Grow NE

2026–27 Application

Beyond School Bells
nebraskachildren



Grow NE is a Beyond School Bells program that supports Expanded Learning Opportunity programs to cultivate youth leadership in food systems: gardening, agriculture, local foods and so much more. Grow NE contracts and technical assistance are offered to support high school student leadershipand afterschool club activities.

The goal of Grow NE is to empower Nebraska's young leaders to engage in and become leaders of local food systems.

Grow NE contracts can support program needs to achieve this goal, including student and staff stipends, garden supplies and technology, and club events and field trips.

All funded clubs are required to engage in monthly peer learning community meetings, support high school student leadership, and provide food systems career connections at least once each quarter.

Choose Your Track

Programs can apply for a single track and request up to $5,000. Select one:

Innovative Agriculture	Local Food Systems	Sustainable Growing	Afterschool to Table
Section: pages 3–5	*Section: pages 6-8*	*Section: pages 9-11*	*Section: pages 12-14*

Program Information

Director's Name(s): _____

Director Email: _____

Program name: _____

School District(s): _____

Additional contacts to be included (name and email): _____

Who will lead your food systems programming? _____

How many students does your program serve? _____

How many students do you expect in your club? _____

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Club Information

Do you have an existing outdoor garden?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have an existing indoor garden tower?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have other gardening spaces? Please describe.

Do you have high school student leaders?

☐ Yes ☐ Recruiting

What grades will engage in the club and gardens?

How to Apply

1. Complete the Program Information and Club Information sections.
2. Complete the section for your selected track only: Innovative Agriculture (pages 3–5), Local Food Systems (pages 6–8), Sustainable Growing (pages 9–11), Afterschool to Table (pages 12–14).
3. Clubs are supported during the fall, spring, and summer as funds allow.
4. Reach out to **Alexus Hansen** (ahansen@nebraskachildren.org) and **Dakota Staggs** (dstaggs@nebraskachildren.org) to apply today.

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GROW NE 2026–27 APPLICATION · TRACK SECTION

Innovative Agriculture

Grow NE: Innovative Agriculture is designed to engage youth in innovative ways to grow food locally throughout the year. This track recommends club resources from **Let's Get Growing from Nebraska Ag in the Classroom** and can support the purchase of a hydroponics garden or other growing technology. **The primary learning goal is to introduce youth to new and engaging ways of growing food.**

Application Questions

What are your three top goals for your club?

How will your club be structured? (start / end, frequency, staff oversight, student leadership)

What Innovative Agriculture do you want to incorporate and how?

Are there any community partners or connections you'd like to include?

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GROW NE 2026–27 APPLICATION

Innovative Agriculture

What career introductions will your club make for club participants and leaders?

All clubs must include HS student leadership, including their participation in the National Geographic Slingshot Challenge. How will HS students engage in your club?

Beyond School Bells will offer Service-Learning through Conservation to student leaders. Will your club's student leaders participate with BSB or will your program provide student leader training directly?

What club resources or curriculum do you plan to use (or would you like assistance)?

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Innovative Agriculture

Proposed Budget

BUDGET CATEGORY	AMOUNT	DETAIL
Wages		
Taxes / Benefits		
Office Operations		
Travel		
Supplies		
Training and Outreach		
Contracting and Consulting		
Other		
Total		*Up to $5,000*

Please describe your proposed budget including details.

Include details like number and role of staff, field trip destination (if applicable), kinds of supplies.
We do not require an itemized supply list for this application but may request additional detail if needed.

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GROW NE 2026–27 APPLICATION · TRACK SECTION

Local Food Systems

Grow NE: Local Food Systems is designed to introduce and connect youth to their local food systems. This track recommends club resources from **NDE's Farm to School Harvest of the Month** and can support the purchase of local foods or hosting an event with local foods (farmers market, family engagement, harvest celebration). **The primary learning goal is to engage youth in local food systems and connect them to local agriculture.**

Application Questions

What are your three top goals for your club?

How will your club be structured? (start / end, frequency, staff oversight, student leadership)

What Local Food do you want to incorporate and how?

Are there any community partners or connections you'd like to include?

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GROW NE 2026–27 APPLICATION

Local Food Systems

What career introductions will your club make for club participants and leaders?

All clubs must include HS student leadership, including their participation in the National Geographic Slingshot Challenge. How will HS students engage in your club?

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What club resources or curriculum do you plan to use (or would you like assistance)?

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Local Food Systems

Proposed Budget

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Sustainable Growing

Grow NE: Sustainable Growing is designed for students to explore the world of regenerative agriculture and view gardening through the lens of ecology, the relationships between living organisms and their environment. This track recommends club resources from **Kiss the Ground** and **Regenerative Farmers of America** and can support the purchase of gardening supplies, learning resources such as books and speakers, or field trips to sustainable farms in the area. **The primary learning goal is to introduce youth to the benefits of utilizing ecology in agriculture.**

Application Questions

What are your three top goals for your club?

How will your club be structured? (start / end, frequency, staff oversight, student leadership)

What Sustainable Growing practice(s) do you want to incorporate and how?

Are there any community partners or connections you'd like to include?

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GROW NE 2026–27 APPLICATION

Sustainable Growing

What career introductions will your club make for club participants and leaders?

All clubs must include HS student leadership, including their participation in the National Geographic Slingshot Challenge. How will HS students engage in your club?

Beyond School Bells will offer Service-Learning through Conservation to student leaders. Will your club's student leaders participate with BSB or will your program provide student leader training directly?

What club resources or curriculum do you plan to use (or would you like assistance)?

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Proposed Budget

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Afterschool to Table

Grow NE: Afterschool to Table is designed to introduce seasonal foods, culinary skills, and connect youth to Farm to School efforts. This track recommends club resources from **NDE's Farm to School Harvest of the Month** and **UNL 4-H's WeCook**. This track can support training youth in kitchens, gardening, and cooking activities to produce and prepare local foods. **The primary learning goal is to engage youth in Farm to School efforts.**

Application Questions

What are your three top goals for your club?

How will your club be structured? (start / end, frequency, staff oversight, student leadership)

What seasonal foods or culinary skills do you want to incorporate and how?

Are there any community partners or connections you'd like to include?

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Afterschool to Table

What career introductions will your club make for club participants and leaders?

All clubs must include HS student leadership, including their participation in the National Geographic Slingshot Challenge. How will HS students engage in your club?

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What club resources or curriculum do you plan to use (or would you like assistance)?

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Afterschool to Table

Proposed Budget

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Taxes / Benefits		
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