



COLORADO
Department of Education

Funding Opportunity

Program Information Webinar

Recorded program information webinar available on [CDE's Local Food Program webpage](#).

Intent to Apply Due: Thursday, August 7, 2025

Completion of the Intent to Apply is strongly encouraged but not required.

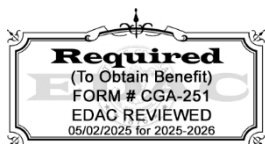
Applications Due: Thursday, August 21, 2025, by 4 pm

Application will open in GAINS on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, and close on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at 4 pm.

[GAINS Access and Application Submission Training Resources](#)

Local Food Program

Pursuant to HB 24-1390



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Table of Contents

Introduction and Purpose 3

Definitions 3

Eligible Applicants 3

Available Funds and Duration of Grant 4

Allowable Use of Funds..... 5

Evaluation and Reporting..... 5

Data Privacy..... 5

Provider Technical Assistance and Education Grant 5

Application Assistance and Intent to Apply 6

Review Process and Notification 6

Submission Process and Deadline..... 6

Required Elements 6

Part I: Applicant Information and Program Assurances 7

Part II: Narrative and Budget..... 9

Evaluation Rubric and Application Scoring 10

Appendix I: Rules for Administration of the Program 12

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

Program materials for opt-in to the Local Food Program must be submitted through [GAINS](#).

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

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

Accessing GAINS

School District and BOCES Applicants

- Contact your district Local Access Manager (LAM) to receive access to GAINS. Documentation and training on this process for LAMs is available on [CDE’s GAINS Training webpage](#).

Charter School Applicants

Complete the [Charter School GAINS Access Request Form](#)

All Other Applicants

- Complete the [Non-District Organization GAINS Access Request Form](#)

Local Food Program

Applications Due: Thursday, August 21, 2025, by 4 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 encourage school nutrition providers to procure local products, while in return fostering nutrition education, bolstering nutrition activities in the state, and supporting Colorado producers, farmers, and food manufacturers.

Farm to School programs enrich communities with fresh, healthy food and supports 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.

The intent of this funding is to encourage local purchases and off-set the cost of Colorado grown, raised, and processed products. The amount of funding is dependent upon the number of school lunches provided during the prior school year (school year 2024-25) multiplied by a minimum of \$0.05. Reimbursement payments must accrue to the sponsor's nonprofit school food account. The reimbursement is a one-time payment that sponsors will receive by October 2025.

Definitions

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

- “Child Nutrition Programs” refers to any of the following federally funded meal programs: National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable 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 designation.)
- “Minimally processed products” means raw or frozen fabricated products that retain their inherent character, such as shredded carrots or diced onions; and dried products such as beans. It does not include any products that are heated, cooked, or canned.
- “Value added processed products” means products that are altered from their unprocessed or minimally processed state through preservation techniques, including cooking, baking, or canning.
 - CDE staff continue to work out detailed parameters for “minimally processed and value-added processed products” food products that this grant program may fund and will collaborate with partners to develop an allowable foods resource list for grant recipients and set parameters in the reporting process that ensures allowability of products. For example:
 - Yogurt and cheese dairy products that are produced, processed, or manufactured in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud Designation are allowable. Colorado produced fluid milk is unallowable.
 - Raw proteins such as chicken, bison, and beef that are produced, processed, or manufactured in Colorado and meet the Colorado Proud Designation are allowable.
 - 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.

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.

- “Sponsor” means a school district, charter school, Board of Cooperative Services that operates a public school, or [Residential Child Care Institution](#) and also operates Child Nutrition Programs.

Eligible Applicants

Child Nutrition Sponsors that are operating 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 (SFA)
- Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
- Facility School or Facility
- Residential or Day Treatment Child Care Institution

Charter Schools:

Pursuant to [C.R.S. 22-30.5-104 \(11\)](#), a charter school may choose to opt-in apart from their authorizer for a competitive grant program created by a federal or state statute or program. The charter school is considered the SFA only for the purposes of opting in and determining eligibility. A charter school's authorizer will be the fiscal agent, if funded.

