisory committees. Sponsors must also provide a detailed procurement plan on how funding will be spent on Colorado products. Only sponsors that specifically address all purposes identified for funding will be considered and sponsors may be asked to resubmit their application if it is lacking the appropriate information.

Available Funds and Duration of Grant

An award of \$0.25 per lunch served in the 2024-2025 school year is available for the 2026-2027 school year, with funding contingent on approval of appropriations from the State Legislature. At a minimum, sponsors that opt in to the program will be eligible to receive \$5,000 if their calculated award amount is less than the minimum amount. Funding will be awarded for a one-year term beginning in the 2026-2027 state fiscal year. Additional grant funding for subsequent years will be contingent upon annual appropriations by the State Legislature, and grantees meeting all grant, fiscal, and reporting requirements. Funded sponsors for the 2026-2027 school year are not guaranteed any additional funding beyond the initial award year. Funds must be expended by **June 30, 2027**. There will be no carryover of funds. Any funding leftover at the end of the state fiscal year must be returned to CDE and will be returned to the Healthy School Meals for All state account.

CDE will open a window when sponsors can request an additional funding amount. Any remaining funding after the initial opt in period will be available for reallocation during the middle of the program year. Only districts that receive \$25,000 or less initially will be able to receive reallocation awards. Reallocation will be based on the highest identified students percentage (ISP) and greatest financial need.

Allowable Use of Funds

A sponsor that receives a grant under the program shall use a majority of the monies to procure Colorado grown, raised, and processed products. Only 25% of the total food award can be used for the purchase of value-added processed products. The products purchased with these funds must meet the categories outlined above in the definitions section.

Funding may be used for:

- The procurement of Colorado grown, raised, and processed products
 - Up to 25% of allocated funding can be used for the purchase of value-added processed products
- Advisory committee (up to 12% of allocated funding)
- Allowable costs (up to 10% of allocated funding)

The majority of the funding must be allocated for the purchase of:

Colorado Grown, Raised, Processed, Minimally Processed, and Value-Added Products:

Colorado grown, raised, or processed products, which includes all fruits and vegetables, grains, meats, and dairy products, *except liquid milk*, grown or raised in Colorado and minimally processed products or value-added products that meet the standards for the Colorado Proud designation. (The product does not have to carry the Colorado Proud designation.)

Minimally processed products, which includes raw or frozen fabricated products that retain their inherent character, such as shredded carrots, shredded cheese, or diced onions; and dried products such as beans and flour. It does not include any products that are heated, cooked, or canned.

Value added processed products, which includes products that are altered from their unprocessed or minimally processed state through preservation techniques, including cooking, baking, or canning. Examples include breads, tortillas, sauces, and pre-cooked meats. Only 25% of the allocated funding can be used for value-added processed products.

Raw or minimally processed items brought across state lines to only be packaged in Colorado do not meet the requirements for the program. For example, eggs cannot be brought across state lines, packaged in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud designation. Value-added processed products that are made by a national corporation and span state lines, such as Mission Foods, Frito Lay, etc. are unallowable in the Local Food Program.

Advisory Committees (up to 12% of funding allocation)

Sponsors that receive Local Food Program funding are required to create an advisory committee made up of students and parents enrolled in the schools served by the participating sponsor (or charter school site). The committee must reflect the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic demographics of the student population. The advisory committee will advise the sponsor on the procurement of foods and work to ensure that meals are culturally relevant, healthy, and appealing to all the student population.

Sponsors that serve 1 million or fewer lunches can create regional or School Food Authority specific advisory committees with CDE's approval. Charter school networks applying for a collective LFP award are encouraged to create one advisory committee under their network of charter schools that operate together. Sponsors are also allowed to use administrative cost funding to contract with external partners and contractors to oversee the advisory committee requirements.

