# Online Grant Application How-To

A guide for applying for the NYS Dairy Modernization grant offered by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and Administered by the Farm and Food Growth Fund

The Farm and Food Growth Fund offers an online application for most of our grants. This guide will walk you through the steps to set up your account and apply for the New York State Dairy Modernization Grant.

Step 1: Go to the Website

Use a web browser (e.g. Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer) to go to the FFGF Grant Log-In Page, at https://ffgf.smapply.us/ and click the **REGISTER** button.
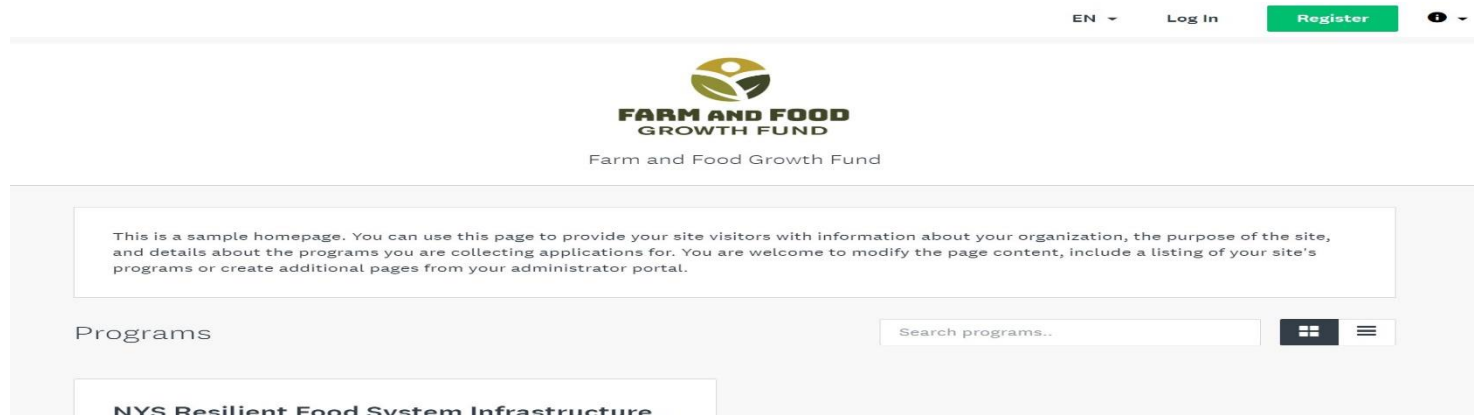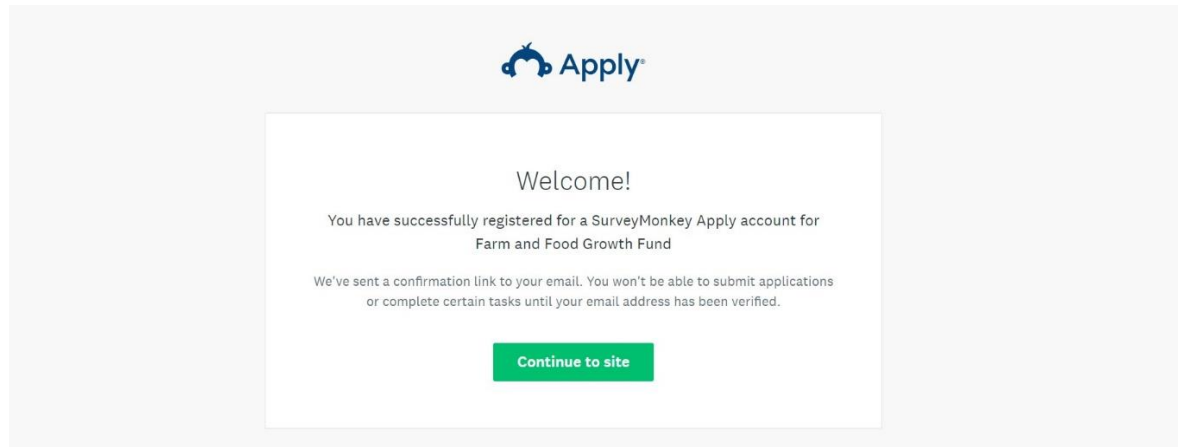

