



Fiscal Year 2024 Description of Funded Projects

Number of Grants Awarded: 43
Amount of Funds Awarded: \$14,150,364.94

For more information, please visit the grant program's website:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp>

NOTES:

- The below project descriptions were provided by the grant recipients.
- An asterisk (*) at the end of the recipient's name is used to identify projects funded with annual appropriations.

Alabama

Recipient: Troy University, Troy, AL.

District: AL-002

Implementation District: Puerto Rico

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$78,239.00

Match Amount: \$19,559.75.

Total Project Amount: \$97,798.75

Enhancing Agricultural Networks through AgriCluster Resilience and Expansion (ACRE): A Framework for Strategic Collaboration and Planning in Utuado, Puerto Rico

The AgriCluster Resilience and Expansion (ACRE) model will address systemic issues faced by Puerto Rico's agriculture sector. The project will transform informal collaborations among local farmers, agritourism operators, and stakeholders into resilient and competitive AgriClusters. These informal collaborations lack strategic structure, limiting the competitiveness, innovation, and market access of agricultural businesses in the Utuado municipality. The project will leverage the capabilities of the Corporación de Servicios de Salud y Desarrollo Socio-económico del OTOAO (COSSAO), the leader in the region's recovery post-Hurricane Maria. By utilizing ACRE's strategic planning and training processes, the project will bolster the understanding, operations, and market access of local food systems. Furthermore, it will enhance the competitiveness of local farmers and agritourism operators by fostering the development of value-added products and innovative marketing strategies. The project will facilitate the formalization of collaboration and the establishment of shared goals through workshops, training programs, and strategic planning sessions. It will formalize the operations of 10 to 15 agricultural professionals through strategic planning workshops and ACRE training. The initiative will improve

agricultural value chains, promote economic resilience and long-term growth, and serve as a model for similar communities.

Alaska

Recipient: Kyla Byers - Arctic Harvest Deliveries, Anchorage, AK

District: AK-001

Implementation District: AK-Statewide

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$50,282.00

Match Amount: \$12,647.00

Total Project Amount: \$62,929.00

Increasing Awareness of Locally Available Farm Products in Communities Across Alaska

Arctic Harvest Deliveries is a local food hub in Anchorage, Alaska that aggregates, stores and transports products from over 30 local farmers, ranchers and value added-producers. This project seeks to increase awareness of our online Farm Share program as a convenient way to gain access to these products for individual consumers in communities across Alaska. Arctic Harvest Deliveries will increase marketing efforts to the existing delivery locations of Anchorage, Eagle River, Palmer, Wasilla, Girdwood and Chignik Lagoon Village, as well as to new locations, including Nome, the surrounding Norton Sound villages, and Iguigig. Many of these locations are under served and have low access to fresh produce and local foods. Arctic Harvest Deliveries will partner with Rising Tide Communications, a local marketing firm to develop a strategic Arctic Harvest Deliveries' brand plan, promotional materials, and targeted social media content and ad campaigns with place-based messaging.

Recipient: Tyonek Tribal Conservation District, Anchorage, AK*

District: AK-001

Implementation District: AK-001

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$466,721.50

Match Amount: \$117,074.50

Total Project Amount: \$583,796.00

Tyonek GATHER: Generating Access to Healthy Expanded Regional Food Systems

After more than a decade of progress from the Tyonek Grown program, the Native Village of Tyonek currently benefits from a strong local food system with greater access to locally produced foods than most remote villages in Alaska.

While socio-economic barriers persist, the proximity of Tyonek to Alaska's largest urban-center allows residents to benefit from access to the global food supply chain. Despite strong local and global food chains, and the robust food producing regions surrounding Tyonek, access to regionally produced foods, remains limited due to Tyonek's location off the road system. Thus, a regional food supply chain is a critical and missing element of ensuring a diverse and resilient food system in Tyonek. To address this gap, the Tyonek GATHER food hub will aggregate produce from small-scale and indigenous producers

from surrounding communities, as well as support local food harvesters, producers, and traditional food processors in Tyonek through training and technical assistance.

In addition to food hub implementation, this project will produce a two-phase food system assessment to uncover the specific conditions and barriers impacting the food system in Tyonek and for Tyonek shareholders at large. To accomplish true food system resilience that ensures tribal food sovereignty in the face of crises, these assessments will shed light on existing gaps and barriers in Tyonek's food system, as well as create systems for gathering input on food system priorities.

Arizona

Recipient: City of Tempe, Tempe, AZ

District: AZ-009

Implementation District: AZ-009

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$486,728.00

Match Amount: \$139,382.00

Total Project Amount: \$626,110.00

Recipe for Success: Cultivating Community Wealth and Collaboration Across the Local Food Economy through Cooperative Food Business Development

The City of Tempe will implement a cooperative food business development program that provides underserved Tempe residents with access to free commercial kitchen space, bilingual business development training, and hyper-local markets. This initiative will connect Tempe residents to the regional food system while developing opportunities for community wealth-building within the middle-of-the-supply-chain space. The project will transform a city-owned commercial kitchen space into a community kitchen through values-based programming that addresses residents' expressed interest in business development and incubation. The program will consist of four, 10-week-long sessions that equip participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to start and run worker-owned food processing businesses, focused on developing value-added goods. The program will engage residents from Northeast Tempe, an area that has been identified as a Low-income, Low-access community by the USDA. In addition to empowering 80 Tempe residents to develop worker-owned processing businesses, this project will embed the new cooperatives within the local food economy by developing new markets to purchase Arizona-grown produce and sell value-added goods in Tempe. By collaborating with public, private, and non-profit partners, this project will cultivate connections between Arizona growers, new food businesses, and neighborhood food outlets, allowing stakeholders from across the value chain to reap its benefits.

