

FY24 Manna Farm to Food Bank Collaborative Funding Program

[Manna Food Center](#) (Manna) in partnership with the [Montgomery County Office of Food Systems Resilience](#) (OFSR), is soliciting proposals from farm partners interested in pursuing collaborative funding agreements through the [Montgomery County Farm to Food Bank Program](#) (F2FB). This opportunity is designed to support the continued engagement of local producers with the Montgomery County food system and in various food security initiatives. The collaborative funding agreements offered through this program will provide farm partners with up-front payments between \$5,000 and \$20,000 to be used by the partner for a variety of approved purposes (see p. 2). The allocated amounts are expected to be repaid in the form of locally grown or produced table crops or food donated to the F2FB program over up to 18 months from the agreement date. Farm partners are expected to provide products throughout the selected repayment period at 80% or more of the value of the collaborative funding payment, using the [FY24 F2FB price list](#) to determine product values.

Key Program Information:

FAQs: Updates will be updated weekly on [this web page](#).

Technical Assistance & Reporting Session: July 9th, 2024, at 11:00 am via [this link](#).

Available Funding: \$135,000

Rolling Application Period: June 10th, 2024 – August 15th, 2024

- To apply, please use [this link](#). Completed submissions must include submission of a project budget and table with proposed repayment plan (in Microsoft Excel format) emailed to mfcgrants@gmail.com.

Funding Notification & Dispersal Period: Pending approval, notification of funding is expected within approximately two weeks after an application is received. Manna will distribute the funding within approximately two weeks of receiving a signed MOU.

Product Repayment Periods:

- Sept 1st, 2024 – November 30th, 2025
- May 1st, 2025 - November 30th, 2025

For technical questions related to the application, please contact:

Morgan Crull, Senior Program Manager for Food Resources

Manna Food Center

(301) 578-5475

mfcgrants@gmail.com

Program Overview:

The Farm to Food Bank Partner Collaborative Funding Program offers a contractual opportunity for current F2FB partners to secure funding for eligible projects that will support their continued participation in the F2FB program. This program aims to increase the volume of food produced in the County for long-term resilience in our food supply. The local food items provided by funded partners through this initiative will be distributed to Montgomery County food assistance providers that work with Montgomery County residents experiencing food insecurity.

Eligibility Requirements:

Montgomery County-based food producing farms that have offered products to the F2FB program from July 1st, 2023, to June 10th, 2024, are eligible to apply. Farms must be in compliance with all recorded spending and reporting requirements for all past and current grants awarded by Manna Food Center.

Funding Criteria:

\$135,000 in total funding is available through this program. Applicants may request a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$20,000.

Eligible Expenses Include:

- Equipment or other infrastructure that will:
 - Increase production, distribution or processing capacity
 - Support season extension
 - Increase storage capacity
 - Prevent weather or other environmental disruptions that impact crop yields
- Transportation, machinery, or other tools, including capital costs and installation costs
- Purchases of seeds, soil amendments, or other inputs required to grow produce

The following are ineligible expenses:

- *Projects that have an existing deficit from a previous year or a previous project*
- *Projects or costs that are fully covered by current contracts with the County or other funding*
- *Ongoing maintenance costs*
- *Staff salaries or other labor expenses*
- *Mortgage/leases*
- *Insurance*
- *Existing technology subscription renewals*
- *Legal/attorney expenses*
- *Application writing expenses*

Application Process:

Applicants must apply using [this form](#), with the following information:

- Farm name
- Primary address of Farm
- Farm website or Facebook page (*if applicable*)
- Name of person submitting the application
- Email address of person submitting the application
- Phone number of person submitting the application
- Amount of funding requested
- Narrative description of the supplies, equipment, or infrastructure to be purchased with funding and explanation of how the proposed purchases support future contributions to Farm to Food Bank. (500

word maximum)

- Narrative description of the projected impact of the investment on local food production. (500 word maximum)
 - This section must include:
 - Projected product volume and product variety
 - Projected resource conservation (if applicable)
 - Other metrics of interest that illustrate the program’s impact (if applicable)
 - Proposed method for collecting and reporting this data
- Budget detailing all proposed expenditures, emailed as a Microsoft Excel document to mfcgrants@gmail.com. **Emailing supplemental documentation in support of your proposed budget is encouraged but not required.**
 - **Note:** Awardees will be required to submit all receipts and/or invoices for purchases during the reporting period.
- Selection of a repayment period:
 - September 1st, 2024 – November 30th, 2025
 - November 1st, 2024 – November 30th, 2025
 - March 1st, 2025 – November 30th, 2025
- Table detailing the proposed repayment plan, emailed as a Microsoft Excel document to mfcgrants@gmail.com. The table should be formatted following the model below, to include the month and year you plan to donate, the items or products, the quantity, its value, and progress to repayment:

Example:

Month/Year	Item/Product	Pounds	Value	Repayment Progress
Sept '24	Tomatoes – non-heirloom	100	$(100 * (\$2.50 * 1.25)) = \312.50	\$312.50
Sept '24	Carrots	200	$(200 * (\$3.00 * 1.25)) = \750.00	\$1062.50
Oct '24	Potatoes	300	$(300 * (\$2.00 * 1.25)) = \312.50	\$1812.50
Nov '24	Winter Squash	200	$(200 * \$1.75) = \350.00	\$2162.50
March '25	Eggs	40 dz	$(40 * \$5.50) = \220.00	\$2382.50
March '25	Chard	300	$(300 * \$3.50) = \1050.0	\$3432.50

- Narrative description of the proposed repayment plan, explaining all the elements of the table above. (250 word maximum)

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and may be submitted any time between June 10th, 2024 – August 15th, 2024.

