

TO: Middle Schools Starting New Agricultural Education Programs in Illinois
FROM: Jason Mott, Principal Consultant for Agricultural Education
DATE: Sept. 19 2025
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding – Incentive Funding Grant for Middle School Agricultural Education

Congratulations on your decision to implement an approved middle school agricultural education program. The Incentive Funding Grant (IFG) for agricultural education is available to all eligible middle schools offering an agriculture program in fiscal year 2027; \$5,000 is made available over a two-year period. After the second year of the program, the incentive funding allocation is calculated based on the number of quality indicators earned on the IFG application. The award of the IFG and total dollar amount is contingent on the availability of state funds. There are requirements to be met each year for eligibility to continue.

Eligibility Requirements to Receive a Grant in Any Year

In order to be eligible annually to receive a grant, the following must be met:

- The agriculture teacher/FFA Advisor is licensed in agriculture education.
- At least 25% of a local full-time equivalent working day and/or teaching load must be composed of middle school agricultural education courses.
- Course(s) in agricultural education are offered at the middle school/junior high level for a minimum of one quarter for more than one class period/section.
- The school must charter or maintain an official FFA chapter affiliated with the Illinois Association FFA and submit an FFA roster prior to the deadline set forth by the Illinois Association FFA OR be affiliated with an FFA chapter in the high school that the middle school feeds into.
- Coursework must provide all students with agricultural career exploration opportunities (foundational Supervised Agricultural Experiences).
- Coursework must be articulated with secondary CTE programs of study.
- An IFG application must be completed prior to June 30 annually after Year 1.

Requirements in Year 1

To be eligible to receive a \$2,500 grant in Year 1, the following must be met:

- The FFA chapter participates in at least one Career Development Event (CDEs) and/or Leadership Development Event (LDEs).
- It is not a requirement, but it is strongly recommended to develop a plan detailing how the district will reach at least 50% of the total X's available on the application during Year two.

Requirements in Year 2

To be eligible to receive a \$2,500 grant in Year 2, the following must be met:

- The FFA chapter participates in at least two CDEs and/or LDEs. (See Attachment A.)
- An IFG application must be completed prior to June 30, with at least 50% of the total quality indicatory points available earned.

I affirm that I have read and understand the requirements that must be met to receive the start-up funds for the Incentive Funding Grant. In addition, I affirm that we will meet the goals outlined in the three-year course offering plan. If any of the requirements are not satisfactorily met, we understand we will be ineligible for the grant. Items purchased with previously allocated grant funds will be relocated to other agriculture departments within the Education for Employment (EFE) System.

District/School Name

_____	_____
School Board President	Date
_____	_____
District Superintendent	Date
_____	_____
Principal	Date
_____	_____
Agriculture Teacher	Date
_____	_____
EFE System Director	Date
_____	_____
FCAE Program Advisor	Date