Recipient: Sun Produce Cooperative, Tempe, AZ

District: AZ-001

Implementation District: AZ-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$492,114.07

Match Amount: \$123,028.5

Total Project Amount: \$615,142.57

The Fresh Food for Phoenix project will increase access to and consumption of local food in the Phoenix Metro Area, benefiting small farmers and residents of low income/low food access areas.

Fresh Food for Phoenix will utilize Sun Produce Cooperative's 35 years of experience and multiple connections to improve food systems and local food access, consumption of local food, and distribution in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Phoenix is the largest city in Arizona and the greater metropolitan area, including Mesa, Tempe, and Chandler, is nearly 5 million, meaning the potential to increase consumers of local food is tremendous. The proposed project will increase markets for small farmers in the region, expand the Co-op's Community Supported Agriculture program from the current 250 to 500 subscribers by year three, and promote Sun Produce Cooperative and local food through a marketing campaign while simultaneously reducing food waste on the farms included in the project. The Fresh Food for Phoenix Community Supported Agriculture expansion will target low income/low access areas, focusing on reaching families at elementary schools.

California

Recipient: Farmgate Technology, LLC., Barstow, CA

District: CA-023

Implementation District: CA-023

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,000.00

Roots & Fruits: An Online Market and Delivery Solution expanding Access to Desert Communities and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers.

Roots & Fruits is an online market and delivery solution that supports local and regional agricultural producers in Southern California, specifically Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers. Producers with limited technical capabilities and time can sell merchandise through an online market without the need to manage or create their own website or manage logistics and delivery. Roots & Fruits handles the entire process for them from Farm to Table, so producers can focus more on farming. Roots & Fruits will increase capacity for 113 producers (Ag and value-added) in San Bernardino County, as well as increase access to local foods for the underserved tri-city desert communities of Barstow, Victorville, and Hesperia, CA. Through collaborations with Barstow Youth Sports Coalition— organizer of the only farmers market in Barstow— this project aim to bridge the gap that exists between producers and consumers in the desert. Our collaborators will engage with beneficiaries by conducting producer/consumer surveys,

listening sessions, and other methods of engagement to obtain feedback that will be critical for improving user experience. By leveraging the online market platform, optimized logistics/delivery, and data-driven decision-making, projects like Roots & Fruits not only modernize local food systems, but also serve as blueprints for adapting and enhancing agricultural practices across the nation.

Recipient: Ventura County Farm to School, Camarillo, CA

District: CA-026

Implementation District: CA-026

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$497,875.28

Match Amount: \$158,500.00

Total Project Amount: \$656,375.28

Farm Cart Organics Food Hub Growth to Support Small Farms, Serve Families and Gain New Institutional Partners

Cart Organics, a food hub comprised of small farms in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties along the Southern California coast; will implement a strategic plan to gain new institutional partners, and increase school districts served in their current Ventura County School Food Hub Project. This project will assist the food hub to obtain group-based Good Agricultural Practices certification, develop and market value-added products, and increase deliveries. Exploring partnerships with universities, Food-As-Medicine programs, and correctional facilities will inform the development of value-added products and produce offerings for sale. New institutional partners will increase the quantity and variety of products sold, while creating stability when schools are closed. The project will strengthen the mid-tier value chain of Ventura and Santa Barbara counties and expand access to nutritious, local fruits and vegetables for families.

Recipient: Veritable Vegetable, Inc., San Francisco, CA

District: CA-011

Implementation District: CA-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$434,597.85

Match Amount: \$108,649.46

Total Project Amount: \$543,247.31

Enhancing Market Accessibility for Local & Regional Producers by Implementing Transportation Logistics Technology

The ability to transport relatively small quantities of food to different markets is critical to the survival of small and mid-sized regional producers. This project will enable local producers to develop new and diverse markets for their goods. Key activities include creating videos explaining different freight and logistic services offered by Veritable Vegetable and how farmers and producers can use them effectively; conducting outreach to local and regional producers; designing and launching a web-based transportation logistics platform; developing educational resources; and promoting the platform and resources widely. Expected outcomes and deliverables include a new freight booking platform, resources

for freight and market readiness, a marketing and promotion plan, how-to videos on how to use the new platform; and increased knowledge and use of the freight services. The primary beneficiaries are local and regional producers who will improve market readiness, increase engagement with market access points and local value chains, and increase their economic viability in a competitive marketplace. The project also benefits regional retailers, grocers, wholesalers, food hubs, distributors, and our own logistics operations.

Colorado

Recipient: Nourish Colorado, Denver, CO

District: CO-001

Implementation District: CO-003

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,000.00

Building and Strengthening Sustainable Value Chains in Southeast Colorado

The goal of this project is to strengthen the collaboration of small and mid sized producers, food hubs, and incubators in southeast Colorado to catalyze sustainable, regional procurement, aggregation, processing, and distribution by leveraging local food institutions. The data collected through an award received in 2022 from the Regional Food System Partnership Program will be used to identify commonly purchased products with the intention to identify at least four products that could be supplied locally. This will increase participation of local suppliers and their engagement in a long-term bid process, and ultimately sustainable regional value chains. Nourish Colorado will also provide technical assistance to support partners with the aggregation, processing, and distribution of these four products to institutional buyers. The project will allow key players to learn more about value chain logistics; receive food safety education; bolster the regional bid with additional items; help inform institutional regional bids; and further an aggregation hub that connects food hubs to local producers.

