

Central Alberta Co-op - Building Communities Fund

Submitted by Elske de Kroon on Jun 27th 2025 4:36PM

Organization Associated: Little Sprouts Farm

State: Unprocessed

Central Alberta Co-op Building Communities with you!

Organization Information

Organization Name:

Little Sprouts Farm

Make Cheque Payable to:

Little Sprouts Farm, 123 Anywhere Street, Any City, AB T4T 2W8

Please describe your organization's overall mission and main objectives (maximum 2000 characters):

Little Sprouts Farm is not only a space for children to learn about food, farming, and nature—it is also proudly maintained with the help of individuals with disabilities. By involving people of all abilities in the daily care of the animals, garden, and facilities, we foster inclusion, purpose, and skill development in a supportive environment. This collaboration enriches the experience for everyone, building empathy, connection, and a stronger, more inclusive community. At Little Sprouts Farm, our mission is to cultivate curiosity, connection, and compassion by providing hands-on farm experiences that teach children where their food comes from. We create a safe, inclusive, and joyful environment where kids can explore gardening, animal care, and food preparation—all while learning alongside and from individuals of all abilities. Through meaningful engagement with nature and each other, we grow healthy habits, life skills, and a stronger, more connected community.

Is your organization a not-for-profit or registered charity?:

Non-profit

Is your non-profit registered?:

Yes

Has your organization ever received funding from Central Alberta Co-op?:

No

Main Contact First Name:

Cooper

Main Contact Last Name:

Cooper

Does your organization have a membership with Central Alberta Co-op?:

Yes

Main Contact Phone:

1 234 567 890

Main Contact Email:

hello@littlesprouts.com

Organization or Main Contact Mailing Address:

123 Anywhere Street

City / Province:

Red Deer County, Alberta

Postal Code:

T4T 2W8

Alternate Contact Phone:

0987654321

Alternate Contact Email:

admin@littlesprouts.com

Main Contact Title:

Founder

Alternate Contact First Name:

Coop

Alternate Contact Last Name:

Cooper

Organization Website (if applicable):

www.littlesprouts.com

How did you hear about Central Alberta Co-op's Building Communities Fund?:

- Central Alberta Co-op Team Member

General Information

Street Address of project (including postal code)::

123 Anywhere Street

Community where the project is located::

Any City in Red Deer County

Project Name:

"From Farm to Fork" Kids Experience Plan

Anticipated project completion date::

Spring 2026

Ability to complete the project within 1-2 years::

Yes

Project Details

Closest Central Alberta Co-op location to your project::

Red Deer

Which category best describes your project: (Please select one):

Urban Agriculture

What is your project intended to do (maximum 2000 characters):

The purpose of this project is to build a safe, inclusive, and multi-functional barn that will serve as the central hub for learning and food education at Little Sprouts Farm School. This space will include a kitchen, accessible hand-washing stations, and a flexible area for group learning, storytelling, and hands-on activities. The structure will allow children to safely collect eggs, wash produce, prepare simple meals like pancakes and lemonade, and engage in guided lessons about food systems, farming, and sustainability—rain or shine. It will also provide a sheltered environment for people with disabilities who help maintain the farm, ensuring their participation is comfortable and supported. By creating this dedicated, weather-resistant space, we aim to make educational programming more consistent, accessible, and impactful year after year—strengthening connections between children, food, and the land

Please provide a short executive summary outlining the main objectives of the project. (maximum 2000 characters):

Little Sprouts Farm is a hands-on educational experience designed to teach children where their food comes from through interactive farm-based activities. Our program invites kids to connect with nature, animals, and the food system in a fun and meaningful way. Children will collect eggs to make their own pancakes, hand-milk a “cow” to enjoy fresh lemonade, explore a working garden, and care for friendly farm animals. These activities will be paired with storytelling and guided lessons that promote healthy eating, environmental awareness, and agricultural literacy. We are seeking funding to develop a safe, child-friendly space on the farm where kids can prepare food, eat together, and participate in learning sessions. The area will include shaded prep stations, seating, hand-washing stations, and educational displays to ensure a safe, hygienic, and enriching environment. By supporting Little Sprouts Farm, you are helping children gain a deeper appreciation for where their food comes from—one egg, seed, and smile at a time.

Please explain why your project is needed in your community. Feel free to use statistics, research, needs assessments, evaluations, or community testimonials. (maximum 2000 characters):

Many children today are disconnected from the origins of their food, with limited opportunities to experience farming, gardening, or food preparation firsthand. This disconnect can lead to poor nutrition choices, a lack of environmental awareness, and reduced appreciation for local agriculture. Little Sprouts Farm fills this gap by offering a safe, hands-on space where kids can engage with animals, harvest from a garden, and prepare simple meals using ingredients they collect themselves. Through interactive learning and play, children gain a better understanding of where food comes from, develop healthy habits, and build respect for nature. This project supports our community by fostering agricultural literacy, encouraging outdoor activity, and strengthening connections between families, schools, and local food systems. It offers a meaningful, educational experience that will benefit children for years to come.

