



Request for AmeriCorps Farm to School Program New Host Site Applications 2021 – 2022

[Notice of Intent to Apply](#) Due: March 19, 2021
[New Host Site Application](#) Due: March 31, 2021
Target Date for Grant Award Notification: April 12, 2021

Seeking New Partners

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is accepting applications for new partner sites across Wisconsin for the 2021-2022 grant year in anticipation of receiving AmeriCorps Farm to School Program funding in the 2021-2022 grant cycle. Through an AmeriCorps (AC) grant, we are able to offer the AC Farm to School (F2S) Program to communities around Wisconsin. In the past year, this program has worked with 16 host sites throughout the state and has served over 5,000 Wisconsin students.

What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a national service program that engages over 80,000 members in service each year to solve pressing national problems through direct service and by mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve. Members gain valuable professional, educational, and life benefits while having a lasting impact on their community.

What is the AmeriCorps Farm to School Program?

The AC F2S Program provides an innovative approach to building healthy communities through:

- Improving child nutrition through the implementation of educational F2S activities for students and families. These activities encourage healthy eating choices within an educational setting.
- Developing strong communities by creating future community leaders and connecting schools with local farmers and food businesses.
- Increasing the capacity of communities all over Wisconsin to support sustainable F2S programs that encourage healthy behaviors and improve the school food environment.

Program Outline

With the support of their host site, AC members will serve to meet the following program performance measures:

- Teach 5,000 4K-12 grade students a series of nutrition lessons that cover the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Nutrition.
- Educate students' parents through take-home activities including a monthly educational newsletter.
- Administer surveys to determine the program impact on student nutrition knowledge and willingness to try fruits and vegetables.

- Implement a minimum of three components of F2S (as defined below) to at least two different schools.
 - 1) Local Procurement Educational Documents – Create and share at least five different educational documents on local food procurement with a school’s food service director;
 - 2) Local Food Taste Tests – Introduce local foods through taste testing activities; each lasting at least 10 minutes;
 - 3) Menu Local Food Items – Incorporate local foods as menu items in either the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP);
 - 4) Farmer Engagements – Engage local farmers in educational F2S activities that last a minimum of 30 minutes (e.g., classroom presentation, donation for taste testing, farm field trip);
 - 5) School Gardens – Help build or maintain a new garden or spend at least an hour with students working or learning in the garden;
- Participate in or establish a F2S Task Force including at least five community members to promote program involvement and sustainability.
- Participate in or plan at least five community events to promote the host site’s F2S program and build community support.
- Train and support a sustainable base of volunteers to support program activities.
- Participate in trainings and required program reporting and data collection.
- Participate in National Service Recognition Day

Each partner host site will be eligible to apply for one or two, part-time or full-time AmeriCorps members who will serve as Farm to School Specialists. Host sites may apply for consideration of alternative member configurations. Each community is unique, however host sites should *only* apply for a different member configuration based on justified needs specific to their communities and schools. Host sites requesting a single half-time member are not exempt from completing all of the program components. We strongly encourage host sites to apply for at least two half-time or one full-time member(s) to ensure a well-rounded program with multiple components. Research has shown that programs with more than one F2S component are more beneficial than programs with just one component. Requests for modifications in member configurations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Program Goals

Short-Term Outcomes

- Increase student knowledge of quality nutritional choices and food sources
- Increase school food service director’s confidence in their abilities to incorporate local fruits and vegetables into school menus
- Increase the community’s knowledge about the benefits and components of F2S
- Increase member knowledge of their community’s needs and challenges when it comes to implementing F2S programming

Mid-Term Outcomes

- Improve students’ attitudes toward trying fruits and vegetables
- Increase students’ parents’ attitudes toward purchasing and consuming fruits and vegetables
- Increase average student consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Increase parental fruit and vegetable purchases
- Increase average parental consumption of fruits and vegetables

- Increase school food service directors' attitudes toward incorporating local fruits and vegetables into school menus
- Increase the number of local food items on school menus
- Increase the community's attitudes toward supporting F2S as a long-term initiative
- Increase in the number of community members that voluntarily support F2S programming (i.e., through funding, donations, or volunteering to support the program's various components)
- Increase members participating in local coalition meetings
- Increase member lead initiatives in the community (ex. F2S community events or programs)