District of Columbia

Recipient: Dreaming Out Loud, Inc., Washington, DC

District: DC-001

Implementation District: DC-001

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$496,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$621,000.00

Marion Barry Avenue Market: A Recipe for Food System Transformation in Southeast DC

The Marion Barry Avenue Market project's goal is to launch a multi-purpose food hub in the heart of a community that lacks equitable access to healthy food and economic opportunity. Dreaming Out Loud acquired a 4,770-square foot retail space in the District of Columbia historic Anacostia neighborhood. This

building is a vibrant and innovative space that tackles the complex issue of food insecurity in the nation's capital. It includes a food hub, a grocery store, a food incubator for farmers and entrepreneurs, and a community cafe. The Marion Barry Avenue Market building is a new and larger home for several of Dreaming Out Loud's already successful food distribution programs. This project will assist with the coordination of aggregating local food in this new food hub facility, analyze and address the demand for local food via Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program; and strengthen the mid-tier value chain by developing new regional hub-to-hub partnerships to extend regional reach. This project will assist to cover personnel cost, and marketing efforts needed to increase partnerships, and CSA and food hub visibility. This project will benefit people in the surrounding community, many of whom experience extreme food insecurity because they have limited access to quality grocery stores and fresh produce. In addition to being a place to access high-quality, fresh, healthy, affordable produce for the community it will also allow Dreaming Out Loud to hire personnel from the Anacostia community. Finally, it will support historically underserved farmers in the region.

Georgia

Recipient: Georgia Fruit & Vegetables Growers Association, Inc., Lagrange, GA

District: GA-003

Implementation District: GA-008

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$99,655.00

Match Amount: \$24,913.75

Total Project Amount: \$124,568.75

Press the Potential: A Roadmap to Revolutionize Georgia's Fruit & Vegetable Market with Mobile Processing

This pivotal feasibility study will evaluate the best path to success for an innovative mobile processing concept that not only adds value and extends shelf life but also minimizes waste in Georgia's fresh harvest in a region where 90% of Georgia's produce farmers operate. Led by seasoned farmers, industry organizations, and subject matter experts and with comprehensive farmer feedback guiding the study, we will tackle one of the most pressing challenges in global food supply. By the end of this project, a comprehensive road map for successful implementation of the mobile fruit processing unit will be crafted and commitments from farmers and stakeholders through Memorandums of Understanding will be secured. This project will demonstrate a transformative path forward: reduced food waste, increased farm profits, enhanced community nutrition and economic growth. With clear objectives, broad stakeholder support, and the potential to serve as a model for other regions, we will set the stage to revolutionize Georgia's agricultural landscape and set a new standard for sustainable food systems

Illinois

Recipient: Navore, LLC., Chicago, IL
District: IL-007
Implementation District: CA-Statewide
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$471,860.00
Match Amount: \$117,965.00
Total Project Amount: \$589,825.00

Navore Market: Connecting Local Producers with local food businesses and consumer-facing markets through an Innovative Online Marketplace with tools to increase cost-effective distribution and reduce On-Farm Waste

Navore Market's innovative online platform aims to invigorate local and regional food systems by connecting local producers directly and indirectly with businesses and consumers. The purpose is to optimize indirect marketing strategies with the online marketplace with features to increase cost-effective distribution methods, minimize on-farm waste, and strengthen relationships. Activities include onboarding producers who conduct indirect sales, account set up, training sessions, enhancing distribution and wholesale features, connecting local producers with wholesale customers and local businesses, and creating individual plans to reduce on-farm waste. Project will result in increased market access for producers, more efficient distribution networks, and a rise in the local food economy's vitality. Primary beneficiaries include small and medium-sized local food producers who will gain market exposure and business opportunities, as well as businesses and customers with increased access to local products. This project will be implemented in the state of California, impacting the Imperial and San Diego counties.

Indiana

Recipient: Simply Indiana, LLC., Seymour, IN
District: IN-009
Implementation District: IN-Statewide
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$498,525.00
Match Amount: \$124,631.25
Total Project Amount: \$623,156.25

Fostering Demand for Local Ingredients in School Nutrition: Data-Driven Software to Connect Schools & Suppliers

Simply Indiana was formed in early 2024, following close collaboration between MenuLogic K12, Wild Pansy Farm, and Indiana school food procurement specialists, facilitated by a 2023/24 Farm-to-School Action Planning Grant from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Following a year of planning to address critical challenges in Indiana's farm-to-school supply chain, the Simply Indiana Food Hub is growing into an aggregator, processor, and producer of goods along the farm-to-school supply chain. The company is

deepening its partnership with Foodworks Technologies to support their development of the MenuLogic K12 platform. This software will empower Indiana farmers and the state's schools to coordinate procurement across a range of farm raised and value added goods. Through this grant, the Menu K12 platform will be expanded to enable farms to meet the demand criteria of Indiana schools and facilitate the Simply Indiana Food Hub's efforts to aggregate from the smallest farms in the state, allowing Hoosier farmers to collectively contribute to students' nutrition. The beneficiaries include students, who will access healthier meals; local farmers and suppliers, who will gain new business opportunities; and School Nutrition Programs, which will benefit from improved procurement processes and reduced administrative burdens. Through this collaborative effort, the project aims to foster sustainable demand for local ingredients.

Iowa

Recipient: ChopLocal, Inc., Wayland, IA*

District: IA-002

Implementation District: IA-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,000.00

ChopLocal: Increasing Local and Regional Meat Sales

ChopLocal is a project focused on connecting, cultivating, and strengthening relationships between local and regional producers and local and regional food businesses and consumer-facing markets.