Up to 12% of the grant funding can be used for the mandatory advisory committee. Payments for these costs will be completed and approved by the Sponsor. A School Food Authority that serves less than 1,000,000 lunches can work with other School Food Authorities to implement an advisory committee that collaborates with multiple School Food Authorities. This collaboration must be approved by CDE. Advisory committee costs will be tracked on a form designated by CDE. Advisory committee costs include (but are not limited to):

- Paying participants for their time
- Language translation services
- Advisory committee marketing/resources
- Childcare
- Transportation reimbursement
- Food for participants
- Staff time/salary for organizing advisory committee
- Contracting services with a non-profit to convene and facilitate the advisory committee

Allowable Costs (up to 10% of allocated funding)

Allowable costs include services or activities that are directly related to the administration of the Local Food Program. This includes school kitchen infrastructure, equipment, and supplies to support utilization of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products in school meals. It also includes staff wages or salary for the administration of the LFP. 10% of the grant funding can be used for allowable costs. Allowable costs include (but are not limited to):

- Staff time/salary for procuring Colorado foods
- Staff tasks related to washing, prepping, procuring, and tracking local foods
- Professional development/staff training for the LFP
- Scratch cooking equipment to store, process, and scratch cook Colorado foods
- Capital equipment (cannot include construction or renovation) directly supporting program activities related to local foods. Sponsors purchasing equipment must provide written justification and follow CDE purchase and approval procedures.
- Storage fees related to the Local Food Program
- School kitchen cold storage
- Transportation or delivery of Colorado products within the school district
- Food Service Management Company or Vended Meals Contract Costs related to LFP
- Sending staff to a Farm to School Conference or another district to learn about Farm to School efforts

Allowable expenditures must be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient administration of the Local Food Program and conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in program regulations. Funding may not be used for any expenses outside of the nonprofit school food account.

Evaluation and Reporting

Each sponsor that receives funding through the Local Food Program is required to report, at a minimum, the following information to the Department on or before **July 1, 2027**:

- The total amount spent purchasing all products used in preparing meals (total food cost) and how much of that total was attributable to the LFP funding received.
- The total amount spent purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed and value-added products and how much of that total was attributable to the LFP funding received.
- Total number of meals served for the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program
- How funds were used for advisory committee costs and other allowable costs

See **Appendix A** for the mid-year and end-of-year reporting questions that are required for recipients of the LFP funding.

Data Privacy

CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored. PII will not be collected through the LFP. All program evaluation data will be collected in the aggregate and will be used, shared, and stored in compliance with CDE's privacy and security policies and procedures.

Note: Documents submitted as part of the application must not contain any personally identifiable student or educator information including names, identification numbers, or anything that could identify an individual. All data should be referenced/included in the aggregate and the aggregate counts should be redacted to remove small numbers under n=16 for students or n=5 for educators.

Information reported to CDE in relation to grant activities is not confidential and is subject to public request. Awarded grantees should ensure reported information does not contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or confidential information.

Program Requirement Webinar

A recorded Opt-in training webinar will be posted on [CDE's Sourcing Local Foods Webpage](#).

Weekly office hours will be hosted by CDE starting January-May 2026. The schedule can be found on [CDE's Sourcing Local Foods Webpage](#).

Review Process and Notification

Program materials will be reviewed by CDE staff to ensure they contain all required components. Sponsors will be notified of program opt-in status no later than **June 30, 2026**. **Note:** This is a non-competitive process – but sponsors must demonstrate their ability to operate the Local Food Program in the narrative and budget sections of the program materials to be approved for funding. Sponsors that do not have a strong narrative or plan for administration of the LFP may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the program up to a fundable level. There is no guarantee that applying will result in funding or funding at the requested level. All award decisions are final.

Submission Process and Deadline

Program materials must be completed and submitted through [GAINS](#) by Friday, **May 22, 2026, at 4 pm**.

Program materials, GAINS information, and resources are available on [CDE's GAINS webpage](#).

Required Elements

The format outlined below must be followed to ensure consistent evaluation criteria. See Evaluation Rubric for specific selection criteria.

Part I: Applicant Information and Program Assurances

Part II: Narrative and Budget

Local Food Program

Program Materials Due: Friday, May 22, 2026, at 4 pm

Sponsors will opt-in to LFP using [GAINS](#).