Long-Term Outcomes

- Increase positive health indicators in participating communities, including a reduction of obesity rates
- Increase long term healthy eating behaviors by students and parents such as increased fruit and vegetable intake
- Increase regular availability of local foods in schools
- Increase community and school support for F2S programming through internal funding of activities or other support
- Increase awareness of the benefits of F2S programming through school and community engagement
- Increase capacity of communities to carry out F2S activities through utilization of a consistent volunteer base
- Members will become lifelong civically engaged members of their local community
- F2S Alumni members will gain meaningful employment in a related field

What the Program Offers Host Sites

The program will offer each host-site:

- 1) One or two, half-time or full-time Farm to School Specialist member(s) to help teachers and school nutrition professionals develop and implement nutrition programs that will educate children about the benefits of making healthy eating choices. Members will collaborate with school staff to create and implement healthy food curricula including school or community garden development, cooking in the classroom programs, field trips to farms, and development of wellness programs.

Members will also serve as the main liaison between the schools and the community. They will educate food service directors about sourcing local, healthy foods for the school districts they serve and will create an action plan laying out the steps necessary to procure local food into their programs. They will also be responsible for recruiting and mobilizing volunteers to enhance and increase the capacity of the AC F2S program. This will include organizing a F2S Task Force within the school or community, recruiting farmers to present in the schools, organizing farm tours, and organizing snack preparation or food tastings. With the assistance of the site supervisors, they will create a database of volunteers for sustained program efforts.

- 2) A Program Director, housed at DPI, to oversee the statewide program, member training, payroll activities, provide technical assistance, professional development opportunities for AC members, additional grant cash and in-kind matching, and other program resources as available and necessary.

Partner Site Requirements

In order to be considered for the AC F2S Program, sites must commit to the following responsibilities:

- Assist with the recruitment and hiring of members for your site.
- Identify a qualified onsite supervisor who will meet at least bi-weekly with each AC member to help track program progress and provide assistance and advice. It is crucial that that supervisor is able to dedicate enough time and attention with their member(s) to ensure success of the program. The supervisor will also be responsible for all required reporting and participation in an annual supervisor training in order to understand the AC rules and regulations.
- Provide host site orientation, workspace, basic office supplies, business cards, and access to phone, computer, and internet.
- Assist with the creation and facilitation of a F2S Task Force made up of local community members to assist with activities, planning, and develop routes of sustainability for your local F2S Program. Task force participants could include teachers, professors, local food organizations, Wisconsin Physical, Activity and Nutrition counselors, Parent Teacher Organizations and Associations, University of Wisconsin Extension agents, local government, chambers of commerce, civic organizations, interested citizens and parents, school boards and farmers.
- Contribute \$6,200 per full-time member and \$2,800 per half-time member in non-federal match funds. These funds will be used as cash match for operating costs of the program.
- Obtain evaluation forms from students, parents, teachers and staff about the program. This includes a pre- and post-participation student attitudinal surveys, parent surveys, and teacher/food service personnel surveys. Evaluations are a required part of the AC grant to measure program impact and success.

Sites that can provide the following additional support will receive higher levels of consideration:

- Show strong need for program services in the schools and community.
- Show strong community and/or school desire for impacting change in the goal areas.
- Show strong partnerships with schools, community, and local farmers.
- Show strong history of management skills for host site supervisor.
- Show dedication of organization and supervisor to childhood nutrition and local agricultural development.
- Outline other non-federal cash grant match amounts (staff time, office supplies, office space, member business cards, etc.). Please be specific where possible.

Applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to:

- Demonstrate a community need for the AC F2S Program.
- Provide a reasonable plan to facilitate the implementation of F2S activities in their communities.
- Demonstrate the capacity to provide high quality support for AC members.
- Demonstrate the capacity to participate in AC F2S training and reporting requirements.
- Demonstrate the capacity to provide cash and in-kind match.

Application Instructions and Requirements

In order to be considered for continuation, you must fill out and return the "[Notice of Intent to Apply](#)" by **5:00 PM, March 19, 2020**. The completed "[New Site Application](#)" and any supporting materials must be submitted by **5:00 PM, March 31, 2020**. Host site match funds are not required until after the program is awarded.