ChopLocal, an online farmer's market specifically for meat, seeks to increase and improve marketing efforts on behalf of participating producers by hiring a dedicated marketing specialist, revising and implementing the ChopLocal marketing plan, improving search engine optimization and performing web development to maximize order size and order frequency. This project is expected to increase the online sales of participating producers by 25% year over year, and many of the activities included will have a lasting impact on sales volume after the grant period has ended.

Kansas

Recipient: The Food Conservancy, Inc., Bronson, KS*

District: KS-002

Implementation District: MO-001

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$399,794.30

Match Amount: \$212,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$611,794.30

Strengthening Missouri's Local Food-Chain Resilience and Farmer Sustainability by Utilizing Existing Promise Zone Infrastructure: Creating New Channels for Aggregation, Processing and Distribution

The Food Conservancy, Inc. and its partner, Good Nature Family Farms (GNFF), proposes to strengthen the gaps in the local food-supply chain in Missouri. The gaps often stem from post-harvest barriers that have historically prohibited small to mid-sized farms from successfully entering a viable market and ultimately has resulted in many farms closing down. This has led to local food sources drying up and an increase in food-insecurity in our under-served communities.

GNFF's proposal is to enhance the sustainability of Missouri's local farms by establishing a new food system infrastructure. GNFF will utilize space in an existing grocery's warehouse in a promise-zone in the North-side community of St. Louis, Missouri. The goal is to establish and expand the aggregation, processing, and distribution capacity of locally-grown and produced foods. GNFF will focus on local and regional producers, with emphasis on new, minority and women-owned growers. GNFF will create new connections to local, independent grocers. The major outcomes will be: 1) a replicable model of systemic change toward a more equitable outcome for 50 local producers, thereby escalating their economic sustainability and 2) increased local food availability, thereby contributing to improved public health.

Recipient: Prairieland Market, Inc., Salina, KS*

District: KS-001

Implementation District: KS-001

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$321,591.75

Match Amount: \$82,033.95

Total Project Amount: \$403,625.70

Building a Healthy Community: Expanding Capacity, Value-added Production, and Promotion at Prairieland Market to Enhance the Connection of Local Farmers to Consumers in Salina County, Kansas.

Prairieland Market seeks to open a new facility that will increase capacity with an on-site commercial kitchen, increased storage capacity for local food from area farmers, better access to healthy foods for those facing food insecurity, and an expansion of healthy food offerings to the community at large.

A key piece of this project is the establishment of a commercial kitchen on-site that will enable Prairieland Market to process more value-added products using local produce, meat, honey, cheese, and eggs.

Crucial to this expansion is the ability for area farmers to store more product for consumer sales, the CSA program, and value-added food processing. Farmers that Prairieland Market currently buys from have stated that they could provide more product if more space was made available. The project will also add capacity to assist a long list of producers who would like to connect to consumers through Prairieland Market.

An important component of this project is the marketing and promotion of local foods. By partnering with our producers, we will highlight the local food products that are available from each of those partners through a coordinated integrated marketing program.

Louisiana

Recipient: Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA

District: LA-006

Implementation District: LA-006

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$94,203.2

Match Amount: \$23,562.00

Total Project Amount: \$117,765.2

Louisiana State University AgCenter Food Innovation Institute Service Expansion

The Louisiana State University AgCenter Food Innovation Institute started in 2013 as a food incubator program to help entrepreneurs start small food businesses. At this time, companies are only able to produce food products that are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration through the food incubator program. Several requests per month have been received from entrepreneurs who are interested in making foods containing meats (ex: gumbo, egg rolls, boudin, meat pies, sausage, etc.), that are regulated by U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety Inspection Service, many of which are food products that are specific to Louisiana. The purpose of this project is to conduct a feasibility study to determine the technical, operational and financial viability of expanding the current food incubator program to include meat and poultry products that are regulated by Food Safety Inspection Service.

Maryland

Recipient: University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD

District: MD-007

Implementation District: MD-Statewide

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$97,415.00

Match Amount: \$46,491.00

Total Project Amount: \$143,906.00

Focusing In: Identifying and Addressing Legal Challenges and Educational Needs to Increase Participation in Maryland's Farm to Institution Local Food Purchasing Program

This project will conduct research to accomplish four main goals. The first goal is identify the specific legal knowledge gaps that exist for regional food producers and institutional buyers, including food service management companies, like contracting strategies (pricing standards, and procurement processes and regulations) through surveys and focus group meetings with key stakeholders. The second goal is to create opportunities for farmers, institutional buyers, food distribution managers, local agricultural service providers, and community organization members, to learn from each other and establish relationships. The third goal is to design educational materials to bridge identified legal knowledge gaps. The fourth goal is to share findings with regional partners and collaborators through a research report, a public symposium, training workshop template materials, and live webinars.

This project aims to increase technical knowledge about procuring and accessing local and regional foods (wholesalers and distributors), school food programs, and other institutions; increase engagement between institutional purchasers, local producers and stakeholders; help facilitate partnerships or collaborations between producers and the local supply network of wholesalers and distributors; and help update the strategic plan.

Recipient: Watershed, LLC. dba Woodberry Kitchen, Baltimore, MD

District: MD-007

Implementation District: MD-007

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$340,709.80

Match Amount: \$86,644.00

Total Project Amount: \$427,353.80

Launching CanningShed to Create a Value-Added Product Pipeline for Mid-Atlantic Farmers

Woodberry Kitchen has been sourcing exclusively from local producers since our launch in 2007. Over time, a gap was identified in the local Mid-Atlantic value chain: the need to align customer demand with the short harvest window. Farmers need to move excess produce, and consumers need simple ways to access local food year-round. The solution is CanningShed, a value-added processor with exclusively local sourcing created by some of the most knowledgeable local food chefs in the region. CanningShed will build upon the existing relationships with regional producers, restaurants, groceries, and consumers. The

initiative will operate in the middle of the supply chain, purchasing produce in large volumes from Mid-Atlantic farmers, and transforming that into desirable shelf-stable value-added products.