Step 2: Create an Account

You must register to create to account. This allows you to access the application portal. Provide your email, create your password, and confirm that you are not, in fact, a robot. Then click the **CREATE ACCOUNT** button.
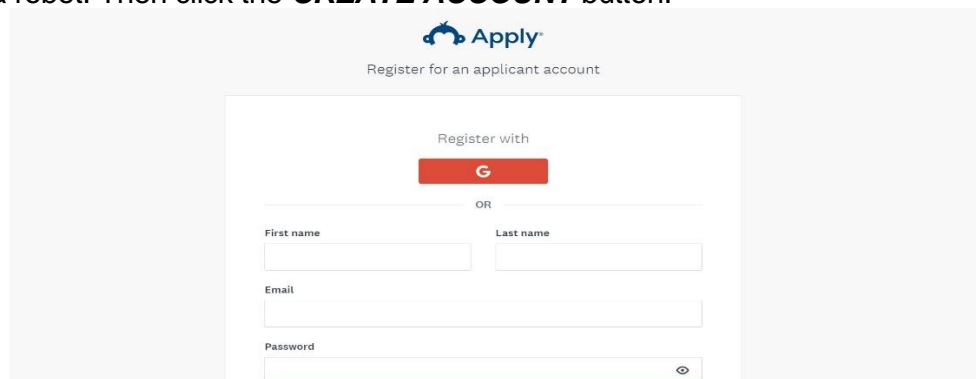
Step 3: Continue to Site

At the Welcome! Page you will follow the **CONTINUE TO SITE** button.

Step 4: Verify Your Email and View Programs

Next be sure to verify your email by clicking the **SEND VERIFICATION LINK.** You must follow the instructions in the verification email in order to apply for funding and establish your account. Once completed, click the **VIEW PROGRAMS** button.
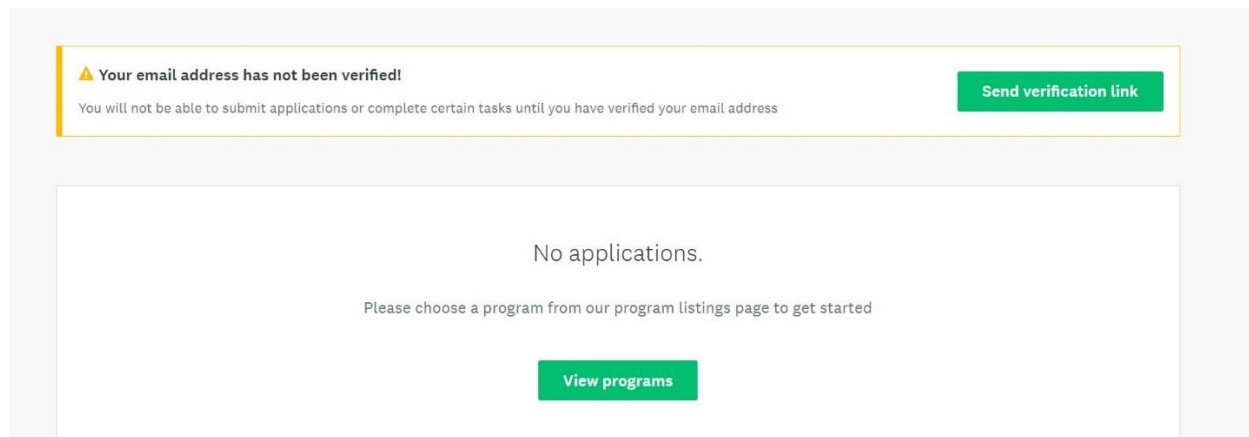
Step 5: Check Your Eligibility

On the Program Page select **MORE** under the NYS Dairy Modernization grant, which will bring you to the home page. Select the **APPLY** box to proceed to the eligibility section.

From there, follow the link to the **ELIGIBILITY QUIZ NYS DAIRY** link to proceed. You must answer **ALL 5** of the eligibility questions correctly to proceed to the application. Select the **MARK AS COMPLETE** box to submit your answers.

After you have successfully submitted your Eligibility Quiz you will see the green check mark in the left column. Select the **DAIRY APPLICATION** link to begin filling out your application.

