



Food Security and Wisconsin Products (FSWI) Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Last Revised: September 30, 2025

BACKGROUND

The Food Security and Wisconsin Products Grant Program is a new Wisconsin State Grant program beginning in 2025 as a result of the 2025-2027 Wisconsin State Budget.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP) Food Security and Wisconsin Products Program is designed to provide grants to Wisconsin's nonprofit food assistance organizations for the purpose of purchasing food to Wisconsin communities at no cost and supporting the growth and operations of food producers/processors in the state.

The 2025-2027 Wisconsin State Budget included \$5 million annually for a Food Security and Wisconsin Products Program.

STATUTORY LANGUAGE

The following language outlines the Wisconsin State Budgetary statutes that instituted this program:

SECTION 9102. Non-statutory provisions; Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

(1) FOOD SECURITY AND WISCONSIN PRODUCTS GRANT PROGRAM. In fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27, from the appropriation under s. 20.115 (3) (m), the department of agriculture, trade and consumer protection may award grants to nonprofit food banks, nonprofit food pantries, and other nonprofit organizations that provide food assistance for the purpose of purchasing food products that are made or grown in this state. Notwithstanding s.

16.42 (1) (e), in submitting information under s. 16.42 for purposes of the 2027-29 biennial budget bill, the department shall submit information concerning the appropriation under s. 20.115 (3) (m) as though the total amount appropriated under s. 20.115 (3) (m) for the 2026-27 fiscal year was \$5,000,000 less than the total amount that was actually appropriated under s. 20.115 (3) (m) for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

The Food Security and Wisconsin Products Program will follow [Wisconsin Administrative Code Ch. ATCP 163](#), which is DATCP's Administrative Rule for Agricultural Development Grants (proposals, evaluations, contracts, verifications, and public access).

FUNDING PRIORITIES

This program will prioritize projects that:

- Purchase Wisconsin sourced foods and distribute across the state of Wisconsin at no cost to community members
- Demonstrate procurement from Wisconsin producers, processors, or local food distributors
- Partner with and serve multiple Wisconsin local food suppliers and communities
- Combine resources and create partnerships to streamline sourcing and delivery in order to expand access to a variety of foods
- Increase food access to each of Wisconsin's 72 counties across the state

For more information about the Food Security and Wisconsin Products Grant Program, please review our [grant webpage](#) which includes the FSWI Request for Proposals document for details on eligible projects.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The frequently asked questions (FAQ) below represent input and queries received through discussion and enquiries regarding this grant program. These FAQs cover topics of particular interest regarding the program.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Where is this money coming from?

The Food Security and Wisconsin Products Grant are supported by an allotment of \$10 million provided in the 2025-2027 State Budget providing \$5 million for food security in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and again in Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Review the statutory language above for further details about this grant funding.

How do community-based food programs connect to this funding?

Grant applicants must demonstrate both how projects will collaborate with food suppliers, food security networks, and non-affiliated programs on increasing access and food security in Wisconsin, and how the network that will be served and how non-affiliated food programs can partner and gain access.

Interested organizations can reach out to [DATCPGrants](#) for any questions on how to connect with

awardees.

Are the food purchases exclusively for Wisconsin products?

Grant applicants must demonstrate that all foods procured using grant funds meet a minimum standard of Wisconsin food product (at least 51% produced or processed in Wisconsin). Strong applications will demonstrate the potential to procure Wisconsin foods exceeding this minimal standard.

Who determines whether a product meets the definition of a Wisconsin product?

It is the responsibility of the organization who submits an application to verify whether the food products being purchased meet the definition and are therefore eligible for grant funding. The applicant can also request that food product partners certify that the products meet the definition in their sign on letter.

How can non-affiliated programs or organizations access funds provided by this program?

Any non-profit food assistance organization serving Wisconsin communities will be eligible to apply for this program. Food assistance organizations are encouraged to apply together in order demonstrate how they will utilize combined networks to maximize their reach across the state.

Projects will be prioritized for consideration should they demonstrate an expansion of network partnerships and beneficiary communities throughout Wisconsin to ultimately increase access to food and food security for communities statewide.

Will the program impact all 72 Wisconsin counties?

Grant applicants will need to describe how they will work to impact food insecurity statewide across multiple regions of the state and Wisconsin's 72 counties.

Will food deserts continue to be prioritized as receiving communities?

Grant applications must clearly describe how projects will collaborate with food suppliers, food security networks, and non-affiliated programs on increasing access and food security in Wisconsin.

Does the grant allow for sub award programs?

