



**DELAWARE
GROCERY
INITIATIVE**



**FIRST STATE
FOOD SYSTEM
PROGRAM**



DELAWARE DIVISION OF SMALL
BUSINESS

What Is Delaware Grocery Initiative?

- A statewide initiative to strengthen the First State Food System – connecting producers, suppliers, and communities.
- Supports small grocers, food producers, and supply-chain operators who expand access to healthy, affordable foods.
- Administered by the Delaware Division of Small Business (DSB)



2025 Snapshot

- 22 organizations awarded across Delaware (59 applied)
 - 15 NCC, 0 Kent, 7 Sussex
- \$250,000 in total funding distributed
- Award grant size: up to \$12,500
- **5-week turnaround from application to award disbursement** – rapid effort to prevent unspent FY25 funds from lapsing



Updates for 2026

- Scaled-Funding Model: Tiers of awards based on project size and impact.
- Improved Online Application Portal, clearer guidance and live info session
- Scoring Rubric will be available for review when application launches
- \$700,000 in available funding
- Rolling Timeline:
 - Feb 20th at 9:00am– Application Opens
 - March 20th at 4:30pm – Application Closes
 - Mid April – Award Notifications Sent to Awardees
 - Awardees will have 7 days to sign Award Agreement

Who is Eligible to Apply

- Delaware-based food producers, grocery operators, food supply-chain businesses, and nonprofits improving food access.
 - **Farmers/Food Producers:**
 - producing for supply – fruits, vegetables, animal proteins, or other food products
 - **Retailers:**
 - independently owned grocery stores, cooperative groceries, neighborhood markets, corner stores, restaurants, farmers markets, on-farm stores, food trucks, or farm stands
 - **Other Food Distributors:**
 - food pantries, food closets, faith-based organizations, soup kitchens
 - **Storage:**
 - food aggregation facilities, food refrigeration or freezers
 - **Transportation:**
 - pickup and delivery of food products
 - **Processing:**
 - commercial kitchens, food prep facilities, food washing or cutting facilities
- Entities with active Supplier ID registration and current financial statements.
- New or returning applicants in good standing



Who Is Ineligible

- Entities seeking to refinance debt or pay off existing loans.
- Projects outside the State of Delaware.
- Incomplete applications or those missing required documentation.
- Entities that do not fall into the previous categories.



What can be funded?

- Operations Support
- Capital Expenses
- Equipment Purchases
- Other projects that expand chain capacity



Application Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria below. Priority will be given to projects that expand or preserve access to healthy foods in food deserts or areas at risk of becoming food deserts.

- **Problem Statement and Supply Chain Context**
 - Clarity of the problem the project seeks to address, its relevance to food access, availability, affordability, or continuity of healthy food, and its connection to food deserts or areas at risk of becoming food deserts.
- **Project Description and Work Plan**
 - Clarity of the proposed project and activities, alignment between activities and goals, and feasibility.
- **Measurable Outcomes**
 - Whether outcomes and indicators are clearly identified and appropriate to project scale.
- **Potential Impact**
 - Anticipated impact on food access and community benefit.
- **Project Commitment and Oversight**
 - Readiness, oversight, and accountability.
- **Budget**
 - Reasonableness, alignment, and fiscal responsibility.



APPLICATION

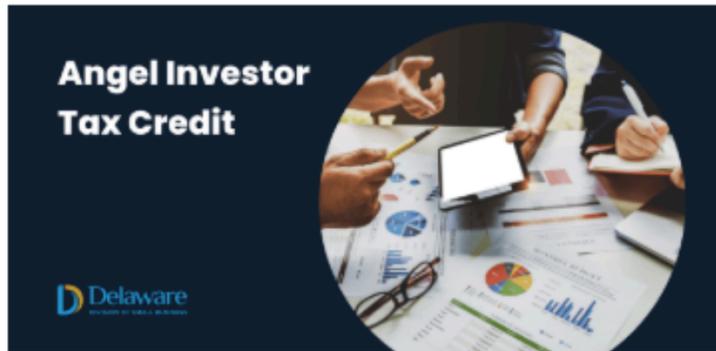
PROGRAMS

Programs

Welcome to the Delaware Division of Small Business services and payment portal. Through this portal, you can view Division program information, check your account status, make payments, and review program documents. Please select View Program Details below for the program(s) relevant to your business.

All Programs

Angel Investor Tax Credit
Incentives & Credits



[View Program Details](#)

DE Relief Grants (DRG)
Grants



[View Program Details](#)

Delaware Accelerator & Seed Capital Program
Direct Investment



[View Program Details](#)

Delaware Grocery Initiative
Grants



[View Program Details](#)

Delaware Sports Tourism
Grants



[View Program Details](#)

Delaware Strategic Fund (DSF)
Grants & Loans



[View Program Details](#)

Delaware Grocery Initiative Intake

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Applicant Business Identification

Fields marked with a red * are required.

Account Info

* Applicant Entity Name

* Tax ID Number ⓘ

Mailing Address

* Street

* City

* State

* Zip Code

Is the Address of Business Operation different from the Mailing Address?

