



## FY25 Agricultural Innovation Grant Program

### Overview

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey (CFBNJ), with funding made possible through the New Jersey Department of Agriculture/Office of the Food Security Advocate, is pleased to offer this competitive grant opportunity for agricultural innovation and infrastructure projects. The intent is to support New Jersey's farmers, farming cooperatives, aggregators, and agriculture nonprofit organization to strengthen ties with the emergency feeding sector.

Grants will be a minimum of \$2,500 and a maximum of \$25,000 per awardee. Individual items above \$10,000 in cost will require presentation of three (3) cost quotes from three different vendors. Only one award will be issued per farm/business/organization/project. Awardees must be able to complete the project by June 30, 2025. Matching funds are not required.

### Eligibility Criteria:

- **Location:** Applicants must be located in the following 15 counties that are within the service areas of CFBNJ and/or its affiliate food banks, Mercer Street Friends and Norwescap: Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren.
- **Businesses Operations:** For-profit businesses and nonprofit organizations must be in operation for a minimum of one year.
- **Proof of secure land tenure:** Proof of ownership or a lease, license, or other written agreement for a reasonable time period will be required. If land tenure is for less than three years, applicants should explain how the tenure is sufficient in relation to the improvements being made or purchased.
- **Ownership of Item(s) Purchased:** Applicants requesting funding for purchase of equipment, tool, or supplies agree to maintain ownership and primary use of said purchases for at least three (3) years following the grant award. Equipment rentals are not permissible.
- **Permitting:** Any municipal permits required for improvements, installations, or projects associated with grant funds are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

### Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Build, repair, or improve farm buildings, service buildings, including walk-in coolers, irrigation equipment, wash/pack structures, fencing, livestock facilities, etc.
- Purchasing farm equipment, implements, or tools such as tractors, tractor implements, equipment, tools, fencing, trellising, high/low tunnels, and post-harvest equipment.
- Soil and Water Conservation Projects

- Projects that build aggregation models where producers can donate and/or sell produce for distribution to food security organizations, such as web-based portals to allow growers to share notifications about leftovers and seconds for pantries and EFOs.
- Establish and/or improve key farm infrastructure for community-oriented farming projects that have a measurable impact beyond the individual applicant/organization.
- Bar coding equipment to allow for scanning and creation of farm-specific codes indicating grower and harvest dates.
- Inventory systems
- FMNP/EBT - ability to accept SNAP, WIC, and S-EBT at farm stands.
- Web-based portals to allow growers to share notifications about leftovers and seconds for pantries and EFOs.

### **Additional Guidance**

- **Administrative costs:** Up to 10% of the requested award may be designated for administrative costs to implement the intended project.
- **Project Narrative & Budget** – Applicants must provide a 1-2 paragraph narrative description of how the proposed funds will be used to improve farm viability and profitability and/or support local food production; Applicants must also provide a simple budget justifying all project expenses.
- **Site Visit:** Awardees agree to permit CFBNJ to visit your farm or organization and share the story of your project with our broader community.
- CFBNJ reserves the right to make partial awards and/or to request additional documentation as necessary to disburse grant funding.

### **Timeline**

This is a time-sensitive grant opportunity with a short spending period. Funds awarded must be used for purchases made between April 7 – June 30, 2025. It has been recommended that grantees plan to finish spending grant money sooner than June in case of unexpected delays.

### **Important Dates (Tentative, Subject to Change)**

- Grant spending period: April 7, 2025 – June 30, 2025
- Application opens via the SMAApply portal: February 26, 2025
- Virtual office hours for orientation, questions, and technical assistance via Zoom:
  - March 5th from 3 – 5 p.m.
  - March 13th from 5 – 7 p.m.
- Application Closes: March 26th
- Grant Review Period: March 27th – April 3rd
- Grant notification and distribution of grant agreements via SMAApply sent via email: April 4th
- Grantees returned signed grant agreements via SMAApply: April 7th
- Mid-term written check-in due through SMAApply: May 19th
- Final report and invoices due through SMAApply: July 14th

### **Questions and Clarification**

In the spirit of ensuring equitable consideration for this grant opportunity within a brief application window, thank you for submitting all inquiries via email only. All questions and/or clarification requests should be submitted via email to [aggrants@cfbnj.org](mailto:aggrants@cfbnj.org).