- A charter school that opts-in for LFP shall provide to its authorizing SFA:
 - A copy of the program materials at the time the program materials are submitted to CDE; and
 - If the charter school receives the grant moneys, a summary of the grant requirements, a summary of how the charter school is using the grant moneys, and periodic reports on the charter school's progress in meeting the goals of the grant as stated in its program materials.

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 apply again for funding 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.

Sponsors are ineligible to participate in the program if in the prior year (school year 2024-2025), more than 2,150,000 lunches were served. Please contact CDE program staff if you are uncertain about your eligibility.

Available grant funding will be distributed to sponsors with the highest scores based on priority criteria. Priority will be given to sponsors that:

- Have a free and reduced percentage of 25%.
- Served fewer than 1,250,000 lunches in School Year 2024-2025.
- Are designated as a Rural or Small Rural district.
- Successfully participated in the LFP during prior pilot years (allowable and complete use of funds).

Available Funds and Duration of Grant

\$500,000 is available for the 2025-2026 school year. Sponsors will be selected for the LFP by September 1, 2025.

Reimbursements will be distributed by October 2025. Sponsors must utilize the funding by June 30, 2026, and track all allowable purchases. Sponsors are allowed to backdate any allowable purchases made from the beginning of the 2025-2026 School Year. Additional grant funding for subsequent years will be contingent upon annual appropriations by the state legislature. The reimbursement amount will be contingent on the number of lunches served in the 2024-2025 School Year.

Allowable Use of Funds

Sponsors that receive a grant under the Local Food Program must use the reimbursement to improve their nonprofit food service department by procuring Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products. The products purchased with these funds must meet the definitions outlined above.

Allowable expenditures must be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient administration of child nutrition programs 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 a grant through the Local Food Program is required to report, at a minimum, the following information to the CDE on or before **August 1, 2026**:

Report and track separately for School Year 2025-2026 when instruction begins, SFA-wide:

Total dollar amount purchased for:

- Colorado Grown/Raised Products
- Colorado Processed Products
- Colorado Value-Added Products

CDE recommends using code **0639** to track local food purchases. CDE is authorized to monitor sponsors to ensure program integrity and to reallocate funds if program integrity issues are identified. Such monitoring could include budget documentation or requesting detailed lists of food purchases and expenditures.

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.

Provider Technical Assistance and Education Grant

As part of this program, CDE's School Nutrition Unit awarded Nourish Colorado with \$150,000 to provide technical assistance to Participating Providers, producers, food hubs, growers, etc., and other groups this program might reach. Nourish will issue sub-grants to promote the use of Colorado grown, raised, and processed products. They may also award sub-grants including, but not limited to, equipment, training, technical assistance, and physical infrastructure. Sponsors will be given more information as the technical assistance grant from Nourish becomes available.

Application Assistance and Intent to Apply

A recorded application information webinar is available on [CDE's Local Food Program webpage](#). [GAINS Access and Application Submission Training Resources](#) are available on the GAINS Training webpage. If interested in applying for this funding opportunity, submit the [Intent to Apply](#) by **Thursday, August 7, 2025**. Although strongly encouraged, completion of the Intent to Apply is not a required component of the application process. Completing the Intent to Apply assists CDE in knowing who needs access to the application in GAINS and providing access guidance, securing a sufficient number of peer reviewers, and provides an avenue to communicate important updates with potential applicants.

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 **September 8, 2025**. Final award determinations will not be released by School Nutrition until the National School Lunch Program meal counts for School Year 2024-2025 are submitted and approved for reimbursement.

Note: This is a competitive process – and 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 **Thursday, August 21, 2025, by 4 pm**.

[GAINS Access and Application Submission Training Resources](#)

Required Elements

The format outlined below must be followed to assure consistent evaluation criteria. See Evaluation Rubric for specific selection criteria (pages 10-11).

