



in partnership with  SUSTAIN ONTARIO

“nourish to flourish” Ontario School Grants 2026/27

Guidelines for Applicants

About the Guidelines

This document provides guidelines for those who are considering applying for a “nourish to flourish” School Grant for the 2026/2027 school year. These grants are provided thanks to a partnership between Sustain Ontario and Farm Boy Company Inc. with Farm to Cafeteria Canada as the administrative partner. Full grant details are available on the [Sustain Ontario website](#).

As a complement to the Guidelines, we will be hosting a webinar on the grant opportunity on **Thursday May 21 at 3:30 pm ET** - [register here](#).

Funds available

The “nourish to flourish” School Grant program will award \$184,000 in one-time grants of **between \$1,000 and \$10,000** to an estimated **59 schools** across Ontario, with the aim of awarding 24 grants of \$1,000, 20 grants of \$3,000, 10 grants of \$5,000 and 5 grants of \$10,000. Project activities must be implemented between September 2026 and June 2027.

Eligibility

Applications are open to **all schools (kindergarten to grade 12) across Ontario**. This includes schools in rural, remote and urban settings.

Schools in Indigenous communities / Nations, as well as schools that serve a high-proportion of low-income, racialized or other equity-deserving communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

The selection process will consider schools across the province, but will look to select a greater proportion in urban regions as well as to schools that serve a high proportion of low-income, racialized or other equity-deserving communities.

Applications will NOT be accepted from school boards or community organizations. *Both can be important partners for school projects and are welcome to support schools with their applications, but they are not eligible to receive the funds.*

Access more information about the grants on the Sustain Ontario website at:
sustainontario.com/nourish-to-flourish

Definitions

We refer to a number of terms throughout these guidelines including “healthy food” and “sustainably produced food”. To understand how we are defining these terms, please visit Farm to Cafeteria Canada’s [Glossary](#).

What are the “nourish to flourish” School Grants?

Farm Boy, Sustain Ontario and Farm to Cafeteria Canada have partnered to develop and deliver the “nourish to flourish” grants to cultivate an ecosystem where children not only eat nourishing food but also develop a deep understanding and appreciation for food. Through support for in-school meal programs and food literacy initiatives, these grants seek to help students develop more knowledge and skills to support a lifetime of healthy eating. By offering funding for in-school meal programs, immersive trips to farms, school gardens, guest speakers and other food literacy initiatives, we aim to connect school-aged children with the origins of their food, fostering a sense of wonder, respect, and stewardship for the earth.

When we nourish our children, we empower them to flourish and, in turn, enrich the world around them.

Learn more about Farm Boy’s vision and passion for this work [here](#).

Key dates

May 4, 2026	Grant application window OPENS
May 21, 2025 at 3:30 ET	Information webinar - register here
June 19, 2026	Grant application window CLOSES (11:59 pm ET)
Late August 2026	Grant recipients notified
Sept 2026 - June 2027	School projects are implemented
End of June 2027	Deadline for participating schools to submit their grant experience survey & story

Eligible costs

For all of the grants, a portion of allotted funds must be used to support in-school meal programs.

\$1,000 grants	\$3,000 grants	\$5,000 grants	\$10,000 grants
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A minimum of 50% of the grant must be used to support in-school meal programs			<ul style="list-style-type: none">A minimum of 75% of the grant must be used to support in-school meal programs

Specifically, support for in-school meal programs can include the following costs:

- ✓ Partnerships: bringing community partners together to support program planning, implementation and/or delivery

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- ✓ Kitchen equipment to support student meal service. This may include appliances, pots and pans, reusable dishes, utensils, equipment for preserving foods, etc.
- ✓ Equipment and material costs for growing, foraging or harvesting food (e.g. lumber, soil, seeds, etc.)
- ✓ Minor costs for food service space modifications.
- ✓ Food costs (**See restrictions below)

\$1,000 grants	\$3,000 grants	\$5,000 grants	\$10,000 grants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A maximum of \$500 of allotted funds can be used to purchase food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A maximum of \$1,500 of allotted funds can be used to purchase food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A maximum of \$2,500 of allotted funds can be used to purchase food. 	
<p>Any food purchased with grant funds should be as fresh, healthy, culturally appropriate and as locally and sustainably sourced as possible.</p>			

The remaining funds can support other school food program costs such as:

- Field trip to a market, farm, forest, or other place that supports the local food system. This may include a follow-up in-school activity such as using fresh ingredients from the field trip for cooking or canning demonstrations in school.
- Equipment or materials for creating composting systems.
- Honoraria for food literacy activities: nominal, one-time recognition for community members and partners who provide support in delivering food literacy.
- Hosting in-school guest speakers and workshops on gardening, harvesting, cooking or other food literacy topics.

Note that the grant funds cannot be used for school staff salaries or other paid positions or contracts to coordinate and administer the program.

Additional considerations for applications

- **School leadership** (Principal, Vice-Principal) **must be in support** of the proposed activities and grant application.
- The proposed activities should **reflect and celebrate the diversity** of the student population.
- Activities delivered as part of the grant should be **open and accessible, without stigma**, to all students who wish to participate, regardless of means.
- Reporting requirements for grant recipients will include completion of a grant experience survey and the submission of a short story and supporting image(s) (or video) that demonstrate the grant impact.

How will applications be selected?

- Applications will be screened for eligibility based on the following criteria:
 - ✓ **The applicant meets the eligibility criteria**
 - ✓ **The requested funds are in the amount of \$1,000, \$3,000, \$5,000 or \$10,000.** We will ask you to specify which amount you are asking for; however, you will be able to tick a box to say that you

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would like to be considered for a smaller amount as well. If you are offered a smaller grant than you requested we will ask you to modify and resubmit your budget before receiving the funding.

- ✓ **The [application form](#) has been completed in full**, and submitted online by June 19, 2026 (11:59 pm ET)
 - ✓ **The proposed activities support the vision of seeing more fresh, healthy and culturally appropriate food in schools as well as students more involved in hands-on food literacy education, and the activities reflect the local context, vision and needs.** Applicants should consider and speak to the unique geographic, social and cultural contexts of their school community and how these will be honoured, respected and reflected in their proposed activities.
 - ✓ **It is clear how the proposed activities will have an impact on the school community and contribute to positive change in the school food environment.**
- Grants will be selected by a selection committee, with a greater proportion of grants given to schools in urban regions as well as to schools that serve a high proportion of low-income, racialized or other equity-deserving communities.
 - A review committee will validate the selected applications to confirm eligibility according to the criteria outlined above.
 - Please note that the application form this year includes a question for you to indicate whether generative AI was used in the writing of your application. It will not change the selection process, but will just ensure transparency.

Get Inspired!

Looking for ideas on how the grants can be implemented in your school community?

Check out Sustain Ontario's [Local Food Literacy in Schools FAQ Tipsheet](#) and Farm to Cafeteria Canada's farm to school [Resource Centre](#)

Questions?

Have questions about the application process? Contact Heather Thoma at heather@sustainontario.com.

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