



# **Grants for Youth Growing Projects**

December 8, 2025

Auburn, NY

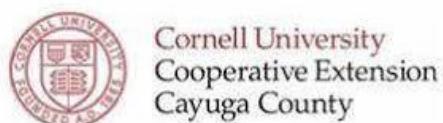
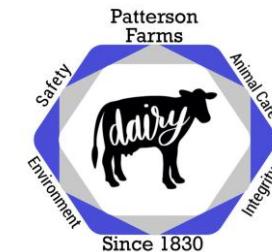


## **Growing Hope Cayuga Mission**

*Our mission is to foster empathy, compassion and shared purpose to accelerate an end to hunger and malnutrition around the world through positive youth development and collective action.*

# Funding for Youth Projects

Thanks to **Cayuga County Youth Bureau and sponsors** for supporting Growing Hope Cayuga youth projects.





# Purpose of Projects

- **Educate youth** and raise public awareness about hunger, malnutrition, farming and food systems locally.
- **Empower youth** to change the world through farming and community development.
- Accelerate an **end to hunger and malnutrition** through food production and food system reform.



# Grant Basics

- Up to \$5,000 per project
- Applications accepted on a rolling basis
- Must include school-aged youth from Cayuga County
- Youth involved in project planning and implementation
- Funds must be fully spent by 12/31/2026
- Expenses/receipts, metrics/impact, photos, insurance



# What makes a good project?

- ✓ High level of youth engagement in design and implementation
- ✓ Increased youth and public awareness about hunger, malnutrition, and food systems
- ✓ Measurable impact on local hunger and malnutrition
- ✓ Sustainability



# Local Needs

- Prevalence of food choices that provide empty calories vs. nutrition
- Improved food distribution network
- Consumer knowledge deficit in preparing unprocessed food
- Group discussion



# Project Example | Firehouse Pancake Fundraiser for Local Hunger

**Core idea:** Youth partner with their local fire department to run a pancake breakfast fundraiser using the New Hope Mills Firehouse Program.

**What youth do:** Youth plan the event, manage a simple budget, help prepare and serve food safely with adult support, promote the fundraiser within their community, and decide how funds are used such as donating to a pantry, supporting a meal program, or purchasing New Hope Mills mixes to distribute.

**Educational value:** They learn budgeting, event planning, food safety basics, community engagement, and how fundraising can directly support hunger relief

**Local partners:** New Hope Mills, fire departments



# Project Example | Booker T. Washington Center Greenhouse & Community Garden Rebuild

**Core idea:** Youth help rebuild or refresh the greenhouse and community garden at the Booker T. Washington Center, growing herbs, greens, and culturally relevant vegetables for local families.

**What youth do:** They repair beds or greenhouse structures, or add hydroponic systems and select crops based on community needs, plant and harvest produce, and participate in simple nutrition or cooking demonstrations supported by local farmers.

**Educational value:** They gain hands-on experience with urban agriculture, seasonal growing, crop planning, and the relationship between fresh produce and community food security.

**Local partners:** Booker T. Washington Center, local farmers



# Project Example | School Lunch Improvement

## Project: Taste Tests & Better Meals

**Core idea:** Youth work with their school's cafeteria staff to test new foods, introduce more local items, and improve the overall school lunch experience.

**What youth do:** They choose one or two meal improvements, coordinate taste-test days, gather student feedback, create simple posters showing where foods come from, and share results with cafeteria teams or school administrators.

**Educational value:** They learn about nutrition, data collection, how school food systems operate, and how to collaborate with adults who oversee school meals.

**Local partners:** Schools, local farms, Cornell Cooperative Extension.



# Project Example | “Healthy Food on a Budget” Youth Meal Kit Project

**Core idea:** Youth explore the challenges of preparing healthy meals on a limited budget by creating low-cost, nutritious meal kits for local families.

**What youth do:** They work within a fictional low-cost grocery budget, plan a meal that fits that budget, assemble meal kits using donated or grant-funded ingredients, write recipe cards with simple nutrition explanations, and distribute the kits to a pantry or school resource center.

**Educational value:** They learn budgeting skills, nutrition label reading, meal planning, and develop empathy for families facing food insecurity, while gaining insight into the real-world challenges of food affordability.

**Local partners:** CAPCO, school family resource centers, community pantries, food suppliers



# Food Systems Career Day

## Save the Date: 3/12/2026