Part I: Applicant Information and Program Assurances

Part II: Narrative and Budget

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

Application will open in GAINS on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, and close on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at 4 pm.

Part I: Applicant Information and Program Assurances

| 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: | |
| Program Contact Information | | | |
| Name: | | Title: | |
| Telephone: | | E-mail: | |
| Fiscal Manager Information | | | |
| Name: | | | |
| Telephone: | | E-mail: | |

Program Assurances

Sponsors will agree to the below Assurances 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 annually provide the Colorado Department of Education with the required evaluation information in the Mid-Year Report (**Appendix I**) and the End-of-Year Report (**Appendix I**) of the Request for Applications.
- 2) The grantee will work with and provide requested data to CDE for all grant expenditures within the time frames specified.
- 3) The grantee will not discriminate against anyone regarding race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.
- 4) 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.
- 5) 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.
- 6) If any findings of misuse of these funds are discovered, the sponsor will be ineligible to participate in the LFP the following year.
- 7) 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.

- 8) 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.
- 9) 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).

- 10) 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 to the projected budget will be reported in GAINS and approved by CDE during the award process. 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:

**site refers to an individual charter school site*

Section A: Colorado/Local Food Procurement

1. For school year 2024-2025, what is the estimated dollar value of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products purchased by the district/site?
2. For next year, school year 2025-2026, what is the estimated amount the sponsor/site expects to spend on purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products?
3. Describe in detail the district's/site's current commitment to local purchasing or food and agricultural education. (e.g., CO Proud School Meal Day, student ag groups, school gardens, etc.).
4. Describe the district's/site's ability to store, prepare, and serve local food products. (e.g., ability to prepare raw animal proteins, freezer capacity, central kitchen or warehouse, salad bars, variety in meal preparation, etc.).

Section B: Program Administration and Commitment

1. Describe the district's/site's process for working with vendors to bring local food into the food service department (e.g., informal prices/quotes, releasing a formal solicitation, prime distributor, seeking new producer relationships, learning about a food hub, etc.) and include who will be responsible for implementing the procurement components of the program. Describe the procurement experience of the person who will be responsible for purchasing Colorado products.
2. Describe the district's/site's current process for tracking and managing local procurement. Who will be responsible for updating the tracking and reporting elements of the program if awarded?

Section C: Priority Points

1. Have a free and reduced percentage of 25% or higher district-wide. [CDE will verify]
2. Assigned a designation of Rural or Small Rural by CDE. [CDE will verify]
3. Served fewer than 1,250,000 lunches in School Year 2024-2025. [CDE will verify]
4. Successfully participated in the LFP during prior pilot years. [CDE will verify]

Section D: Projected Program Budget

1. Provide an estimate of the total dollar amount expected to be spent on purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products in the school year 2025-2026. Note: This amount can be MORE than the estimated LFP award amount and should include ALL allowable Colorado purchases.
2. Provide a description of the anticipated Colorado items to be purchased. Show the district's/site's intent to spend the funding.
3. Provide a list of the suppliers, vendors, and producers from which the sponsor expects to purchase the items.

Complete your proposed program budget in GAINS.

In GAINS, applicants will complete a single placeholder line in the budget (must be at least \$1). Awarded applicants will complete a final budget in GAINS once award amounts are determined.

Evaluation Rubric and Application Scoring

The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application. For the application to be recommended for funding all required elements must be addressed. An application that receives a score of zero on any required elements will not be funded without revisions.