Program materials will be accepted in GAINS from March 30, through May 22, 2026.

Part I: Applicant Information and Program Assurances

Note that the contact information applicants must provide below is for the purposes of program implementation and is not tied to system roles and permissions within GAINS for the applicant organization.

Application Contact			
The person that CDE should contact if there are any questions or additional information needed for this application.			
Name:		Title:	
Telephone:		E-mail:	
Program Contact			
The person who will be responsible for receiving communications from CDE staff about this program.			
Name:		Title:	
Telephone:		E-mail:	
Authorized Representative Information			
For Charter School applicants, the Authorized Representative and Fiscal Manager will be contacts from your authorizing SFA.			
Name:		Title:	
Telephone:		E-mail:	
Fiscal Manager Information			
Name:		Title:	
Telephone:		E-mail:	

Program Assurances

Sponsors will agree to the Program Assurances below within the Local Food Program Opt-in form in GAINS. An upload of this document is not required.

The applicant hereby applies for and, if awarded, accepts the state funds requested in this application. In consideration of the receipt of these grant funds, the applicant agrees that the General Assurances form for all state funds and the terms therein are specifically incorporated by reference in this application. The applicant also certifies that all program and pertinent administrative requirements will be met. In addition, grantees that accept Local Food Program funding agree to the following assurances:

- 1) The grantee will operate the Healthy Schools Meals for All program as required by CDE’s site determination.
- 2) The grantee will annually provide a Mid-Year report and budget revision (if necessary) administered by CDE.
- 3) The grantee will annually provide the End-of-Year Report in GAINS and to the Technical Assistance Provider.
- 4) The grantee will work with and provide requested data to CDE for all grant expenditures within the time frames specified.
- 5) The grantee will not discriminate against anyone regarding race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.
- 6) Funds will be used to supplement and not supplant any funds currently being used to provide Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products and grant dollars will be administered by the appropriate fiscal agent.
- 7) Funded projects will maintain appropriate fiscal and program records and fiscal audits of this program will be conducted by the grantees as a part of their regular audits.
- 8) If a selected SFA spends more than 15 percent of Local Food Program funding on unallowable products and expenses, the SFA is ineligible to receive the grant for the next budget year after the year the Department conducts the review. (CCR 301-114 § 4.3)
- 9) The grantee will maintain sole responsibility for the project even though subcontractors may be used to perform certain services.

Duplication of Benefits

Federal or State funds generally cannot be used to pay for the exact same cost or activity already paid for from another source of funding. This is sometimes referred to as a prohibition on duplication of benefits (DOB), or “double-dipping.”

Entities using multiple funding sources should be aware of the different authorities and program requirements for each funding source, being careful to avoid DOB in instances where they are paying for similar costs or activities from multiple sources. (2CFR200.302) For example, sponsors cannot utilize this funding for the purchase of foods for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program or use funding for the purchase of USDA DoD Fresh, as these programs are funded by other federal sources. Subrecipients should avoid a duplication of benefits for any federal or state award. A duplication of benefits occurs when the amount of the assistance (i.e., funding) to a beneficiary exceeds the total allowable assistance (i.e., based on the total allocable expenses) to that beneficiary for that purpose.

10) Applicant certifies no duplication of benefits resulting in this funding will occur. If awarded, the Awardee (applicant) will notify in writing CDE should this occur.

Fraud, Waste and Abuse

Recipients of grant funds are responsible for taking steps to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse. Entities are required to have a procedure or methodology for timely reporting, in writing, of any noted violations that may potentially affect the federal or state award. (2CFR200.113)

Fraud Waste and Abuse can come in many forms, such as:

- Embezzlement, bribery, or other public corruption involving federal or state funds;
- Serious mismanagement involving federal or state programs or funds;
- Theft or misuse of Federal student aid to include knowledge of fraud, waste, or abuse involving a financial aid administrator or other entity official(s), or knowledge of fraud, waste, or abuse involving a student loan servicer or collection agency;
- Knowledge that your entity is not complying with regulations or laws involving Federal student aid or other federal or state program or operation requirements;
- Conflicts of interest, violation of arm's length agreements;
- Contract and procurement irregularities;
- Theft or abuse of government property;
- Employee misconduct; or
- Ethics violations by officials.

