



**Agriculture
and Markets**



Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

Division of Agricultural Development

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Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI): Outreach Period

1. Introduce the Program
2. Launch Outreach and Public Comment Period
 - Open Webinar & stakeholder discussion groups
3. Develop & Submit State Plan

Program Overview

- Funding is provided through the USDA as authorized in Section 1001(b)(4) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021
- The overall goal of RFSI is to create more and better processing, aggregation and distribution options for local and regional producers across the specialty crops, dairy, grain (for food), and other sectors
- A total of \$19.38M is available to NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets
- Funding expires May 2027

Program Goals

- Build resilience in the middle-of-the-supply-chain and strengthen local and regional food systems by creating new revenue streams for state's producers
- Create food systems infrastructure to support competitive and profitable market access for domestic farm products
- Support development of value-added products, provide fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities that keep profits in rural communities, and increase diversity in processing options



Program Structure

- States are directed to use funds to make competitive Infrastructure Grants for projects to expand capacity and infrastructure for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, or distribution of targeted local and regional agricultural products to eligible entities. Awards may range from \$100,000 - \$3 million.
- \$1 million may be used for Statewide Supply Chain Coordination Activities

Eligible Entities

- Agricultural producers or processors, or groups of agricultural producers and processors
- Nonprofit organizations operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Local government entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products

Eligible Entities Cont.

- Tribal governments operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural products.
- Institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals bringing producers together to establish cooperative or shared infrastructure or invest in equipment that will benefit multiple producers middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural product.



Matching Funds Requirement

- Infrastructure grant recipients are required to contribute 50% of the total proposed project cost as a match to federal funding. This applies to all applicants except those who qualify for the reduced match.
- Reduced Matching Funds– Historically Underserved Groups
 - For historically underserved farmers and ranchers, or for other businesses that qualify under SBA categories of small disadvantaged business, women-owned small business, or veteran-owned small business, the required match funding contribution or cost share is reduced to 25% of the project cost.

Eligible Commodities

- Specialty crops
- Dairy
- Grains (for human consumption)
- Aquaculture
- Other food products (excluding meat and poultry)

Project Examples

- Expanding processing capacities, including adding product types, increasing production volumes, and supporting new wholesale/retail product lines;
- Modernizing equipment or facilities through upgrades, repairs, or retooling; (e.g., adapting product lines for institutional procurement or adding parallel processing capacity);
- Building a new facility
- Purchase and installation of specialized equipment, such as processing components, sorting equipment, packing and labeling equipment, or delivery vehicles;



Project Examples Cont.

- Modernizing manufacturing, tracking, storage, and information technology systems;
- Enhancing worker safety through adoption of new technologies or investment in equipment or facility improvements;
- Increasing packaging and labeling capacities that meet compliance requirements under applicable laws (e.g. sealing, bagging, boxing, labeling, conveying, and product moving equipment);



Project Examples Cont.

- Increasing storage space, including cold storage;
- Develop, customize or install climate-smart equipment or vehicles that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, increases efficiency in water use, improves air and/or water quality, and/or meets one or more of USDA's climate action goals;
- Modernize equipment or facilities to ensure food safety, including associated Hazard, Analysis, and Critical Control Points (HACCP) consultation, plan development and employee training; and
- Training on the use of all equipment purchased under the grant and associated new processes;



Eligible Activities

- Purchasing special purpose equipment including equipment for institutions or others that will benefit multiple producers through middle-of-the-supply-chain activities such as processing, aggregation, distribution of targeted agricultural product;
- Analyzing potential facility upgrades and changes that meet regulatory requirements, obtaining design and/or architecture services, etc. (to the extent these costs are directly related to the project);
- Planning for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) or other food safety or worker safety measures or equipment recommendations; and
- Hiring term-limited personnel to assist with project implementation activities;

Activities Cont.

- Upgrades or new facilities for processing specific agricultural products, such as:
 - o On-farm post-harvest processing, preservation, and storage/cold storage;
 - o Post-harvest cleaning and grading;
 - o Aggregator warehouse and storage, including cooperatives;
 - o Purchase of freezing equipment, freezer, or cold storage;
 - o Processing, canning, preserving and pasteurization;
 - o Preparation and packing;
 - o Drying, hulling, shelling, and milling; and
 - o Cooking, baking, juicing, distilling, fermenting.



Ineligible Activities

- Acquiring real property (including land purchases), or any interest therein;
- Projects focused on meat and poultry processing or other ineligible agricultural products
- Activities that have received a Federal award from another Federal award program;
- Claim expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any Federal, State, or local government funding

Opportunities to provide comments

- Additional stakeholder meetings to be held the week of July 24th
 - Agricultural producer group organizations and agricultural cooperatives: Monday, July 24, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.
 - <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/r437db911d5d25027129877f80a935af3>
 - Processor/ distributor stakeholder webinar: Tuesday, July 25, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
 - <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/ra1024c470b51a29d52dc7885c0edda25>
 - Technical Service providers/ organizations serving historically underserved producers: Tuesday, July 25, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
 - <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/r35ce3eb33951cbd37d6f85db87f23850>
- Comments are due by July 28th
- To submit Comments or register for additional Stakeholder Discussion groups:
- <https://agriculture.ny.gov/business-development>

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

The Department is eligible to receive nearly \$20 million through a new United States Department of Agriculture and Markets (USDA) grant opportunity. Funds will be used to provide grants for infrastructure projects that strengthen the New York food system by expanding capacity and infrastructure for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, or distribution of targeted local and regional agricultural products.

The Department is seeking input from stakeholders in the food supply chain as we develop our State Plan to apply for this grant. Learn more about the opportunity and how to submit your comments at the links below.

[LEARN MORE](#)[REGISTER FOR A WEBINAR](#)[SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS](#)

Questions and Comments

- What regional processing, aggregation or distribution infrastructure opportunities/needs exist? What should be prioritized?
- What barriers exist for development?
- Are there opportunities to develop products for specific markets? (ex. Institutional, retail)
- Are there specific crops/products that should be targeted?
- What coordinating role could Ag and Markets play in addressing these needs?