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Select a repayment period that includes donating locally produced food items between September 1st, 2024, and October 31st, 2024.
- Include any of the following products for repayment:
 - a. Apples
 - b. Cabbage
 - c. Potatoes
 - d. Squash
 - e. Onions
 - f. Sweet Potatoes
 - g. Tomatoes

- h. Culturally considerate crops, including:
 - i. Bok Choy
 - ii. Bitter Melon
 - iii. Bitter Gourd
 - iv. Okra
 - v. Mustard Greens
 - vi. Sweet Potato Greens
 - vii. Collards
 - viii. Beets
 - ix. Carrots
- Support or improve gender, racial, and/or ethnic diversity in the agricultural producer community
- Support or improve sustainable growing practices

Repayment Terms:

Recipients of this award will be required to donate locally produced food in exchange for the funds awarded through the collaborative agreement program.

The terms of repayment are as follows:

- Recipients must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the details of the proposed expenses, the product repayment period, and an approved product repayment plan.
- Recipients must donate, via [ChowMatch](#), locally produced products for the associated price listed on the [2024 F2FB price list](#).
 - **Note:** Products offered from September 1st, 2024 – October 31st, 2024, will be valued at 1.25x the current FY24 F2FB prices.
- Recipients must donate food items in an amount **totaling at least 80%** of the dollar value of the award within 18 months of the receipt of funding.
 - For example, if a partner receives \$5,000 up-front payment through this program, they are expected to donate a minimum of \$4,000 worth of produce, calculated using the FY24 F2FB Price Sheet, to F2FB over the selected repayment period. This will be included in the MOU, as indicated above.
- **If the recipient is unable to provide locally produced food in the quantity owed, they must purchase the remaining quantity from another local producer to donate to F2FB.**
- Farmers with incomplete repayments on December 1st, 2025, will be ineligible to sell to the F2FB program until the repayment terms have been fulfilled. All products, including those not included in the initial repayment agreement, offered by farmers with outstanding payments will go toward the fulfillment of the repayment plan. Once the repayment is complete, farmers may resume selling to the F2FB program.

Reporting Requirements:

Recipients will be required to complete mid-cycle reporting **within 2 weeks after the midpoint of the funding period** via [this reporting form](#) with the following information:

- Progress to the completion of the proposed expenditures
- Progress to the completion of product repayment
- Percent of funding spent to date
- Progress to all metrics listed in the application including:
 - Projected variety and resource conservation
 - Other applicant-identified metrics illustrating program impact
- Narrative feedback related to progress on the proposed project

- Photographs or other uploads related to the proposed project emailed to mfcgrants@gmail.com

Submission of all receipts and/or invoices for purchases made must also be sent via email to mfcgrants@gmail.com.

Within **2 weeks after the conclusion of the funding/repayment period**, recipients will be required to complete [this reporting form](#) with the following information:

- Completion of, or progress to, related to the completion of the proposed expenditures
- Completion of, or progress to, related to the completion of product repayment
- Percent of funding spent
- Performance to all metrics listed in the application including:
 - Projected variety and resource conservation
 - Other applicant-identified metrics illustrating program impact
- Narrative feedback related to progress on the proposed project
- Programmatic feedback
- Photographs or other uploads related to the proposed project emailed to mfcgrants@gmail.com

Submission of all receipts and/or invoices for purchases made must also be sent via email to mfcgrants@gmail.com.

Mid-cycle and end-cycle (final) reports are required for all awardees and the deadlines for each report will be dependent on the selected repayment period.

Application Review & Award Process:

All applications received will be reviewed by a three-person panel comprised of at least one Manna staff member, at least one OSFR staff member, and/or one subject matter expert representing a food system partner organization.

The application will be reviewed using the following rubric:

Farm to Foodbank Partner Collaborative Funding Program	
	Maximum Value
I. Application	30
Clear description of the supplies, equipment, or infrastructure to be purchased.	10
Clear link between the proposed purchases and increase in farm food production and future sales to Farm to Food Bank.	20
II. Budget	10
Detailed and reasonable cost estimates are provided in the budget narrative/budget spreadsheet for specific item(s) to be purchased.	10
III. Repayment Proposal	20
The selected time period for repayment is September 1 st , 2024 – August 31 st , 2026.	5
The narrative description of the repayment plan and timeline for repayment are clear and realistic.	10
The repayment proposal includes priority products.	5
IV. Additional Considerations	10
Supports or improves gender, racial, and/or ethnic diversity in the agricultural producer community.	5
Supports or improves sustainable growing practices.	5
TOTAL	70

Once a funding decision is reached, Manna Food Center will notify the applicant of a decision within about two weeks of the submission date. For those awarded funding, Manna will develop an MOU to be signed by both partners within one week of funding notification. Manna will distribute the funding within approximately two weeks of receiving the signed MOU.

Questions & Technical Assistance:

Please visit Community Food Rescue grants page, located [here](#), for more information related to this funding opportunity. If you have technical questions or need help with applying, please contact the Manna’s Food Resources Team at mfcgrants@gmail.com.