Part II: Narrative and Budget

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Section A: | Colorado/Local Food Procurement | /12 |
| Section B: | Program Administration and Commitment | /12 |
| Section C: | Priority Points | /22 |
| Section D: | Projected Program Budget | /18 |
| Total: | | /64 |

| Section A: Colorado/Local Food Procurement | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| For school year 2024-2025, what is the estimated dollar value of Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products purchased by the district/site? | | | |
| Applicant did not respond to question or did not provide necessary information. | Applicant provided some information but did not answer the question in full. | Applicant provided the necessary information, and no clarification is required. | Applicant provided all information in a clear, thorough, and exemplary response. |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| For next year, school year 2025-2026, what is the estimated amount the sponsor/site expects to spend on purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products? | | | |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Describe in detail the district's/site's current commitment to local purchasing or food and agricultural education. (e.g., CO Proud School Meal Day, student ag groups, school gardens, etc.). | | | |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Describe the district's/site's ability to store, prepare, and serve local food products. (e.g., ability to prepare raw animal proteins, freezer capacity, central kitchen or warehouse, salad bars, variety in meal preparation, etc.). | | | |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

| Section B: Program Administration and Commitment | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| 1. Describe the district's/site's process for working with vendors to bring local food into the food service department (e.g., informal prices/quotes, releasing a formal solicitation, prime distributor, seeking new producer relationships, learning about a food hub, etc.) and include who will be responsible for implementing the procurement components of the program. Describe the procurement experience of the person who will be responsible for purchasing Colorado products. | | | |
| Applicant did not respond to question or did not provide necessary information. | Applicant provided some information but did not answer the question in full. | Applicant provided the necessary information, and no clarification is required. | Applicant provided all information in a clear, thorough, and exemplary response. |
| 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 2. Describe the district's/site's current process for tracking and managing local procurement. Who will be responsible for updating the tracking and reporting elements of the program if awarded? | | | |
| 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 |

| Section C: Priority Points | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Does the district have a free and reduced percentage of 25% or higher district-wide? | | | |
| FRL Rate of 25-34.9% | FRL Rate of 35-49.9% | FRL Rate of 50-74.9% | FRL Rate of 75-100% |
| 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 2. Assigned a designation of Rural or Small Rural by CDE. | | | |
| No – 0 | | Yes – 6 | |
| 3. Did the district serve fewer than 1,250,000 lunches in School Year 2024-2025? | | | |
| No – 0 | Rural – 6 | | Small Rural - 8 |
| 4. Did the district successfully participate in the LFP during prior pilot years? | | | |
| No – 0 | | Yes - 2 | |

Section D: Projected Program Budget

1. Provide an estimate of the total dollar amount expected to be spent on purchasing all Colorado grown, raised, processed, and value-added products in the school year 2025-2026. Note: This amount can be MORE than the estimated LFP award amount and should include ALL allowable Colorado purchases.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Applicant did not respond to question or did not provide necessary information. | Applicant provided some information but did not answer the question in full. | Applicant provided the necessary information, and no clarification is required. | Applicant provided all information in a clear, thorough, and exemplary response. |
| 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 |

2. Provide a description of the anticipated Colorado items to be purchased. Show the district's/site's intent to spend the funding.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|

3. Provide a list of the suppliers, vendors, and producers from which the sponsor expects to purchase the items.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|

Appendix I: Rules for 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), Summer Food Service Program, or Afterschool Snack Program.
2. Sponsors must be operating Healthy School Meals for All.
3. Sponsors must record all Colorado food purchases on the tracker developed and administered by School Nutrition.
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 to School Nutrition in the designated format developed by School Nutrition.
- **Quarterly Check-in Surveys:** Sponsors will participate in quarterly check-in surveys to School Nutrition summarizing program progress, successes, and challenges.
- **Mid-Year Reporting:** Submit required information to School Nutrition, 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.
- **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 to School Nutrition, 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 a 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 Timeline

| May-August 21, 2025 | September 1, 2025 | October 2025 | September 1 – June 30, 2026 | January 2026 | June 30, 2026 |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sponsors apply for the LFP via the GAINS system | CDE awards selected sponsors and determines award amounts based on SY 24-25 lunch counts. | LFP funding distributed | Sponsors procure CO products, track allowable purchases | Sponsors submit mid-year report | Sponsors submit end-of-year report |

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. 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.