Please identify any potential risks or liabilities with the project. This includes risks that may affect your group's ability to complete your project as described. (maximum 2000 characters):

Building a safe, functional space for food preparation and education involves several risks. Construction delays may occur due to weather, contractor availability, or supply chain issues. Budget overruns are possible if material costs rise or unexpected issues arise. Delays in securing permits or meeting health and safety regulations—especially for food preparation—could affect timelines. There's also a risk of non-compliance with accessibility standards, which may limit participation. Contractor issues such as poor workmanship or no-shows could compromise quality or cause delays. Environmental factors like poor drainage, zoning conflicts, or protected land use may also impact construction. To mitigate these risks, we will build in timeline buffers, engage early with regulatory bodies, allocate contingency funds, and work with experienced, licensed professionals. Ensuring all facilities meet health, safety, and accessibility standards is a top priority to create a safe and inclusive learning space.

Please identify who currently owns the land and/or building associated with your project. If the organization applying is not the owner, please outline the terms of the agreement with the owner. (maximum 2000 characters):

My husband and I privately own the land and buildings.

Please describe the long-term sustainability of your project, including people and other resources required to ensure the ongoing operations of your project. (e.g., annual maintenance costs, staffing requirements, insurance) (maximum 2000 characters):

Little Sprouts Farm is designed for long-term operation with minimal overhead and strong community appeal. Ongoing sustainability will be supported through program fees, seasonal workshops, school partnerships, and potential grant opportunities. Staffing will include one full-time program coordinator (owner-operated), part-time seasonal support, and volunteers. Annual maintenance will cover garden upkeep, animal care, and equipment repair, estimated at \$5,000–\$7,000 per year. Insurance coverage for liability, property, and participants will be maintained and reviewed annually. We are committed to building durable, low-maintenance infrastructure and sourcing local, sustainable materials. Relationships with local schools, farms, and volunteers will provide both program support and community engagement. Educational content can be refreshed annually to keep programs relevant and exciting, ensuring return visits. With careful planning and community support, Little Sprouts Farm will be a lasting, enriching asset for children and families in our region.

Will there be a cost for your community members to use this space?:

Yes

When/how often will community members have the opportunity to access the space? (maximum 2000 characters):

Community members will have access to Little Sprouts Farm seasonally from May to October, with programming available 3–4 days per week, including weekends and select evenings. We will offer: • Scheduled visits for families, schools, and youth groups • Drop-in days and community open houses monthly • Special events and workshops (e.g., harvest festivals, seed planting days) This flexible schedule ensures a mix of structured learning and casual community engagement. Private group bookings and educational field trips can be

arranged throughout the season. In the off-season, we'll host occasional indoor sessions or partner with local organizations for outreach events. Our goal is to make the space welcoming, accessible, and enriching for a wide range of families and organizations in the community.

Budget Details

Please indicate the total funding requested from Central Alberta Co-op's Building Communities Fund. Reminder: This is restricted to capital costs \$5,000 to \$50,000 - see above for definition. (maximum 2000 characters):

\$35,000

Please indicate the total budget associated with the project. (maximum 2000 characters):

\$90,000

Please provide a high-level itemized budget for the scope of the entire project. (maximum 2000 characters):

Funds requested for Little Sprouts Farm will be used to build a safe, engaging space for children to learn about farming and food. The largest portion will go toward constructing a multi-purpose shelter barn with closable windows for year-round use (\$25,000–\$40,000). Additional funds will support a food preparation area with hand-washing stations and basic plumbing (\$10,000–\$15,000), and garden infrastructure such as raised beds, fencing, and irrigation (\$3,000–\$6,000). We will also build animal enclosures for safe, hands-on learning (\$5,000–\$10,000), install seating and signage for education and comfort (\$3,000–\$5,000), and cover permits, insurance, and contingency costs (\$5,000–\$10,000). These investments will create a safe, functional space where children can explore, learn, and connect with nature and food in a meaningful way.