Yes. All funds awarded from this program will be exclusively for eligible expenses budgeted directly for food procurement. Please review the Request for Proposal Document on [our webpage](#) for further details.

How will the program ensure that 100% of the grant funds are directed to Wisconsin producers?

To receive reimbursement, grantees must clearly outline costs being claimed, provide supporting documentation and proof of payment including invoices or other appropriate documentation. Grant awardees will only be reimbursed for procurement costs outlined in their project budget and stipulated by their grant contract.

How will the program promote geographic coordination and strategy so that producers and food banks in all regions of the state can benefit?

Projects will be prioritized for consideration should they demonstrate how multiple food security networks and non-affiliated partners can be utilized to benefit the maximum number of communities across

Wisconsin's 72 counties. In addition, projects will be prioritized for consideration should they demonstrate an expansion of network partnerships and beneficiary communities throughout Wisconsin to ultimately increase access to food and food security for communities statewide.

Can grantees impose membership requirements, or charge delivery fees, or fees to partner agencies or pantries? Can consumers be charged for food?

No, applicant organizations may not impose membership requirements or fees on partner organizations to participate in the grant program. Grantees may not impose fees on consumers for foods or food products purchased through this program.

What is the minimum grant amount eligible under this program?

There is no grant minimum provided that all project eligibility criteria are met and the application makes a compelling case meeting the scoring criteria outline in the request for proposals.

What is the maximum grant amount eligible under this program?

Applicants can apply for up to \$5 million in grants for this program. However, DATCP reserves the right to partially fund applications.

Can funds cover any expenses besides food purchases?

No, 100% of the budget must be spent on food purchases.

Who should I talk to if I have questions?

For questions that are not answered here, please send an email to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) at DATCPdadgrants@Wisconsin.gov.

HOW TO APPLY

How do I apply for the Food Security and Wisconsin Products grant?

Eligible projects can submit their application using the form provided. For more information, please review the application and the request for proposals on the grant program webpage below:
<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/FoodSecurityInitiative.aspx>.

What is a sign-on letter and what should it include?

Sign-on letters demonstrate an applicant's partnership with Wisconsin producers, processors, or suppliers. For more information on what a sign-on letter should include, please review the grant application.

Who should I talk to if I have questions about the application?

If you have any questions, please contact DATCPDADgrants@wisconsin.gov.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

Who is eligible to apply for this grant?

This grant is focused on reimbursing food purchases made by non-profit organizations working to address food access and food security. Applications must demonstrate that an organization or network has the ability to address food security issues across the state of Wisconsin.

Non-profit or charitable organizations are defined in s. 202.11(1), Stats. as any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the internal revenue code that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of the internal revenue code qualifies as a charitable organization and a person who is or purports to be established for a charitable purpose also qualifies as a charitable organization.

What documents are necessary to submit within my application?

Applicants should be prepared to submit their application along with supporting materials including:

- Letters of support (sign on letters)
- Projected purchase and distribution plans
- Any other supplementary documents or information as outlined within the application

For application materials, visit <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/FoodSecurityInitiative.aspx>.

Will my organization be eligible to apply if we only focus on a local area of two counties?

Yes, any non-profit food assistance organization serving Wisconsin communities is eligible to apply. However, for consideration, projects must demonstrate a statewide reach impacting multiple counties and regions across the state of Wisconsin. Therefore, food assistance organizations are encouraged to apply together in order to utilize networks with the greatest possible reach and impact across the state.

Interested organizations can reach out to DATCPdadGrants@wisconsin.gov to inquire about how to connect with awardees.

How can I participate in this program if my organization is not an eligible non-profit or if my network is limited to only nearby counties?

If your organization is unable to meet the eligibility requirements or the scoring criteria independently, you should work in partnership with eligible organizations to ensure that your needs are represented in their application. If an organization needs assistance connecting with eligible organizations, they should email DATCPDADgrants@wisconsin.gov.

OTHER PROGRAM QUESTIONS

What are the reporting requirements for this grant?

All grantees awarded will be required to submit semi-annual reports. Applicants who do not submit semi-annual or final reports on time, and/or submit incomplete reports, may be required to return all previously disbursed funds to DATCP and/or may be removed from future funding opportunities. Please review the Request for Proposal for additional details.

What are the terms and conditions of accepting a grant?

If awarded a grant, grantees will be required to enter into a contract with the department. A sample contract is available for review, which outlines the anticipated terms and conditions expected as part of this grant program.

How will the department decide award amounts if more requests are made than there is funding available?

Depending on the number and amounts of requests, the department may not be able to fund the full amount of the requests. The department may contact grantees to determine what alternate work plan is possible if a lower funding amount is possible.