



Transportation and Marketing

Local Food Promotion Program

Fiscal Year 2019

Description of Funded Projects

Number of Grants Awarded: 42
Amount of Funds Awarded: \$11,749,400.13

For more information, please visit the grant program's website: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/lfpp>

NOTE: The below project descriptions were provided by the grant recipients.

Alabama

Recipient:	Auburn University Auburn, AL	Award Amount:	\$99,625.00
		Match Amount:	\$31,032.00
Project Type:	Planning	Total Project Amount:	\$130,657.00

Improving Food Hub Viability in Alabama

Local food sales, including direct-to-consumer and intermediated sales, grossed \$8.7 billion in 2015 and have shown continuous growth over the last couple decades. Although nationally Food Hubs have a high success rate, currently, there is only one Food Hub listed on the USDA Local Food Compass Map in Alabama. Alabama Food Hubs report that their struggles are centered around failing to properly financially plan and lacking knowledge of the food industry. This project directly addresses this problem by educating Food Hub entrepreneurs on the means to achieve financial viability and plan for the incorporation of social programs in a financially sustainable model. A face-to-face and online curriculum will be developed using the 2016 USDA Rural Development series, Running a Food Hub, as a guide to support entrepreneurs with the business strategies needed to run a financially viable food hub. The program will result in Food Hub entrepreneurs being better financially prepared to begin or expand their businesses and will serve to create a horizontal system of coordination among Food Hubs in Alabama. The program will be piloted, rolled out, evaluated, and made available for immediate implementation in other regions.

Nebraska

Recipient:	Community Crops Lincoln, NE	Award Amount:	\$86,460.00
		Match Amount:	\$21,615.00
Project Type:	Planning	Total Project Amount:	\$108,075.00

Developing a Kitchen Incubator for Lincoln, Nebraska Food Entrepreneurs

Together, Community Crops and Recipe Box Inc. are developing Lincoln, Nebraska's first and only full-scale shared commercial kitchen and food business incubator ("kitchen incubator"), which will launch and grow food and beverage businesses in Lincoln and surrounding areas. Currently, there are limited opportunities for local and regional food business enterprises to start and expand, as kitchen incubator space is not available, but significant demand has demonstrated a need for this project. The project will result in a needs assessment, feasibility study, business plan and marketing plan for a kitchen incubator. In the process of gathering information from stakeholders to develop these plans, the partners will build community support for the project and prepare for implementation. The future kitchen incubator will provide a one stop shop for current and emerging entrepreneurs to launch, grow, market, and scale food and beverage related businesses.

New Hampshire

Recipient:	Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success Manchester, NH	Award Amount:	\$88,545.20
		Match Amount:	\$22,136.30
Project Type:	Planning	Total Project Amount:	\$110,681.50

Fresh Start Farms Food Hub Planning Grant

The Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success (ORIS) and its Fresh Start Farms incubator farm program, propose this project to (1) assess the feasibility of an incubator farm program in southern New Hampshire; (2) model an appropriately scaled and structured business entity; and (3) prepare ORIS and Fresh Start Farms farmers for the launch of such an enterprise. The resulting Food Hub will allow 30 refugee beginning, socially disadvantaged farmers and an additional 10 area farmers to sell the majority of their produce directly to the Food Hub, for the Food Hub's aggregation, storage, packaging, distribution, and sale. The resulting Food Hub will allow participating farmers to (1) spend less time individually selling produce at farmers markets; (2) spend more time producing crops that CSA, mobile market, and institutional buyers order ahead of time; and (3) take full advantage of the new farm land that ORIS recently acquired.

New Mexico

Recipient:	New Mexico Community Capital Albuquerque, NM	Award Amount:	\$497,750.00
		Match Amount:	\$125,000.00
Project Type:	Implementation	Total Project Amount:	\$622,750.00

The Native Agribusiness and Food Security Initiative

New Mexico's Tribal communities are at the center of our State's agricultural traditions, and represent great potential for agricultural revitalization. While for thousands of years tribal communities farmed and subsisted from the land, hundreds of years of forced assimilation and the introduction of processed goods systematically dismantled traditional foodways. Tribal community members still suffer disproportionately from the loss of generations of farmers and a lack of healthy foods (1 in 4 Native Americans are food insecure, compared to 1 in 8 across the US, according to Feeding America). However, New Mexico's food economy is in great demand for local food, with many restaurants, institutions and local businesses looking for new producers/aggregators. While growing the economic viability of local, native farm businesses, this project will simultaneously build food delivery systems to increase food security for Tribal community members. This project will support 25 Native farmers in western Pueblo communities to develop and grow their farm businesses to aggregate for 10 new wholesale markets, and to develop 12 new Food Access Points that serve Tribal community members. Access points will be provided through MoGro's healthy food delivery program at Native community health and wellness centers, as well as through Farm Stands and Markets.

New York

Recipient:	Cornell University Ithaca, NY	Award Amount:	\$433,412.00
		Match Amount:	\$108,909.00
Project Type:	Implementation	Total Project Amount:	\$542,321.00

Farm to Institution Expansion in Western NY

Cornell Cooperative Extension Harvest NY (CCE-HNY), which is a statewide agricultural extension team aimed at growing the NY food and farm economy, will expand their Local Foods program area, with the specific goal of increasing institutional procurement of local farm products. The primary institution targeted through this project will be public K-12's, though assistance will be provided to any interested institutional partner. Through recent New York State legislation, a financial incentive is now available to schools that can meet 30% local purchases through their lunch program, which is creating tremendous demand for locally grown, raised, and/or processed food products that contain a minimum of 51% New York ingredients. CCE-HNY will partner with eight county-level Cornell Cooperative Extension offices in Western NY to provide direct assistance and education to farmers and food producers interested in selling to institutional markets, and to institutions interested in localizing their food supply chain. By hiring a dedicated Farm to Institution Program Coordinator who has expertise in developing Farm to Institution programs and deploying evidence-based strategies, this project will greatly expand Farm to Institution programming across the region and will ultimately (1) strengthen the local economy via the institutions' investment of millions of dollars into the local food and farming sectors; (2) benefit tens of thousands of consumers through increased healthy food access; and (3) leverage millions of dollars in State reimbursement to strengthen individual school districts.

