



BEREA COLLEGE

2026 PROPOSAL GUIDELINES



www.growappalachia.berea.edu/garden-grants

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We partner with organizations, communities, and families in Appalachia to create healthy, resilient, and economically viable food systems.

Grow Appalachia seeks to impact food insecurity in central Appalachia by helping as many Appalachian families grow as much of their own food as possible through grantmaking to non-profits throughout central Appalachia, including Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina. These organizations administer an organic gardening program at the local level, delivering organic production resources & technical assistance through a hired partner site coordinator so that families truly have all they need to grow their own food.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Partners must demonstrate the following:

AN ORGANIZATION IN &
OF YOUR COMMUNITY

HISTORY OF FOOD SECURITY
WORK & OUTREACH

FISCAL MANAGEMENT
CAPABILITIES

1. 501(c)3 Status or Fiscal Sponsorship: We can only award funds to organizations with 501(c)3 status or organizations receiving fiscal sponsorship from a 501(c)3 organization. We have partnered with a variety of organizations, including, churches, universities, community-based non-profits, schools, medical clinics, and extension offices.

2. Backyard Gardeners & Market Gardening: Our priority is to fund education and resources for backyard gardeners. We also encourage you to provide information & resources to gardeners if they wish to scale up production and sell at local markets. However, this isn't required.

3. Garden Visits: Each participant garden should be visited once per program cycle.

2. Funding Restrictions: Funds from a Grow Appalachia grant can only go towards *organic gardening practices, education & resources*. Non-organic (conventional) materials & education cannot be covered through this grant. A detailed list of items we cannot fund is found on the budget page.

3. Gardening Curriculum: Grow Appalachia requires every site to host six *organic gardening* classes throughout the growing season: (1) garden planning, (2) garden planting, (3) organic garden maintenance, (4) food preservation, (5) heart-healthy cooking, and (6) season extension. Program participants are expected to attend all six classes. We are happy to support your development and delivery of this curriculum. Check out [sample curricula on our Garden Grants page](#) from Build it Up East TN. Please keep in mind that these classes must be taught at appropriate times throughout the year.

4. Bi-Monthly Reporting: We require 4 reports due in April, June, August and November. Reports are robust Excel documents that are reviewed at the annual All Hands Gathering in February, and on-going assistance is provided throughout the year. Reports will require you to track purchasing, harvest data, participation information, workshops, employment, produce sales, and external resources. [See the report template here.](#)

5. Monthly Blogging: All sites must submit a blog once a month from March - October on our Wordpress site.

6. All Hands Gathering: All sites must send at least 1 representative to attend the annual All Hands Gathering on February 12-13th, 2025 at Berea College.

PROPOSAL, Part 1: Application Questions

Please (1) address the following questions & (2) include a detailed budget using the provided Excel template. Your application must be submitted online at bit.ly/gardengrantsapp2026

NEW SITES ONLY:

- **Introduction:** Tell us about your community, your organization, and your role in that organization. Has your organization addressed food security & access issues in your community? Does your community have trouble accessing land to grow food & rely more on community gardens? If so, please elaborate. (300 words or less)
- **Rationale:** Why does your community need a Garden Grants program? (200 words or less)

RETURNING SITES ONLY:

- **Reflection:** Please provide a reflection of your 2025 season so far using the following prompts: *What challenges and successes did you experience? What do you want to celebrate, and how did your program grow? Has your organization faced any staffing or leadership transitions in 2025? If so, please elaborate.* (300 words or less)

REQUIRED FOR ALL SITES:

1. **Fiscal Sponsorship:** Please provide the name and federal EIN of your fiscal sponsor for 2026. This organization must have a 501(c)3 status.
2. **Context:** Has your community faced any significant challenges over the past 5 years that have impacted food and/or land access?
3. **Geographic Area:** Please list all counties & states where you plan to work.
4. **Participants:** How many households / participants / backyard gardens do you plan to work with in 2026?
5. **Goals & Objectives:** What are your goals for this program, and how will it impact your community? (300 words or less)
6. **Advertisement, Recruitment & Retention:** How do you plan to recruit families & participants into the program? How will you retain gardeners & incentivize their participation? How do you advertise this program in your community? Please use the text box to include the blurbs you use to describe the program via email, in newspaper advertisements, etc. when trying to recruit new participants. If you use social media graphics or other digital designs to promote the program (flyers, etc.), please upload an example using the upload box at the bottom of the online application.
7. **Partners:** Who/which organizations will you collaborate with to deliver this program?
8. **Organic Education:** What is your experience delivering organic gardening education in your community? Have you faced any resistance to adopting these practices? If so, how are you working to overcome these barriers?
9. **Curriculum:** How will you administer the required classes to your participants? Please provide a tentative monthly schedule.
10. **Capacity:** Please describe the structure of your team and how they will deliver the different aspects of the program. How will you delegate report & blog submission responsibilities?
11. **Program Sustainability:** Which aspects of your program could continue without funding from Grow Appalachia?

PROPOSAL, Part 2: The Budget

Budget requests must be divided into 6 categories: *labor, travel, consumables, instructional costs, equipment and administrative*. Please be as specific as possible in each line item. You must upload both your **organizational budget** and your **program budget** via the online application.

LABOR

- Labor requests may not exceed more than 50% of the total request
- Please estimate hours worked each month and the hourly rate
- You may hire more than one person to administer the program
- We will not consider proposals where temporary Americorps VISTA volunteers are the supervisors.

TRAVEL

- Please estimate how many miles you will travel to visit your gardeners, pick up supplies, and attend the required All Hands Gathering in Berea, KY in February
- This section does not include fuel for tractors

INSTRUCTIONAL COSTS

- Include costs for your 6 required classes here, including workshop supplies, instructor fees, classroom rental fees, etc.

CONSUMABLES

- Consumables are anything that will likely not be around the second year, including seeds, plants, organic pesticides, fertilizer, fuel for farm equipment, etc.

EQUIPMENT

- These are items that will still be around after the first year. We consider these investments. Equipment includes: hand tools, walk-behind tractors, drip irrigation supplies, food preservation equipment, etc.

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

- Administrative costs cannot exceed more than 5% of the budget subtotal
- These costs include: fiscal management, office supplies, phone & internet costs directly related to your Grow Appalachia program, etc.

WHAT WE CANNOT FUND

Non-organic sprays, fertilizers or treated seeds; animals raised for meat production; conference travel or registration; workshop honoraria; “consultant” positions; general facility maintenance; gardening books; rain barrels; program vehicles; computers (Berea College offers free refurbished laptops to our partner sites every year); decorative garden infrastructure; fruit trees, flowers & decorative plants

THE TIMELINE

**PROPOSAL
SUBMISSION OPENS**

August 1

**DEADLINE FOR
DRAFT REVIEW**

September 1

**FINAL
PROPOSALS DUE**

October 1

**GRANTS
ANNOUNCED**

November 8th

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL

Submit your application & upload the required documents using this link:
bit.ly/gardengrantsapp2026

Questions? Email us at growapp@berea.edu
or call us at (859) 985-3195