Application Form

Step 1: Proceed With Your Application Form

Please note that while this guide follows the flow of the application itself, you can complete any section in any order and **SAVE & CONTINUE EDITING** along the way. No edit is final until you submit your application. As you complete your Application and Budget Forms, please refer to the [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) for additional information and guidance.

The initial task is to enter the identifying information for the business entity that is actually applying for the grant. Be sure to include your Tax Identification Number, and upload the most recent passing farm inspection document, and/or the Department of Agriculture and Markets Part 2 Processing Permits, and or BTU or plan number(s) information. Use the **UPLOAD A FILE** box to enter your documents.

You will next be asked if you are applying as an individual business or as a cooperative. Please refer to Page 6 of the [RFP](#) for further clarification: Cooperatives may apply for more than one project but **may not submit more than four total**. If submitting more than one, each application **must be distinct in the described individual farm beneficiaries and geographic location**. Cooperatives must demonstrate benefits to individual farmers in the network and benefits in the supply chain that reflect the priority categories outlined by this grant.

No farm or farm business may apply for the same funding more than once. For example, if a farm member of a cooperative is included in the cooperative's proposal and intends to submit its own proposal as well, the two proposals **must not** request funding for the same item.

If you are applying as an **Individual Farmer/Processor**, select that option and follow the series of questions that appear. The PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT is responsible for your application and project if approved.

If you are applying as a **Cooperative**, you will provide your business entity's information, as well as each coop member's on whose behalf you are applying for actual funding. Select the number of coop members and the corresponding section will appear.

Step 2: Entity History

Next you will be asked a series of questions about your business *ENTITY's HISTORY.* As you complete each question, many will have drop downs for you to provide detailed information if you select *YES*. Please be as thorough and detailed in your response as possible, particularly as your application will be evaluated based upon 1. **Project Readiness and Need**, and 2. **Applicant has leveraged other resources to support this grant project such as technical assistance, business assistance, partnerships, loans, and/or other grants (**see page 13 in the [RFP](#)**)**. Below are two examples of these types of questions.

ENTITY HISTORY

Has your business/organization received any federal or state grant in the past 5 years?

○ Yes

● No

Clear

Have you or your project partners received any (federal, state, or other) grants for *this specific project* in the last five years?

● Yes

○ No

Clear

If yes, list the grants received:

Do you currently work with a farm business planner to support the financial health and future planning for your business?

● Yes

○ No

Clear

If yes, please give the following information:

Name of organization: [   ]

Contact person name: [   ]

Organization address: [   ]

Contact person phone: [   ]

Contact person email: [   ]

Have you received technical assistance related to food safety in preparation of the project, or do you plan to receive related technical assistance during this grant project?

● Yes

○ No

Clear

If yes, please give the following information:

Name of organization: [   ]

Contact person name: [   ]

Organization address: [   ]

Contact person phone: [   ]

Contact person email: [   ]

Step 3: Project Details

In this section you will define your project, beginning with its **Title** and a brief **Summary.** Then provide a detailed description of the **Challenges** that the funding will address.

PROJECT DETAILS

What is the title of your project?

Summarize your project in a couple of sentences:

This value must not be more than 100 words.

What are the challenges that your business is facing that this grant project will address?

Project Priorities:

As per Page 5 of the RFP, Project approaches must address at least two (2) of the following funding priority areas. Projects that address additional priority areas will be awarded additional points. Then you must detail what you will purchase with grant funds. You can submit detailed drawings, quotes, and other supporting documentation further in the application.

Select any or all of the funding priorities addressed in your proposed project:

☐ Project will expand, improve or install on farm storage capacity, milk transfer systems, and/or cooling technologies

☐ Project will increase energy efficiencies on farm(s)

☐ Project will improve food safety / quality measures

☐ Project will provide cost-savings to the farm(s)

☐ Project will decrease raw milk dumping

☐ Project will increase farm's resilience to changing market conditions, uncertain environmental conditions, and/or supply chain interruptions

Describe your proposed project in terms of what you will pay for with these grant funds:

One of the key scoring factors (see RFP P. 13) is your ability to demonstrate that your project aligns with the above priorities. In the first question below, please provide details of how the project will have impacts on the priorities you selected above. Be sure to include metrics will you use to track your progress (for example: reduced bacterial counts in milk, increased milk quality, reduced fuel use, reduced energy consumption, increased volume of milk production, or any other metric you feel would demonstrate success). Please be sure to identify your metrics by priority.