[Save & Continue →](#)

CONTACTS

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Delaware Grocery Initiative Intake

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Business Contacts

Authorized Signer

The Authorized Signer must be a person with authority to sign on behalf of the applicant business. For a small, closely held business this might be the same person as the general contact.

* First Name

* Last Name

* Title ⓘ

* Authorized Signer Email

Authorized Signer Phone

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DETAILS

Business ID

Business Contact

Business Details

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Business Details

* Entity Type

Food Producer

* Brief Description of Entity (indicate if for profit, nonprofit, or public charity)

Brief Description of my for-profit organization will go here

* Years of Operation (if new/startup, provide a description of your industry experience)

6

* Sam.gov Registration Completed:

Yes

UEI #

00000

Supplier ID #

0000000

* State of Delaware Supplier Registration Completed:

Yes

* Has this applicant received prior funding under the Delaware First State Food System Program?

No

Preference will be given to new eligible applicants to ensure broad distribution in communities across the State of Delaware.

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PROJECT INFO

Project Information

* Project Name

Key Dates

* Expected Start Date

* Expected End Date

Project Details: (500 character max per question)

* Project Purpose

* What is the problem or challenge the project helps address?

* Who will this project serve or who will benefit from the project? If possible, specify age, race/ethnic, socio-economic or geographic populations.

* What geographic location will this project serve? Example: your community, outside of your community, the whole state of Delaware, etc.

PROJECT INFO

* Name of project partners, stakeholders, contributors:

Partners list

* Describe how the project will positively impact the local food system, including how it improves access to healthy foods, affordability, availability, or continuity of food access for underserved or food-insecure communities.

Impact

* What are the specific goals or outcomes of the project? Where applicable, include goals related to expanding or preserving access to healthy foods.

Goals

* What are the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill goals?

activities

* What information or data will be collected related to the project? (example: types of product sold, number of meals served, number of neighborhood delivery stops, etc.):

data

* How do you plan to continue this project once the grant has ended?

our plan moving forward

Requested Funds

* Total Funds Requested

\$10,000.00

* List any funding sources outside of this grant used to complete this project (name, type, committed/pending):

funding sources

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DISCLOSURES

Business ID

Business Contact

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Disclosures

If you answered "Yes" to any of the questions below, you are required to upload a document in the Documents section of this application with an explanation.

Has the applicant or any person listed as an owner on Management section of this application:

*** Been the subject of, or party to, any formal or informal inspection, inquiry, investigation, administrative proceeding, criminal prosecution, or civil litigation by any federal or state agency administering, or private person seeking relief under, state or federal statutes, regulations, or rules governing collective bargaining, hours of labor, working conditions, industrial hygiene and safety, minimum wage standards, discrimination in wages, child labor, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation or other labor law matters?**

- Yes
 No

*** Been the subject of or a party to any formal or informal inspection, inquiry, investigation, administrative proceedings, criminal prosecution**

- Yes
 No

*** Been the subject of, or a party to, any formal or informal inspection, inquiry, investigation, administrative proceeding, criminal prosecution or civil litigation by any state or federal law enforcement, regulatory or administrative agency for the criminal or civil violation of any federal or state statute, regulation, rule or the terms of any license or permit issued by a federal or state agency, including the failure to hold such a license or permit?**

- Yes
 No

*** Been the defendant in any civil litigation in which any type of fraud, misrepresentation, unfair or deceptive trade practices were alleged?**

- Yes

DISCLOSURES

*** Been the defendant in any civil litigation in which any type of fraud, misrepresentation, unfair or deceptive trade practices were alleged?**

- Yes
 No

*** Been denied any license or permit or had any license or permit revoked or suspended by any federal, state or local agency or governmental body?**

- Yes
 No

*** Been convicted of a crime? (Those convicted of a financial crime are not eligible to apply)**

- Yes
 No

*** Filed a voluntary petition in bankruptcy or had an involuntary petition in bankruptcy filed against the Applicant, in any bankruptcy court, or been subject to any other state or federal insolvency or receivership proceedings?**

- Yes
 No

*** Been an owner or manager of a manufacturing facility that was designated as a chronic violator by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control?**

- Yes
 No

*** Do you have a family member who is currently employed in either the Delaware General Assembly and/or Executive Branch? Family member is defined as sibling, parent, child, aunt, uncle cousin or second cousin.**

- Yes
 No

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DOCUMENTS



Documents

Document Upload

The following documents are strongly recommended for application:

- Current Balance Sheet (list as required)
- Current Profit and Loss Statement
- Two Year Tax Returns
- Project Budget (list as required)

All documents must be formatted as PDF.

To reduce unnecessary administrative burden on small or emerging food access operators, applicants may submit alternative financial documentation (such as summarized financial statements, bank statements, or a CPA/bookkeeper letter) where full financial statements are not readily available. All applicants remain subject to fiscal review and verification.

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A file upload interface. At the top, it says 'Files (0)' and 'Add Files'. Below that is a dashed box containing an 'Upload Files' button with an upload icon and the text 'Or drop files'. A red circle highlights the 'Upload Files' button and the text below it.