To achieve these goals, Woodberry Kitchen will design a value-added product line that highlights the local riches of the Mid-Atlantic; build the marketing infrastructure needed to support CanningShed and promote partner farms; and, launch CanningShed with a comprehensive marketing effort, connecting farmers, chefs, retailers, and consumers. By project's end, Woodberry Kitchen intends to produce 20 new value-added products, all with labels highlighting the producers from whom the ingredients are sourced. Products will be sold to at least local and regional restaurants, groceries, and retailers, and promoted direct-to-consumer at local farmers markets.

Recipient: Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, Inc., Easton, MD

District: MD-001

Implementation District: MD-001

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$498,000.00

Match Amount: \$124,500.00

Total Project Amount: \$622,500.00

Chesapeake Farm to Institution Value Chain Coordination Project

The Chesapeake Farm to Institution Value Chain Coordination Project will demonstrate a replicable model for preparing both institutions and farmers to commit to larger local food sales transactions, leveraging important federal farm-to-school funding, and complying with state legislation on local food. It addresses the challenges institutions have in transacting with small family farms, and prepares farmers to work within state institutions and public school procurement processes. This project will develop strategies to expand local food in institutions; identify and support farmers interested to work in those markets; help create individual institutional demand plans, and coordinate farmers' sales to meet those plans, identifying the best logistics for them, leading to purchasing commitments. It will also document and make permanent the value chain coordination processes with farmers, institutional buyers, and partners in the supply chain: Departments of Agriculture, Food Councils, regional hospitals, and distributors.

Michigan

Recipient: Argus Farm Stop, L3C., Ann Arbor, MI

District: MI-006

Implementation District: MI-006

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$413,480.80

Match Amount: \$103,729.00

Total Project Amount: \$517,209.80

Farm Stop Acceleration: A New Way to Grow Local Food Economies to Benefit Farmers, Consumers and Communities

Strong local food systems are a crucial foundation for building resilient communities wherein farmers earn a sustainable living and all have access to healthy food. The continued disappearance of small farms nationally is a strong indication that innovative approaches are needed. One such innovation is Argus Farm Stop, founded in 2014, which represents a breakthrough model to grow local food economies. Farms selling through Argus maintain their farm identities and pricing control and receive 70% of retail sales. Through this model, local farms and producers have been paid over \$20 million over the past 10 years and the 2022 Ag Census reported that Washtenaw County has the largest growth of new farms selling vegetables of any county in Michigan. While progress has been made, distinct opportunities remain to expand the capacity and reach of the local food system. Argus Farm Stop proposes to further extend the innovation of the farm stop model to expand access to local food among low income, wholesale and institution customers; expand off-season farm sales in January-May; and, expand systems for aggregation, storage and distribution of local food. The resulting systems, approaches, and impacts will be disseminated for the benefit of other food communities.

Minnesota

Recipient: The Food Group Minnesota, Inc., New Hope, MN*

District: MN-005

Implementation District: MN-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$399,412.55

Match Amount: \$99,855.00

Total Project Amount: \$499,267.55

Harvesting Sustainability: Empowering Local Growers in a Community Food Hub and Enhancing Local Food Systems

The purpose of this project is to increase access to markets for local Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) growers and at the same time expand access to fresh, local produce among low-income populations. To achieve the project purpose, The Food Group will establish the Fare for All affordable grocery program as a consistent market for underserved local growers, including farmers of color. The Fare for All program will develop transportation solutions for local growers who experience barriers

delivering their produce to The Food Group's warehouse in New Hope. In addition, it will increase capacity for produce storage at The Food Group's warehouse. To promote equitable purchasing relationships, The Food Group will establish and strengthen purchasing relationships with growers, and adopt a tiered purchasing system and create simple contract processes for farmers engaged in the project. Finally, The Food Group will build interest in local products among Fare for All customers through marketing and promotional. This project will benefit BIPOC growers in Minnesota and in particular farmers at Big River Farms. In addition, the project will benefit low-income customers of The Food Group's Fare for All program.

A key partner is Naima's Farm, a first-generation family farm that will serve as a docking station for the project collaborators. Collaborators include farm hubs Kilimo Minnesota, Sudanese Farming Group, and Route 1.

Recipient: The Good Acre, Saint Paul, MN

District: MN-004

Implementation District: MN-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$498,445.14

Match Amount: \$124,611.29

Total Project Amount: \$623,056.43

Bridging Gaps for Enhanced Competitiveness in Specialty Crop Markets

The project's purpose is to increase economic opportunity for small-scale, racially diverse produce farmers in Minnesota by facilitating access to new markets, particularly retail grocery. This project will provide farmers with technical assistance to achieve certifications like Good Agricultural Practices and create food safety plans. The Good Acre's Market Access team and Partners will educate new wholesale buyers on working with local distributors and expand sales through marketing, promotion, and building relationships. Specific effort will be made in partnership with Lunds & Byerlys to enter grocery retail. This project will improve local food supply chain logistics through cross-docking, backhauling, and operation efficiencies. This project will improve local food supply chain resilience and generate cost and time savings for farmers and partners. Technical assistance will increase the number of Good Agricultural Practices certified farmers in Minnesota. Beneficiaries of this project include underserved local growers such as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in Minnesota, particularly those growing on 10 acres or less; consumers seeking local and equitably sourced produce; and local food system partners including buyers and agricultural organizations.

