



Thank you for your interest in the Farm Fund Secured Loan Program.

Background

The Community Food Co-op, with additional donations from the Sustainable Whatcom Fund of Whatcom Community Foundation, created a fund through the Industrial Credit Union (ICU) for farmers and food producers who might not otherwise have access to a loan.

Goals

The goals of the Secured Loan are; to stabilize or expand the local farming and food processing economy; to increase the amount of locally, organically and sustainably produced products available for sale; to increase access to capital for local farmers; and to provide a low interest pathway for farms to build credit.

Loan Details

- Applicants may apply for a minimum of \$500 up to \$12,000, secured at a 3% interest rate.
- Larger loans are available directly through ICU's SEED Loan Program at a higher interest rate or a combination of the Farm Fund secured loan interest rate and ICU's loan program.
- Farmers and farm-supported producers may carry more than one loan if they are in good standing on their payment and the total of all their outstanding secured loans isn't more than \$12,000.

Preferred uses

- Loan funds may be used for purchase of machinery, equipment, farm supplies (plant materials, animals, feed, etc.), labor or other resources necessary for increasing productivity, or for on-farm construction.
- Funding of a loan does not guarantee or imply that the Co-op will purchase or sell any product or service from the borrower.

Application process

- Fill out the ICU loan application and the Farm Fund Secured Loan Application (both attached)
- Send your completed Farm Fund application to: ***FarmFund@communityfood.coop***, or Community Food Co-op 405 E Holly St., Bellingham, WA 98225. Attn: Jean Rogers/Farm Fund
- Send your completed ICU application to: Business Relations, Industrial Credit Union PO Box 1767 Bellingham WA 98227-1767 ***businessrelations@industrialcu.org***

Questions? Contact: ***FarmFund@communityfood.coop***, or call 360-734-8158, ext. 311.

We look forward to working with you to promote your farm and your loan project!

Sincerely, the Farm Fund Committee

Secured Loan Application

The loan process will be kept confidential by the Community Food Co-op.

*Please send or deliver completed applications to: ***FarmFund@communityfood.coop***, or Community Food Co-op 405 E Holly St., Bellingham, WA 98225. Attn: Jean Rogers/Farm Fund*



Community Food Co-op Farm Fund Secured Loan Application

Name: _____ Name of Business: _____
Phone Number: _____ Address: _____
Email address: _____ Website: _____
Total loan amount requested: _____ Total project expenses: _____
Proposed term: _____ Proposed payment amounts: _____

Farm Fund Secured Loan Eligibility and Checklist

All food and farm producers and processors in Whatcom and Skagit County and supplying Whatcom County are eligible to apply. Applicants must have a business plan or existing farm or production operation with a demonstrated business history. Loan applications will be reviewed by the Farm Fund Secured Loan Sub-Committee and ICU. The Farm Fund prioritizes projects that focus on some or all of the following areas:

1. Local production, supply, and impact on Whatcom County
2. Environmental Stewardship
3. Strength of business plan
4. Social impact
 - Fair labor practices plan
 - Diversity: minority, women owned or cooperative businesses
 - Increasing food access to vulnerable populations
5. Creating new markets and developing infrastructure
 - Innovation: seasonality and season extension, energy efficiency, creation of new markets etc.
 - Diversification of products and farms
 - Filling gaps in local food supply
 - Potential for community capacity building (benefits to multiple farm and/or food producers)

Secured Loan Application

The loan process will be kept confidential by the Community Food Co-op.

*Please send or deliver completed applications to: **FarmFund@communityfood.coop**, or Community Food Co-op 405 E Holly St., Bellingham, WA 98225. Attn: Jean Rogers/Farm Fund*

Please respond to the following questions:

- Describe how your loan will be used and how the proposed project will impact the viability of your business.

- Describe how your proposed loan and project will meet the Farm Fund goals and checklist, including how your project will impact Whatcom County production and/or supply.
(Please address the areas applicable to your farm and your application -- the more complete and relevant to the numbered checklist on page 1, the better)

- Are you GAP certified, or have you taken the GAP training?

- Are you certified organic? Transitional? Other (please describe)

- Do you have liability insurance of \$1 million? If so, name of insurer:

- Product(s) expected to be sold as a result of this loan:

- Intended market and method of sale of finished product(s):
(For example, direct to the general public via the Bellingham Farmer's Market)

- Attach a one page business description, including location, type of business, years in business, marketable products and where sold, number of employees, gross sales, physical plant/community kitchen, processing facility (land, house, barns, green houses, and livestock inventory. If possible, please attach your farm plan, schedule or other relevant information.

Secured Loan Application

The loan process will be kept confidential by the Community Food Co-op.

*Please send or deliver completed applications to: **FarmFund@communityfood.coop**, or Community Food Co-op 405 E Holly St., Bellingham, WA 98225. Attn: Jean Rogers/Farm Fund*

Assistance with filling out the loan application:

Industrial Credit Union:

Phone: (360) 734-2043 (ask for Diane Neyens)

FAX: (360) 647-6615

businessrelations@industrialcu.org

Loan information: **www.communityfood.coop** (click on the Farm Fund in the menu)

Loan Closing

Prior to closing, Community Food Co-op will submit a letter of commitment that will detail the closing agreements (we look forward to working with you to promote your farm and your loan project!)

Loan Evaluation:

The Farm Fund Committee, Co-op General Manager and ICU review the loan applications. All reviewers sign a confidentiality agreement.

Turnaround: Allow 30 – 40 days for the entire process. Pre-plan so you will have finances when needed (for example, if you expect to buy animals or equipment at an auction). The Farm Fund Committee aims for making decisions on loan approvals within seven days.

Secured Loan Application

The loan process will be kept confidential by the Community Food Co-op.

*Please send or deliver completed applications to: **FarmFund@communityfood.coop**, or Community Food Co-op 405 E Holly St., Bellingham, WA 98225. Attn: Jean Rogers/Farm Fund*