Timeline

March 19, 2021 - [Notice of Intent to Apply](#) Due to DPI

March 31, 2021 - [New Site Application](#) Due to DPI

April 1 to 6, 2021 - DPI Application Review Process

April 12, 2021 - Target Date for Grant Award Notification

April through August 2021 - Host Site Member Recruitment and Onboarding

August 15, 2021 - Program Implementation



AmeriCorps Farm to School New Host Site Application TEMPLATE

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2021
Statute 93.49; WI. Stat

Please use the template below to draft your answers to the application questions. When you are finished, please copy and paste your answers into the [New Site Application Google Form](#). No paper or email applications will be accepted unless otherwise notified.

Application Authorizer Contact Information:

First & Last Name:
Title:
Organization:
Address (Street address, city, state, zip code):
Phone Number:
Email:

Host Site Agreement:

Please check below to indicate your agreement to meet the following partner site requirements. My organization agrees to:

- Assist with the recruitment and hiring of members for our site.
- Identify a qualified onsite supervisor who will: consent to a background check per Serve WI regulations, meet at least bi-weekly with each AC member and help accomplish the goals of the local project, sign and verify AC hours in OnCorps in a timely manner, participate in annual supervisor training, report in-kind donations to the program, and attend quarterly site supervisor webinars.
- Provide a host site orientation and, at a minimum, a workspace with basic office supplies, access to a phone, computer, business cards, and internet for all AC site members.
- Make every attempt to meet the program progress measures in the service year.
- Contribute non-federal cash match of \$6,200 per full-time member and \$2,800 per half-time member.
- Obtain evaluation forms from students, parents, teachers, and staff about the program. This includes: pre- and post-student surveys, parents surveys, and food service director surveys.

AmeriCorps Member Request:

Please indicate how many AC Members you would like to request for the 2020-2021 grant cycle. Requests to increase the number of member positions you have will be filled if at all possible. There is a chance that if a site is requesting an increase in members, the statewide

program may not have more available slots to offer. Awards or rejection of modifications will be announced with final awards of partnership.

Select the number of AmeriCorps members you would like to host at your site:

- One half-time AmeriCorps Farm to School Specialist
- Two half-time AmeriCorps Farm to School Specialists
- One full-time AmeriCorps Farm to School Specialist
- Two full-time AmeriCorps Farm to School Specialists
- Other:

If you selected a member arrangement different than the three options above, please explain your rationale.

Application Narrative Questions:

1. Identify your organization and your position in the organization. Please provide a narrative outline of how you will engage members in service, develop and/or promote F2S in your community, and how you plan to meet the program progress measures outlined on page one and two of the application instructions. Describe any previous organizational involvement or commitment to F2S programming.
2. Provide information that demonstrates the need for an AC F2S Program in your community. Please list the specific names of the schools your host site will reach and estimate the number of students that will potentially benefit from this partnership. (If possible, please provide obesity rates, free and reduced lunch rates, and community demographics that show need for programming.)
3. Explain how your organization will leverage or build relationships with community members, farmers, teachers, parents, school administration, and foodservice staff to carry out and promote F2S activities in your community.
4. Describe how you will support the AC members serving your site. In your narrative, please describe the managerial qualifications of your site supervisor and their commitment to support the work of the AC F2S members. Include briefly in your description what other resources you will make available to your member(s) such as professional development opportunities or tangible program resources not listed.
5. Describe your plan to become a self-sustaining F2S Program using the time and talents of AC F2S members as well as the partnerships developed in your community. We understand that every host site's timeline to becoming self-sustaining differs, but we feel it is important to keep the goal of building sustainable F2S programs at the forefront of our planning.

Letter of Support:

Please attach at least one letter of support from a local school food service director stating their interest in working with the program. Additional letters of support or partnership are not required, but will be accepted.

When you are ready to submit your application, please use the [New Site Application](#) form.

All application questions should be directed to:

Kara Ignasiak, MS, RDN, CD, AC F2S Program Director

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Email: kara.ignasiak@dpi.wi.gov