Recipient: Land Stewardship Project, Minneapolis, MN

District: MN-005

Implementation District: MN-007

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$305,416.49

Match Amount: \$77,498.97

Total Project Amount: \$382,915.46

Building a Resilient and Community-Led Local Food System in West Central Minnesota

Building on the findings of a 2022 LFPP planning grant, the Land Stewardship Project and partners will increase wholesale readiness and food safety practices of local producers; increase farmer income through sales to local wholesale buyers including schools and food access programs; increase market access for producers by educating wholesale buyers and connecting them with local producers; increase local food access through local foods sales to schools, food access programs, and food businesses, and expand and strengthen private-public partnerships focused on the expansion of the local food economy in west central Minnesota. Beneficiaries of this project include farmers that will increase revenue through sales to regional markets, consumers who will experience increased access to local foods via schools and local direct- to-consumer outlets, and food service workers who will receive training on sourcing local foods.

Mississippi

Recipient: In Her Shoes, Inc., Webb, MS

District: MS-002

Implementation District: MS-002

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$307,243.00

Match Amount: \$76,810.75

Total Project Amount: \$384,053.75

Advancing Small Farm Sustainability in the Mississippi Delta: Enhancing Market Integration and Locally Grown Produce Access

The project seeks to primarily address small farm business sustainability, and fresh produce access in rural, low income or low access areas in the Mississippi Delta. The project proposes activities to facilitate capacity building and market integration support for more than 30 small locally owned and operated farm businesses by providing training, technical assistance, and support needed to access new markets. The project will also develop new market channels for local producers including a mobile produce market which will connect farmers with programs such as the Local Food Purchase Assistance Program.

The project's objectives include increasing market integration opportunities for small local growers; developing new market channels, and strengthening the existing ones supported by small local growers; and increasing fresh food access in rural Delta communities.

Nevada

Recipient: Board of Regents of The Nevada System of Higher Education, obo University of Nevada, Reno, NV*

District: NV-002

Implementation District: NV-002

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$88,482.34

Match Amount: \$22,120.58

Total Project Amount: \$110,602.92

Enhancing Nevada Food Chain Initiatives

The Board of Regents of The Nevada System of Higher Education, Desert Farming Initiative (DFI) is applying on behalf of the Nevada Farm Network for this two-year project. DFI will coordinate enhancement actions with partner programs, and facilitate a Leadership Committee made up of local producers and food entrepreneurs to strengthen connections between farmers and the mid-tier value chain. This proposal will leverage and expand on at least four other programs, including the Nevada Small Business Development Centers with the Made in Nevada e-commerce platform, the Transition to Organic Partnership Program, the Nevada Farm Apprenticeship Program, and the Local Food Network's Nourish and Flourish Non-Profit Commissary Kitchen. The Nevada Farm Network is the first online community of practice for Nevada farmers to access educational resources and make market connections. This project will additionally provide for a pilot project of value-add and processing trainings held at the Local Food Network's kitchen in urban Reno and partner organizations in rural Fallon.

New Hampshire

Recipient: Rooted Farmers, Inc., Etna, NH

District: NH-002

Implementation District: NH-002

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$243,870.00

Match Amount: \$62,655.00

Total Project Amount: \$306,525.00

Upgrading Small Farm Virtual Marketplace Point-of-Sale System to Streamline Farm Sales & Inventory Management

Rooted Farmers is a women-run online sales platform for small farms, built and led by a team of farmers. The mission is to facilitate hyper-local distribution of agricultural products through our networked virtual marketplace, allowing farms to access, promote, and sell their inventory to local buyers. Initially launched in 2019 to support local flower sales, Rooted is now completing a multi-year project in partnership with the University of New Hampshire to expand the platform to support food hubs, specialty crop farms, and value-add producers across the US. The project's focus has been on value

chains primarily servicing wholesale channels. However, small farm members are seeking a unified technology solution across all of their channels,-both wholesale and direct-to-consumer. Rooted Farmers is applying on behalf of producer members who have requested the integration of a complete point-of-sale solution with card reader technology to allow them to continue efficiently scaling their businesses.

New Jersey

Recipient: Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey, Lambertville, NJ*

District: NJ-007

Implementation District: NJ-007

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$89,489.06

Match Amount: \$22,584.00

Total Project Amount: \$112,073.06

Accelerating Innovative Marketing Opportunities via Farm Winery License Retail Outlets

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA NJ) and Jersey Cider Works (DBA "Ironbound Farm") will identify, analyze, develop, implement, and evaluate innovative marketing opportunities for farm producers in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania utilizing "Farm Winery License Retail Outlets". These retail outlets, which can include on-farm markets, corner stores, existing grocers and more, offer a unique opportunity for producers to access additional markets without significant increases in staffing or overhead costs. This market access opportunity will specifically focus on supporting small, beginning, and underserved farmers in marketing and promoting shelf-stable and value-added products to accompany Ironbound Farm's existing products offered in each Retail Outlet.

NOFA NJ will work with Ironbound Farm (who currently operates three existing Retail Outlets) and collaborating producers and retailers to perform market analysis for each potential Retail Outlet, to facilitate productive and profitable collaboration between producers and Ironbound Farm, to develop marketing plans and physical/digital marketing materials that benefit and promote collaborating producers and retailers, and to analyze marketplace opportunities for local value-added products via this collaboration. This project will aim to increase sales for at least ten producers and develop a model that can be shared and scaled throughout the Garden State.