Please list any funding partners or in-kind donations confirmed or received for the project to date. Please include the amount or value of the donation. (maximum 2000 characters):

The Ag Society (\$5,000), Rotary Club (\$500), Central Alberta Community Foundation (\$5,000), AFSC (\$500), Anonymous donor (\$10,000), various small donations (\$3,300), other (own contribution) \$10,000

What percent of your total budget has been fundraised to date?:

35%

Project Impact

What segment of your community will benefit from the funding requested? (Check all that apply):

- Youth
- Families
- Elderly/Mature Citizens
- Immigrant/Newcomers
- Indigenous Peoples
- Persons with disabilities
- Cultural Minorities
- LGBTQ2S+
- Underserved
- Rural Communities
- Women

Please describe how this project will bring your community together: (maximum 2000 characters):

Little Sprouts Farm will serve as a vibrant gathering place where families, schools, and neighbors connect through shared hands-on learning and meaningful experiences. By involving local children in farming, food preparation, and gardening, the project encourages intergenerational bonding and community pride in our agricultural heritage. Regular events like open houses, workshops, and seasonal festivals will create opportunities for neighbors to meet, collaborate, and celebrate local food and culture. Partnerships with schools,

community groups, and local farmers will strengthen ties across sectors and generations. Ultimately, this project fosters a sense of belonging, shared responsibility, and appreciation for our land—building a healthier, more engaged, and connected community.

Social outcomes: please indicate whether your project will: (Please select all that apply):

- Create or enable access to local food sources
- Enable local cultural activities
- Enable local recreation opportunities

Economic outcomes: (Please select all that apply):

- Purchase materials locally during construction
- Hire local labour for construction

Environmental outcomes: (Please select all that apply):

- Include energy efficiency features or enhancements
- Promote environmental awareness in the community
- Divert waste from landfill (e.g. during construction)
- Preserve or enhance a natural space in the community

How many people would you estimate will benefit from the spaces each year?:

Little Sprouts Farm expects to welcome approximately 1,000 to 1,500 visitors per year, including children, families, school groups, and community members. This estimate is based on: • Regular weekly programs (3–4 days/week) serving 10–15 participants per session • Monthly community open houses and special events attracting larger groups • School field trips and group bookings during peak seasons By engaging a broad cross-section of the community, the space will provide valuable educational experiences, promote healthy lifestyles, and strengthen community connections for many local families each year.

Approximately what proportion of your community does this number of people represent? (We would like an estimation of what percent of the community will be impacted):

0-25%

Category Selection

Is there an educational component to the project? (maximum 2000 characters):

The core of Little Sprouts Farm is hands-on, experiential learning that connects children to the origins of their food and the natural world. The education program includes: • Animal Care & Observation: Children interact safely with farm animals, learning about their roles in food production, animal biology, and responsible stewardship. • Gardening & Plant Science: Kids explore the garden by planting, tending, and harvesting fruits and vegetables while understanding plant life cycles, pollination, and sustainable growing practices. • Food Preparation & Nutrition: Participants collect fresh ingredients (like eggs and milk) and prepare simple meals such as pancakes and lemonade, learning about healthy eating, food safety, and cooking basics. • Environmental & Agricultural Literacy: Storytelling, guided discussions, and activities teach children about local ecosystems, farming methods, composting, and the importance of sustainable agriculture. This interactive curriculum fosters curiosity, respect for nature, and practical life skills in a fun, supportive and inclusive environment

Recognition

Will your organization be required to receive permission from another entity prior to signage installation?:

No

Is there an opportunity for naming rights on all or part of the proposed project? Naming rights are defined as the right for Central Alberta Co-op to name a space (E.g. Co-op Community Playground):

Yes

Is there an opportunity to support Central Alberta Co-op with purchases related to the project?:

- Fuel
- Grocery
- Home and Building Supplies

Is there an opportunity for Central Alberta Co-op Team Members to engage with the project? (e.g. through volunteering or other means):

Yes

Overall, please describe how you will highlight the contribution from Central Alberta Co-op's Building Communities Fund: (e.g. social media, grand opening, news release) (maximum 2000 characters):

We are deeply grateful for the generous support of our donor, whose contribution has been instrumental in bringing the "From Farm to Fork" Kids Experience Plan at Little Sprouts Farm to life. To honor this vital partnership, we will prominently recognize their generosity with a dedicated plaque at the entrance and naming opportunities within the facility, such as the learning barn or garden area. Their support will also be celebrated through public acknowledgments across our website, newsletters, and social media channels, sharing the positive impact of this project with the broader community. We will invite our donor to key events, including ribbon-cuttings and open houses, ensuring their important role is celebrated firsthand. Additionally, personalized updates with stories and photos will keep them connected to the ongoing success of the school. This meaningful recognition reflects our sincere appreciation for their commitment to nurturing education, healthy living, and community connection.

Supporting Information

Multiple File Upload:

Non-profit Registration.docx, Little Sprouts Farm.pdf

I agree to the declaration:

Yes