In the second section, discuss the other impacts that this funding will have on your overall business.

Please provide details of how the project will have impacts on the priorities you selected above. Be sure to include metrics will you use to track your progress (for example: reduced bacterial counts in milk, increased milk quality, reduced fuel use, reduced energy consumption, increased volume of milk production, or any other metric you feel would demonstrate success). Please be sure to identify your metrics by priority.

What are the major impacts for your farm / co-op if you receive this funding?

Scoring Indicator 1 (see [RFP](#) P. 13) requires that the "Applicant provides clear and relevant reasoning for timely need for funding". Accordingly, be sure to provide a thorough description of the **consequences of not receiving this funding**.

What would be the consequences of not receiving this funding?

Scoring Indicator 1 also evaluates whether the Project overview and workplan illustrates an impactful and realistic project that will improve the farm's long-term ability to address inefficiencies around labor, energy, and product waste as it relates to the movement of milk to processing. Follow the *Template* link, which will open the document below and provide you with a guide to map out your project activities, including approximate dates. You must provide at least 3 key, measurable accomplishments.

Please attach a projected workplan/timeline of your project activities, including approximate dates. Provide at least 3 key, measurable accomplishments during the grant project that will demonstrate that it is progressing. Use this TEMPLATE as a guide.

⬆ Upload a file

PROJECT WORKPLAN (Template)

Provide a detailed list of all major activities that will take place during this project and their associated deliverables and timeframes. Include at least 3 key project activities. For each activity, provide:
- Detailed description of the activity [2000-character limit]
- Description of the deliverables you will be able to show in your reporting to demonstrate this activity has been successful [2000-character limit]
- Estimated timeframe and/or date of completion of the key activity [2000-character limit]

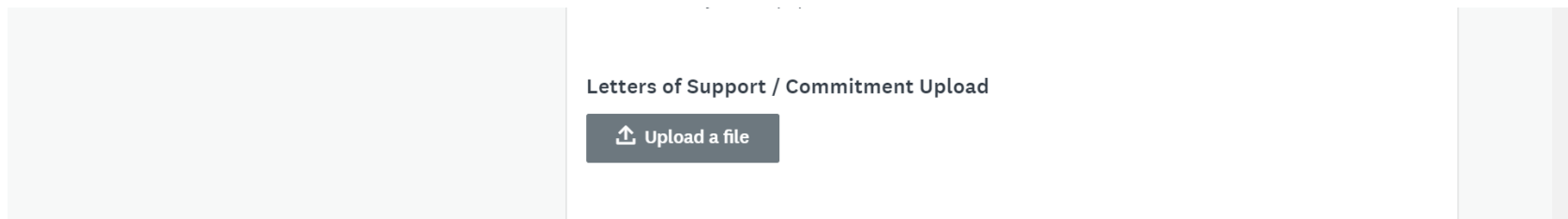| Example Project Workplan Description of key activity	Description of associated deliverables	Estimated timeframe
Remove existing bulk tank and reinforce staging area	• Invoice and proof of down payment for new tank/condenser • Photos of the removal of old tank and preparation of site for new tank installation	April 15 – June, 2025
New Bulk tank installed, calibrated, and inspected	• Photos and/or documentation of installation	July 1, 2025 – November 30, 2025
Increased cost savings evident	• Records show reduction in year-over-year expenses	November 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026
Improvements in food safety		August 1, 2026 – November

Letters of Support / Commitment

Letters of Commitment are required in the event that a partner will be involved in carrying out any component of the project, and/or if the applicant ships milk, from the applicant's processor or buyer. Letters should articulate project partners' or beneficiaries' involvement in the project, and:

- identify the contributions they will make to ensure the project's success, or
- how they will directly benefit from the activities proposed.

This may include a description of the resources that are available for the installation to be successfully carried out, or how the processor's relationship will change with these improvements.

Additional letters of support are encouraged. Up to 3 total may be submitted. Letters of Support should demonstrate support from businesses, retailers, other farmers, organizations, or processors that are connected to or beneficiaries of the project, but *not directly involved* in carrying out the project. This may include demonstrating project feasibility or validating the benefits of any new equipment.