11) Applicant certifies there are sufficient internal controls in place to reduce or eliminate the possibility of fraud, waste and abuse with these, or any funds within their agency, and if an instance occurs. If awarded, the Awardee (applicant) will notify CDE in writing.

Conflict of Interest

The applicant hereby certifies that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, there are no present or currently planned interests (financial, contractual, organizational, or otherwise) relating to the work to be performed under the contract or grant resulting from this award that would create any actual or potential conflict of interest (or apparent conflicts of interest) (including conflicts of interest for immediate family members: spouses, parents, children) that would impinge on its ability to render impartial, technically sound, and objective assistance or advice or result in it being given an unfair competitive advantage. In this clause, the term "potential conflict" means reasonably foreseeable conflict of interest. The applicant further certifies that it has and will continue to exercise due diligence in identifying and removing or mitigating, to the Government's or Colorado Department of Education's satisfaction, such conflict of interest (or apparent conflict of interest).

12) Applicant certifies there are sufficient internal controls in place to reduce or eliminate the possibility of any conflicts of interest with these, or any funds within their agency. If awarded, the Awardee (applicant) will notify CDE in writing. (2CFR200.112)

The Colorado Department of Education may terminate a grant award upon thirty days' notice if it is deemed by CDE that the applicant is not fulfilling the requirements of the funded program as specified in the approved project application, or if the program is generating less than satisfactory results.

Project modifications and changes in the approved budget must be reported in GAINS and approved by CDE before modifications are made to the expenditures. Sponsors will be able to modify their budget in GAINS.

Approvals for this grant must be captured in GAINS from the following personnel:

- Applicant Authorized Representative
- Applicant Fiscal Manager

Note: For Charter School applicants, the above personnel must be from your authorizing district or CSI.

Part II: Narrative and Budget

Responses should be completed in the online application form. Although the system will save your work in progress, applicants may find it useful to compose answers in a separate document and copy them into the form.

For those applicants that have previously received funding from the Local Food Pilot Program, the expectation is that the narrative responses will include references to that award, where applicable. For example, discuss how the funds contributed to the program and what still needs to be accomplished. Applicants should demonstrate ongoing and improved capacity in the program and a well-developed plan for sustainability.

Narrative Questions:

Section A: Colorado/Local Food Procurement

1. Will the sponsor operate the Healthy School Meals for All program in School Year 2026-2027? Yes / No
2. For SY 2025-2026, what is the estimated dollar value of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products purchased by the sponsor (or individual charter site/grouping of charter sites under one nutrition services department)?
3. For next year, SY 2026-2027, what is the estimated amount the sponsor (or individual charter site/grouping of charter sites under one nutrition services department) expects to spend on purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products?
4. What is the exact award amount of funding your district (or individual charter site/grouping of charter sites under one nutrition services department) is eligible to receive for SY 2026-2027? (Refer to CDE's email sent mid-February to each sponsor or contact the School Nutrition representative listed on the first page.)
5. [Utilizing the Local Food Program Funding Estimator tool](#), does your district intend to utilize its exact award amount allotted for the Local Food Program? Yes / No
6. Enter the requested amount of funding the district/site wants to receive. This can be less than the exact award amount allotted.

Note: Any leftover funding will go into a reallocation pool and will no longer be guaranteed to the sponsor. CDE does have the authority to reallocate unused funding to sponsors that received \$25,000 or less in their initial funding allocation. Please provide an accurate estimate and CDE will determine if reallocation is justified during mid-year program evaluation and reporting. Prioritization will be based on the highest identified student percentage and greatest financial need. (Per C.R.S. 22-82.9-205 (2)(b))

Section B: Program Administration and Commitment / Advisory Committee

1. Who will be responsible for updating the tracking and reporting elements for the Local Food Program?
2. What is the sponsor's plan to establish an advisory committee made up of students and parents of students enrolled in the public schools with a membership that reflects the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic of the student population?