REVIEW & SIGN

Business ID

Business Contact

Business Details

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Review & Sign

Submit

Review & Sign

Ready to complete and electronically sign your application?

To review your application before signing, you can use the navigation above. When you're ready use the button below to continue and sign your application.

Only the person identified as the "Authorized Signer" on the "Business Contact" step of this application may sign it. A login must be created with the email address of the Authorized Signer; please [contact us](#) if you need to delegate access to this application to that login.

Once you sign the application, you will no longer be able to make changes. If this application requires payment, you will also need to pay after electronically signing before it will be processed.

After signing the application, you will must confirm that you've completed the application **on this portal** before it will be processed.

Applicant Business Name

Debbie's Food Place

Authorized Signer

Jaimie Watts <jaimie.watts@delaware.gov>

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REVIEW & SIGN

APPLICANT CERTIFICATIONS - REQUIRED

Eligibility for financial assistance from the Delaware Economic Development Authority is determined by the information presented in this application and in the required exhibits and attachments. Any change in the status of the proposed project from the facts presented herein could disqualify the project.

To the extent permitted by Delaware's Freedom of Information Act, all information contained in this application or obtained by the Authority in investigating or considering this application will be kept confidential, except for disclosure to the staff and attorneys of the Authority and the Delaware Division of Small Business ("DSB").

I, the undersigned, being duly sworn upon my oath say:

1. The Applicant as listed is the recipient of the funds.
2. The Applicant hereby agrees, if this application is approved, to comply with all federal, state, and local laws affecting the grant to be issued and the operation of the proposed project. The Applicant further agrees to comply with all of the terms of the Agreement that governs the financial assistance. As part of this agreement, the Applicant agrees to use its best efforts in good faith to meet all employment projections set forth herein and to give the first opportunity of employment to qualified Delaware residents for all unskilled and semi-skilled workers employed by the applicant.
3. The Applicant agrees to report to the Authority, quarterly reports, including proof of purchase of eligible and approved items as described in the formal Agreement.
4. The Applicant hereby agrees that any officers, employees, agents or attorneys of the Authority or the Delaware Division of Small Business ("DSB") may have access to and copy any and all information in any form pertaining to Applicant, including, but not limited to, tax returns and information from tax returns as used in 30 Del. C. §368, in the custody of any State of Delaware, or other State, department, agency, instrumentality, division, office, board, bureau, council, commission, committee, panel or "public body," as that term is defined in the Delaware Freedom of Information Act, 29 Del. C. § 10002(a), including, but not limited to, the Departments of Finance, State, Labor, and Natural Resources and Environmental Control of the State of Delaware, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board or any other agency of the federal government having custody of information deemed pertinent by DSB or the Authority staff or attorneys in evaluating Applicant's application for assistance.
5. This application, with all attachments & exhibits, is the product of diligent and reasonable investigation that I have either overseen or been personally involved.
6. I have carefully read this application, including all attachments and exhibits, and the information contained in this application, including all attachments and exhibits, is true, accurate and complete to the best of my information and belief.
7. I am a director or officer acting within the scope of my employment and authorized to act on behalf of the Applicant.
8. I understand that if I have intentionally made a false statement in this application, or someone else has made a false statement herein that I know or believe to be false, I am subject to criminal prosecution. Further, the Authority, at its option, may terminate its financial assistance.
9. That the information reported herein is true, accurate and complete. I understand that these reports are made in support of claims for government funds.
10. I understand the Authority may also require additional information as determined by Authority staff.

Applicant Information:

Debbie's Food Place

Name of Applicant (Business)

 <small>Jaimie Watts (Feb 17, 2026)</small>	Owner	02/17/2026
Signature of Representative of the Applicant	Title	Signed Date



Click submit to sign. By submitting, I agree to the [Consumer Disclosure](#), and to use e-signatures
Sender has requested to redirect you to [dsb-uat.sandbox.mysite.com](#) after signing.

Submit

SUBMIT

Business ID

Business Contact

Business Details

Program Information

Disclosure Questions

Documents

Review & Sign

Submit

Submit Application

Upon hitting Submit your application and associated attachments will be sent to the Delaware Division of Small Business at business_finance@delaware.gov.

Complete Application

COMPLETED

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Delaware Grocery Initiative

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Program Purpose and Priority

The Delaware Grocery Initiative is administered by the Delaware Division of Small Business to expand access to healthy foods in food deserts in Delaware and areas at risk of becoming food deserts, consistent with Title 16, Chapter 36 of the Delaware Code.

In consultation with the Delaware Council on Farm and Food Policy, the Division prioritizes projects that directly improve food access, affordability, and availability for underserved communities while maintaining appropriate fiscal and programmatic accountability.

[Apply for Program](#)

My Applications

Last Update	ID	Status	
2/17/2026, 12:07:05 PM	INT# 2026-02-17-18917	Submitted	View



Your Questions | Our Support

Let's make Delaware's food system stronger – together.

Email: cj.bell@delaware.gov
Number: (302) 739-4271