Use the *UPLOAD A FILE* tab to upload your letters.
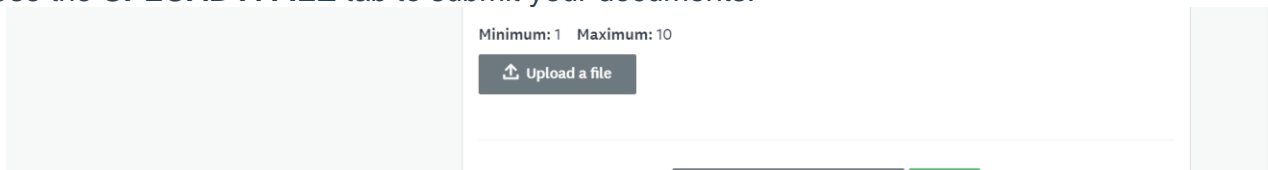
Letters of Support / Commitment Upload

⬆ Upload a file

The final component of the Application Stage is to submit any other **Supporting Documentation** that demonstrates the readiness and thoroughness of your project. You must submit at least one supporting document and can add an additional nine (9). Examples are:

- A current quote for each piece of specialized equipment (and any associated installation costs) requested in this grant.
- Any additional information that shows the impacts of this grant such as evidence of cost or energy savings, impact on business viability, or other relevant information about the business or the project. etc.
- Any site plans / installation plans or additional quotes for the project.

Use the *UPLOAD A FILE* tab to submit your documents.

Minimum: 1   Maximum: 10

⬆ Upload a file

Step 4: Submit Your Application Form

Once you have submitted your **Supporting Documentation** you have completed the Application Form. To submit, click the ***MARK AS COMPLETE*** tab. Upon doing so, you will see the green check mark next to Dairy Application on the left side of the screen.
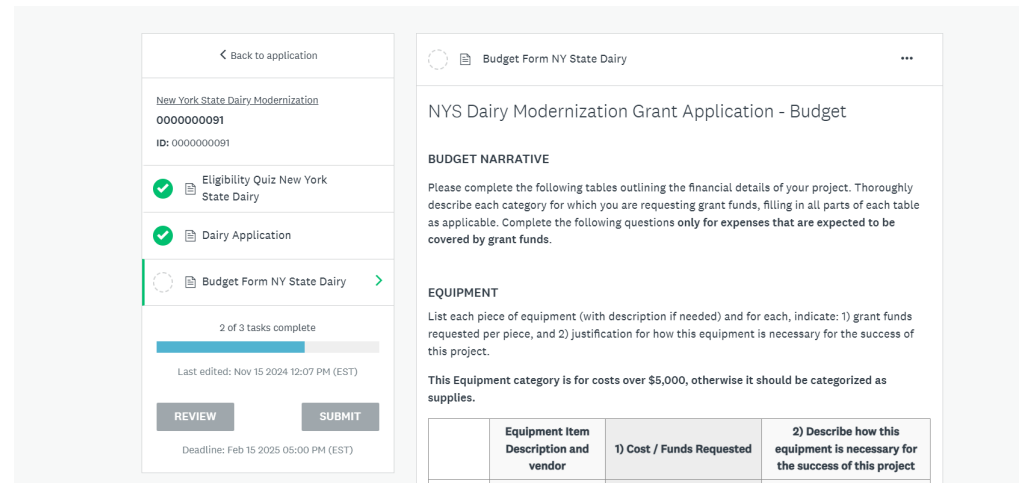
Budget Form

Step 1: Proceed With Your Budget Form

In the Tasks Section you will select the ***BUDGET FORM.*** Pages six (6), (7), and (8) in the [RFP](#) detail both **Eligible** and **Ineligible Expenses.** Please be sure to review those sections as you plan your project and identify necessary costs.

Step 2: Filling Out The Budget Sheet

Enter all expenses into the corresponding budget category. Only select **YES** under those budget categories in which you are requesting funds. The necessary forms will then appear. Be sure to list all of your expenses in the specific category as stated in your work plan and as per the instructions above each.

EQUIPMENT

This Equipment category is for costs over $5,000, otherwise they should be categorized as supplies.

List each piece of equipment in the specific category as stated in your work plan and as per the instructions above and for each, indicate: 1) grant funds requested per piece, and 2) justification for how this equipment is necessary for the success of this project.