Section C: Projected Program Budget

Sponsors must submit the total amount they expect to spend on purchasing Colorado-grown, raised, processed, and value-added products. All narrative responses and the proposed program budget must be completed in GAINS. Each budget item must include a detailed description within the budget narrative.

The budget must include the following:

- The expected total amount to be spent on Colorado purchases
- A description of the items including estimated costs
- A list of suppliers from whom the items are expected to be purchased

All items and suppliers must be clearly detailed in the budget narrative.

Program Budget Guidelines

All local food purchases must be budgeted for using object code 0639.

If the sponsor has not yet identified specific producers, the project narrative must include a description of the procurement process that will be used to source local vendors.

Sponsors may also include projected expenses for advisory committees and other allowable costs using the applicable object codes, if such expenses are known at the time of application. If full budget details are not yet available, a limited set of object codes may be used; however, a mid-year budget revision will be required if the budget is not finalized at the time of application or if changes occur during the program year.

The following spending limits apply:

- 12% of requested funds may be used for advisory committee costs as detailed on pg. 6
- 10% of requested funds may be used for allowable costs as detailed on pg. 7

Object Code
0639 – All local food purchases, including raw, minimally processed, and value-added products
0100 - Salaries (<i>grant recipient salaries</i>)
0200 - Employee Benefits (<i>grant recipient benefits</i>)
0350 - Employee Training and Development - Services supporting the professional and technical development of school district personnel, including instructional, administrative, and service employees. Included are course registration fees (that are not tuition reimbursement), charges from external vendors to conduct training courses (at either school district facilities or off-site), and other expenditures associated with training or professional development by third-party vendors. (<i>used for expenses incurred by grant recipient</i>)
0500 - Other Purchased Services - Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the school district (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). (<i>used for contractual, and sub award grants</i>)
0580 - Travel, Registration and Entrance - Expenditures for transportation to & from airports & conferences, meals, lodging and other expenses associated with travel.
0600 - Supplies - Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances. (<i>used for grant recipient expenses</i>)
0730 - Capitalized Equipment - Expenditures for the initial and replacement items of equipment, such as machinery, furniture, fixtures, and vehicles. Machinery, furniture, and fixtures (including teacher desks, chairs, and file cabinets), technology equipment, and other equipment that are used for instructional purposes should be charged to appropriate instructional programs. The district's capital asset policy establishes criteria for when an equipment item must be capitalized and included on the district's property inventory records. Usually this criteria requires equipment costing above a certain dollar amount to be capitalized. Capitalized equipment must be coded with an object 0730. (<i>used for grant recipient expenses</i>) All equipment purchases must be allowable under the nonprofit food service account.
0735 - Non-Capitalized Equipment - Expenditures for items classified as equipment, but costing less than the district policy for capital assets inventory. To be used in the food service fund. Alternatively, non-capital equipment may be coded as a supply to an object in the 0600 series. (<i>used for grant recipient expenses</i>) All equipment purchases must be allowable under the nonprofit food service account.
0800 - Other - Amounts paid for goods and services not otherwise classified above. (<i>used for grant recipient expenses</i>)

Evaluation Rubric and Application Scoring

The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information for any item that does not meet criteria.

Recommendation:

- Approved
 More Information Needed

Review Comments:

Section A: Colorado/Local Food Procurement	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria / More Information Needed
1. Sponsor will operate the Healthy School Meals for All program in school year 2026-2027.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Sponsor provided the estimated dollar value of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products purchased for school year 2025-2026.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Sponsor provided the estimated dollar value of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products purchased for school year 2026-2027.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Sponsor provided the exact award amount for which they are eligible for school year 2026-2027.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Sponsor indicated whether they intended to use their full allotted award amount and/or the amount of funding they intend to request.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section B: Program Administration and Commitment / Advisory Committee	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria / More Information Needed
1. Sponsor indicated who will be responsible for updating the tracking and reporting elements for the Local Food Program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Sponsor provided a plan to establish an advisory committee made up of students and parents of students enrolled in the public schools with a membership that reflects the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic of the student population.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Projected Program Budget	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria / More Information Needed
1. Sponsor provided an estimated budget for the amount it expects to spend on purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products. Budget includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected amount to be spent on Colorado purchased • A description of the items and amounts it expects to purchase • A list of suppliers from which it expects to purchase the items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If suppliers are not yet known, sponsor explained their procurement process for bringing in local vendors. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix A: Rules for the Administration of the Program