New York

Recipient: Capital Roots, Inc., Troy, NY

District: NY-020

Implementation District: NY-021

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,772.00

Match Amount: \$126,283.00

Total Project Amount: \$626,055.00

Connecting the Capital Region's Rural and Urban Communities Through Capital Roots' Expanded and Enhanced Food-to-Institution Program

Capital Roots' Farm-to-Institution Program addresses the lack of connectivity between small-scale producers' desire to sell to institutions and the desire of institutions to purchase local food. Working with producers in the Capital Region's food system, they will locate appropriately sized markets and increase access to quality food for institutional partners who serve underserved communities. This combination provides vital economic and social development to often overlooked communities and businesses.

Through the Food Hub, institutions can purchase local farm products at competitive prices. This Program fills the fresh food gap, occupying a unique niche within the region by exclusively focusing on local food, providing higher quality, nutritional value and taste to community members and vital support to rural agricultural economies. With a new 4,000 square foot Food Hub, Capital Roots is poised to significantly expand its role as a producer-to-consumer intermediary in New York's Capital Region. This project includes five agricultural producers as collaborators- offering sales/marketing opportunities- and six institutions/schools who will purchase fresh food in underserved communities. With program expansion Capital Roots will support the operation of up to 50-plus producers in the 11-County Capital Region foodshed and 20 small-scale institutions and 10 schools. Capital Roots will partner with Brightside Up to connect with regional childcare centers to increase consumption of local food.

Recipient: The Research Foundation for State University of New York on behalf of University at Buffalo, Amherst, NY

District: NY-026

Implementation District: NY-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,778.00

Match Amount: \$127,467.00

Total Project Amount: \$627,245.00

Expansion of a Campus-Based Mobile Market: Supporting Western New York Producers Through Increasing Food Access and Education Among Underserved Students

The Veggie Van is a mobile market program that provides access to local and regionally produced food for the campus community at University at Buffalo, the largest university in the State University of New York system, where more than half of the students have reported experiencing food insecurity. This project will improve the reach and effectiveness of the University at Buffalo Veggie Van by meeting the

following objectives: increase local producer access to new markets, sales, and processing to create value added products in the form of ready-to-use products; increase food access through the adoption and implementation of the Veggie Van mobile market model to a campus setting; and raise awareness of locally produced food among the campus community through promotional campaign. Together these objectives will help expand access to locally grown and produced foods in underserved communities and connect producers with new markets.

North Dakota

Recipient: Dakota Angus, LLC., Drake, ND*

District: ND-118

Implementation District: ND-118

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,998.88

Match Amount: \$134,574.00

Total Project Amount: \$634,572.88

Market & Channel Expansion of Local Certified Angus Beef by Dakota Angus in North Dakota & Beyond

Dakota Angus represents two, third generation livestock farms that have incorporated a value added farm to consumer beef program. The goal of this project is to build business capacity and expand customer base through both wholesale business and expanded direct to consumer distribution geography. The plan is to add up to five new routes and expand wholesale business through grocery stores, food hubs, convenient stores, and schools in underserved markets. In North Dakota (ND), there are 34 counties that have low access to grocery stores, five times more than other rural areas nationally. Although agriculture is the top economic driver in ND, livestock production only accounts for 8% of those economic dollars. It is critical to expand market opportunities that add value back to livestock producers. A study by the ND Public Health Association found that if each ND household spent just \$10 a week on ND produced food, ND could redirect \$167 million each year to the state's food producers and recirculate that money in the local economy. Secondly, it could create additional jobs and better protect the rural main streets and schools in their communities. This project will benefit the community by adding at least two new jobs and the project's beneficiaries will also be additional livestock producers and underserved communities.

Oklahoma

Recipient: The Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma Health, Oklahoma City, OK

District: OK-005

Implementation District: OK-005

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$99,991.00

Match Amount: \$25,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$124,991.00

Cultivating Oklahoma's Food Network: Understanding Barriers in Local Food Purchasing and Developing Procurement Training for Agriculture Entrepreneurs

The Oklahoma Local Agriculture Collaborative's (OLAC) mission is to unite partner agencies with agriculture entrepreneurs to ensure that the needs of local agribusinesses are recognized and represented. OLAC serves as an outlet to test and explore innovative ideas and provide technical guidance to grow the local food system. OLAC will work to assess the current market for local food in central Oklahoma through surveys and interviews with producers and indirect food procurement institutions (i.e. restaurants, distributors). Through the assessment, OLAC will identify barriers and facilitators in local food procurement. OLAC will then work with stakeholders to develop resources and trainings to be utilized by producers and markets, fostering sustainable outlets and mutually-beneficial purchasing practices for each entity. This project will cultivate Oklahoma's food procurement network through the development of training materials designed specifically to overcome the barriers in purchasing local agricultural products that meet the needs of both agriculture entrepreneurs and food procuring businesses.

Oregon

Recipient: Ecotrust, Portland, OR

District: OR-003

Implementation District: OR-003

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$471,645.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$596,645.00

Moving Invasive Species to Impactful Results: Creating Partnerships and Growing Markets for American Shad in the Pacific Northwest

The proposed project aims to enhance economic opportunities for tribal and non-tribal fishers and mid-tier operators working with an abundant, invasive, and nutritious fish species, American Shad (*Alosa sapidissima*), in the Columbia River region. Through the period of performance of this project, Ecotrust will cultivate and connect mid-tier food enterprises, and producers through market development and value-chain coordination activities; incubate and grow mid-tier producers ability to develop value-added products and assess market opportunities for Shad through technical assistance services; and increase

access and availability of American Shad products by coordinating regional distribution networks and establishing wholesale market and consumer connections. As a result of this work, we will establish a sustainable network of producers developing value-added products with American Shad and increase regional market demand for consumer tested products.