Recipient:	National Young Farmers Coalition Hudson, NY	Award Amount:	\$69,349.50
		Match Amount:	\$17,337.38
Project Type:	Planning	Total Project Amount:	\$86,686.88

Ready for the Big Time: Creating the Next Generation Agricultural Supply Chain

New trends in consumer demand for food products are opening opportunities for family farms to link with corporate supply chains. Yet family farms that supply local food markets, and particularly young and beginning farmers, are not typically prepared to sell to food product manufacturers, restaurant chains, or the intermediaries—meat processors, produce brokers, grain co-ops, etc., that transact within these value chains. The 2017 Census of Agriculture identified a considerable decline in the number of farms capable of accessing corporate supply chains, and many technical assistance programs do not prioritize training direct-to-consumer and beginning farms to access these new market opportunities. Our planning project will convene managers from major food and beverage companies, the farmers who currently supply their ingredients, and the intermediary processors within this value chain, to identify the major barriers that limit corporate procurement from family farms. We will conduct focus group interviews with farmers and companies, and review current vendor requirements, to generate a needs assessment that we will validate at an in-person convening. This convening will create dialogue between farmers and corporate food purchasers that will inform a roadmap for a collaborative initiative to increase market access for family farms and beginning farmers in the mid-tier value chains that supply nationally-recognized consumer food and beverage brands. We recognize the complexity of corporate procurement and the scale of the challenge. This research and convening effort will serve primarily to develop a collaborative initiative, funded by participating companies, to build the next generation agricultural supply chain.

Recipient:	Research Foundation for SUNY Albany, NY	Award Amount:	\$490,883.00
		Match Amount:	\$224,545.00
Project Type:	Implementation	Total Project Amount:	\$715,428.00

Expanding Access to Processing Infrastructure and Value Added Markets for New York Dairy Producers

This project will facilitate transition of regional dairy farms struggling with the price and scale realities of commodity markets to processing and marketing of farm and regionally-branded value-added products. Funds will be used to purchase or lease additional processing and distribution equipment and expand the reach of product development and marketing assistance currently offered through the College's Farm and Food Business Incubator (FFBI). Project goals include enhanced viability of regional dairy producers; a thriving regional value-added dairy product brand; and a larger volume and variety of value-added dairy products marketed out of the region to dense consumer populations in the Northeast.

North Carolina

Recipient:	Seal the Seasons, Inc Chapel Hill, NC	Award Amount:	\$480,000.00
		Match Amount:	\$120,000.00
Project Type:	Implementation	Total Project Amount:	\$600,000.00

Expanding Distribution and Marketing of Locally and Regionally Grown Frozen Vegetables to Grocery Customers across the United States

Family owned farms require additional markets to sell their vegetables in order to increase on-farm revenue. A second need for producers are markets for on-farm produce waste. On-Farm produce waste occurs when farmers don't have markets that match the quality or quantity of their vegetables. Seal the Seasons is a regional food business enterprise that partners with farmers and grocers to supply locally and regionally grown products. The project goal is to expand Seal the Seasons by developing multiple lines of locally and regionally grown frozen produce across the United States. We will locally purchase, locally freeze, and locally sell 8 distinct lines of regional frozen vegetables. Our goal is to engage as intermediary between producers and grocers to help increase access and availability of regionally and locally grown frozen vegetables for consumers in major grocery stores. Help farmers reduce on-farm vegetable waste through the purchase of mid-sized, cosmetic defect, or misshapen product. We will expand mid-tier value chains by selling regionally grown vegetables across eight regions serving 48 states. This project will generate jobs for farmers and other regional food business enterprises. The project will improve income and economic opportunities for producers and help strengthen capacity for consumers.

Recipient:	Toe River Aggregation Center Training Organizational Regiona Burnsville, NC	Award Amount:	\$160,000.00
		Match Amount:	\$50,000.00
Project Type:	Implementation	Total Project Amount:	\$210,000.00

Implementing a Place-Based Marketing Plan for Sweet Corn

Toe River Aggregation Center Training Organization Regional Inc. (TRACTOR Inc.) is a food hub connecting 44-member farmers in Western North Carolina with markets throughout the Southeast. This project focuses on expanding sales of sweet corn using a place-based marketing program. Place-based marketing programs for food products have been demonstrated to expand on-farm income and economic growth to rural areas. Examples of other place-based marketing initiatives include Vidalia Onions (Vidalia, Georgia) and Olathe Sweet Corn (Olathe, Colorado). Growers in the region use carefully selected varieties of sweet corn and, because of higher elevation in the region, the sweet corn has a higher sugar content and matures later than sweet corn from other areas of North Carolina. Genetics and climate, in combination with uniform handling procedures across supply chain, ensure overall product quality, resulting in a highly differentiated sweet corn. The goal of the project is to expand sales of this unique sweet corn and ultimately increase on-farm income and spur overall economic growth in the region. Funds will be spent on sales and marketing expenses associated with launching the Yancey Sweet Corn brand and expanding sales in the Carolinas.