Rules for the Administration of the Program

To participate, School Food Authorities must agree to the following requirements of the Local Food Program:

1. Allowable foods must be served as part of a meal in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP).
2. Sponsors must record all Colorado food purchases, advisory committee costs, and other allowable costs on the tracker developed and administered by School Nutrition.
3. Sponsors must complete required evaluations and surveys distributed throughout the program year.
4. Requested data elements must be submitted monthly.
5. All applicable Federal, State and Local rules and regulations must be followed, including but not limited to 2CFR 200, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21, local procurement requirements, and food safety requirements.
6. All applicable documentation, including but not limited to, the application, procurements, and invoices must be maintained for three (3) years plus the current year, from the end of the funding period, and made available to CDE upon request.
7. Reimbursement funds must be deposited into the non-profit school food service account and comply with 7CFR210.

Training and Reporting Requirements

- **Required Introduction Training:** This will be conducted by CDE in June and July and will provide early technical assistance and support for procurement plans and program management.
- **Monthly Expenditure Reporting:** Sponsors will submit regular expenditures on Colorado products in the designated format developed by School Nutrition.
- **Mid-Year Reporting:** Success and challenges of the program. Progress on award spending, including a plan to spend remaining funds.
- **A Mid-Year budget revision, if necessary.**
- **Farm-Level Data:** If applicable, sponsors should request farm level data and velocity reports from distributors and make efforts to include farm-level data when completing the expenditure reporting. The School Nutrition Unit will provide support and additional guidance for these requests.
- **End of Year Reporting:** Submit required information, including the total amount spent purchasing all products used in preparing meals (total food cost) and how much of that total was attributable to the LFP funding received, the total amount spent purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed and value-added products and how much of that total was attributable to the LFP funding received and the total number of meals served in federal Child Nutrition Programs.
- **External Program Evaluation:** Participate in external evaluation activities conducted by partner representatives, external designee, or auditor for this grant program.
- **Recording Keeping:** Sponsors will keep invoices and procurement documents for audit at a later time.

Program Auditing

School Nutrition will annually require a selected group of sponsors to submit a representative sample of the invoices for the products purchased using the grant money, no later than September 1, 2027. After reviewing the invoices to verify that the products purchased met the requirements specified in section I, and if the department finds that a significant portion of the grant money did not meet the requirement, the sponsor is ineligible to receive the grant funding for the next budget year following the budget year in which the review was completed. (1 CCR 301-114 § 4.3)

Program Timeline

March - June 2026	April - June 2026	July 1, 2026	July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027	Aug-September 2026	June 2027
Sponsors opt-in for the LFP via the GAINS system	CDE determines award amounts based on application requests	Program year officially begins	Sponsors track allowable purchases, facilitate advisory committees	Funding is distributed as a lump sum into the food service account	Sponsors submit required end of year reports

Technical Assistance Offered

School Nutrition is committed to ensuring that state funding is spent accurately and on allowable products determined by the grant. Training, resources, webinars, and one-on-one Technical Assistance will be provided by School Nutrition staff. Under House Bill 22-1414, there was also the creation of the “local school food purchasing technical assistance and education grant program (grant program) under which a statewide nonprofit organization distributes grants to promote the purchase of Colorado grown, raised, or processed products by participating school food authorities and to assist participating school food authorities in preparing meals using basic ingredients rather than processed products.”

Participating sponsors will receive support from the state agency, as well as a non-profit organization that will be able to offer additional funding for operational costs. In addition, the non-profit organization will assist in monitoring purchases made through the Local Food Program and administering reporting requirements.