SUPPLIES

List each supply (with a description if needed). For each, provide: 1) per unit cost, 2) # units purchased, 3) grant funds requested, and 4) justification for how this supply is necessary for the success of this project.

Are Supply expenses included in your project? Supplies include materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than $5,000 per unit.

◉ Yes

○ No

Clear

SUPPLIES

List each supply (with a description if needed). For each, provide: 1) per unit cost, 2) # units purchased, 3) grant funds requested, and 4) justification for how this supply is necessary for the success of this project.

	Supplies Item Description	1) Cost per Unit	2) Number of Units	3) Total Cost / Funds Requested (this should be cost multiplied by number of units)	4) Describe how the supply is necessary for the success of the project
1		$		$	

CONSTRUCTION

Describe necessary / relevant construction costs including site work, construction, renovation, removal and miscellaneous expenses required for the installation or replacement of equipment. For each, provide 1) the cost / amount requested for the construction, and 2) justification for how this construction supports the equipment installation and is necessary for the success of this project.

Are Construction expenses included in your project?

- ● Yes
- ○ No

Clear

CONSTRUCTION

Describe necessary / relevant construction costs including site work, construction, renovation, removal and miscellaneous expenses required for the installation or replacement of equipment. For each, provide 1) the cost / amount requested for the construction, and 2) justification for how this construction supports the equipment installation and is necessary for the success of this project.

	Construction Description	1) Cost / Funds Requested	2) Describe how this construction is necessary for the success of this project
1		$	

CONTRACTUAL/CONSULTANT

List each anticipated contractor/consultant. For each, provide: 1) hourly/flat rate, 2) grant funds requested, 3) detailed description of services, and 4) justification for why the services are necessary for the success of this project.

Are Contractual or Consultant expenses included in your project?

- ● Yes
- ○ No

Clear

CONTRACTUAL/CONSULTANT

List each anticipated contractor/consultant. For each, provide: 1) hourly/flat rate, 2) grant funds requested, 3) detailed description of services, and 4) justification for why the services are necessary for the success of this project.

	Contractual Name/Organization	1) Hourly Rate or Flat Rate (specify which)	2) Total Funds Requested	3) Detailed description of services	4) Describe why the services are necessary for the success of this project.

OTHER

Include any expenses not covered in any of the previous budget categories. Be sure to break down costs into cost/unit and provide justification for how the expense is necessary for the success of this project.

Are there any other eligible expenses included in your project (such as shipping costs, legal costs, planning costs)?

● Yes

○ No

Clear

Other Item Description	Cost per Unit	Number of Units	Funds Requested	Justification for how the expense is necessary for the success of this project. (E.g. meetings/conferences communications, rental expenses, ads, publication costs, data collection.)

As you enter all the individual costs above, they will be captured in this **Totals** chart. Please ignore the **Direct Costs Sub-Total** as the will remain 0.

TOTALS

The totals for each budget category are outlined below. At the bottom of the page, your project total is available.

	Total cost:
Equipment (items over $5000)	$ 0
Direct Costs Sub-Total	0

	Total cost:
Supplies (items sub $5000)	$ 0
Direct Costs Sub-Total	0

	Total cost:
Construction	$ 0
Direct Costs Sub-Total	0

Step 3: Submitting The Budget Sheet

The **Total Funds Requested** reflects the entirety of your budget request. Ensure that the number accurately matches your project as originally intended. If it does not, go back through the above entries to identify where there is misalignment. Once confirmed, follow the ***MARK AS COMPLETE*** tab to submit your budget. You may use the ***SAVE AND CONTINUE EDITING*** tab to enter your work periodically in shifts.

	Total cost:
Contractual/Consultant	$ 0
Direct Costs Sub-Total	0

	Total cost:
Other	$ 0
Direct Costs Subtotal:	0

Total Funds Requested

This describes the total cost of your project based on what you are requesting in the above form. This number must be between $50,000 and $250,000 for your project to be eligible for funding.

Project Total Cost $ 0

SAVE & CONTINUE EDITING   **MARK AS COMPLETE**

Your budget submission is confirmed when you see the green checkmark next to the Budget Form on the left side.

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

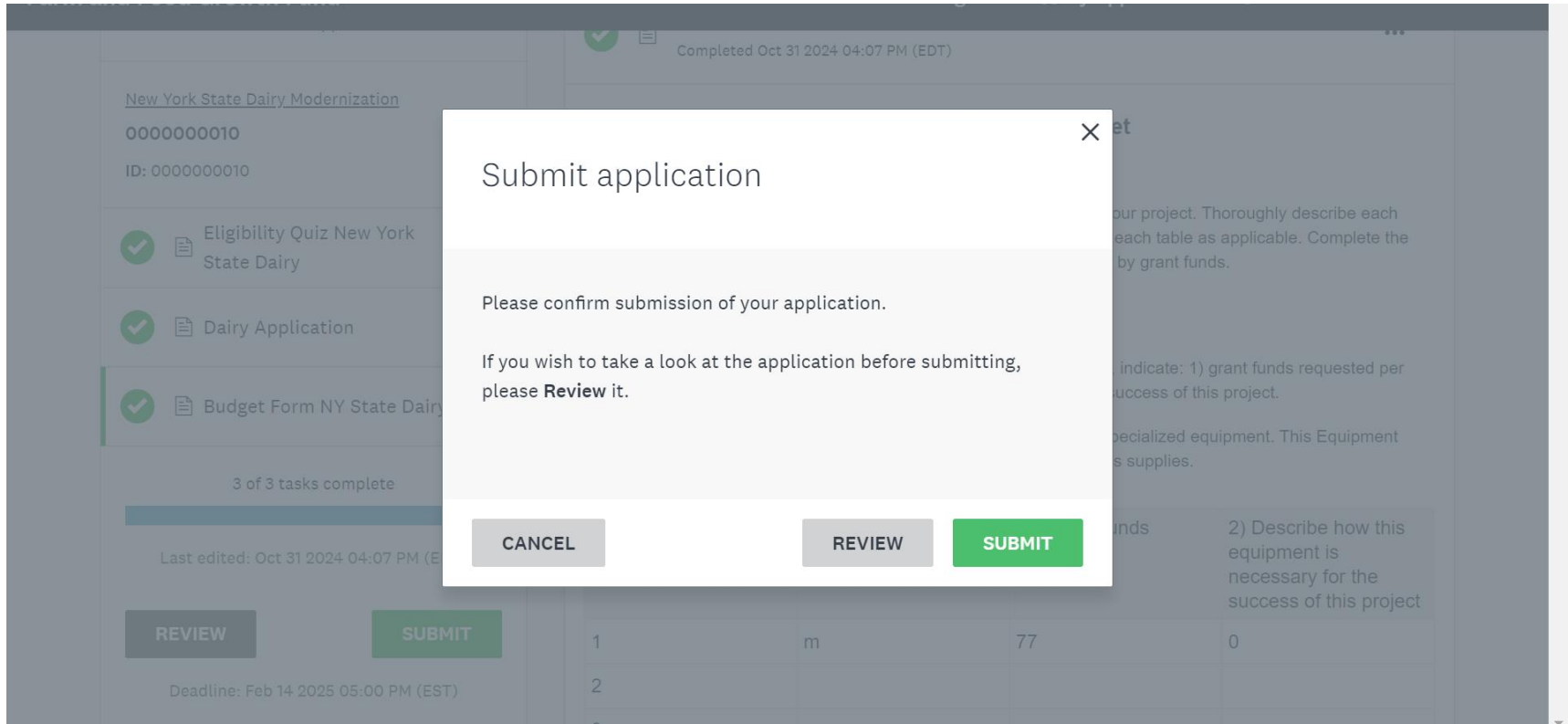## Step 1: Proceed With Submitting Your Application

Once you Marked both the **Application and Budget Forms** as Complete, your grant portal will show that you have **3 of 3 Tasks Complete**, and you may now Click **SUBMIT.**

Step 2: Verify Your Submission

You will then be asked to verify that you want to submit your grant proposal. To proceed, Click the *SUBMIT* Tab.

Step 3: Application Submitted

Once you submit your application you will receive an email confirming the Farm and Food Growth Fund's receipt of your application. If you do not receive an email, please contact the FFGF Administrator.

Questions and Troubleshooting

If you need support completing your application, please contact Duane Stanton, dairymodernization@ffgrowthfund.org