Recipient: Lane County Bount, Eugene, OR

District: OR-004

Implementation District: OR-004

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$99,181.00

Match Amount: \$25,038.00

Total Project Amount: \$124,219.00

Improving Consumer Access to Local Food with Five Food Hubs in Oregon.

A persistent need for marketing resources and training has been identified by the state-wide Oregon Community Food Systems Network working group. This project assesses marketing opportunities and develops, implements and evaluates a marketing plan with training and promotion for 5 regional food hubs serving 10 Oregon and 2 Washington counties to improve local food sales and consumption. All food hubs serve both low-income/low-access (LI/LA) and non-LI/LA customers. An assessment and a marketing plan will be conducted by an experienced contractor that will be supported by hub staff and key partners. Each hub will have the same media assets purchased with AB testing to determine the effectiveness in rural, urban and LI/LA areas in 2025. In 2026, the marketing plan will be reassessed, modified as needed and relaunched to ensure plan effectiveness. The Food Hub beneficiaries include 150+ producers, processors and consumers, many of whom are under-served. Outcomes include a final marketing plan with recommendations presented to the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Travel Oregon, and the Food Hub Working Group which serves approximately 80% of the state to identify opportunities to leverage resources and engage in the marketing of regional food products.

Pennsylvania

Recipient: Horse Shoe Ranch, LLC., Pottstown, PA

District: PA-006

Implementation District: PA-006

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$394,484.1

Match Amount: \$98,667.00

Total Project Amount: \$493,151.10

Horse Shoe Hub: Expanding Our Aggregation & Distribution Network for Small and Mid-Size Farms to Access New Markets

Horse Shoe Ranch is a rapidly growing pastured poultry operation and distribution hub located on 100 acres outside Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Over the past three years, Horse Shoe Ranch has developed a robust aggregation and distribution system that allows it to support other small and mid-size producers,

hauling both their products and the Ranch products to markets at the same time. The 59 existing restaurants, retailers, and Community Supported Agriculture that the Horse Shoe Ranch serves are able to efficiently consolidate orders from several vendors into one coordinated delivery. There is strong demand from both producers and buyers to partner with the aggregation network, but expansion has not been possible due to limited capacity. The purpose of this project is to formalize and streamline operations, and appropriately staff the "Horse Shoe Hub" to be able to serve more farmers, expand the distribution geography, increase days of delivery, and connect producers to new markets. This project will help to create systems for a formalized "Horse Shoe Hub" distribution network that serves small and mid-size Pennsylvania producers; launch the expanded "Horse Shoe Hub" to connect local producers to regional markets; and, build a broad customer base of restaurants and retailers in expanded geographies to create more market access for partner farms. This project will benefit farmers, retailers, and restaurants by the end of the project period.

Puerto Rico

Recipient: Growing Puerto Rico, LLC., Humacao, PR

District: PR-116

Implementation District: PR-116

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$50,307.84

Match Amount: \$12,576.00

Total Project Amount: \$62,883.84.

Turnkey marketing and Promotion for the Direct Marketing of Local Produce and Value-Added Products to Short-Term Rentals, Private Chefs, Restaurants, and Yacht Operators in Puerto Rico

This project proposes a data-driven approach to strengthen Puerto Rico's local food system. By focusing on new, key buyer categories such as restaurants, chefs, short term rentals and yacht operators, the project aims to identify and overcome barriers that prevent them from purchasing local produce. Through research, focus groups, and data analysis, the project will identify the specific challenges these buyers face when incorporating local food into their operations. This information will be used to develop a comprehensive marketing plan and targeted media assets designed to address these barriers and promote the benefits of local food acquisition. The project will deliver a report outlining research findings, identified barriers, and opportunities for increased local food sales. It will also produce a data-driven action plan with actionable strategies to mitigate these barriers and encourage local food purchases. Additionally, a targeted marketing plan and marketing materials will be created to support these efforts. The project's success will benefit multiple groups. Local farmers and agricultural producers will gain access to new market opportunities. Consumers will have increased access to fresh, local food. Finally, the target buyer categories themselves will benefit from improved access to high-quality local food options.

Rhode Island

Recipient: Hope & Main, Warren, RI

District: RI-001

Implementation District: RI-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$491,899.13

Match Amount: \$122,972.28

Total Project Amount: \$614,871.41

Grow Together Rhode Island: Strengthening the Mid-Tier Value Chain Through Collaborative Engagement

Grow Together Rhode Island will enhance mid-tier value chain and regional food system as Hope & Main expands to Providence. This project elevates items made with local agricultural commodities such as Consumer Packaged Goods items, baked goods, and prepared foods. Central to the initiative is establishing the Home & Main Community of Learning & Practice. This forum will harness the experience and expertise of early-stage businesses, local farmers, and Rhode Island food hubs fostering partnerships to expand value chains and create economic opportunities. The project also supports food processors to enhance their production efficiencies with the guidance of Polaris Manufacturing Extension Partnership, the State's leading operations improvement consultants. This partnership will enhance the skills of Hope & Main's co-packing team and value-added producers and will aid in design of workflows and equipment in our new Providence facility. Additionally, the project seeks to assist rural, urban, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to sell their agricultural products to Hope & Main's 130 businesses for value-added production. Through real-time learning and collaboration, the project will develop strategies to optimize Hope & Main West End Kitchens, ensuring accessible shared-use facilities that meet growing demand for local agricultural products.

Tennessee

Recipient: Appalachian Producers Cooperative, Johnson City, TN*

District: TN-001

Implementation District: TN-001

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$495,986.00

Match Amount: \$125,162.14

Total Project Amount: \$621,148.14

Growing Stronger Together: A Cooperative Effort to Increase Access to Market Opportunities for Small-Scale Livestock Producers in Central Appalachia

The Appalachian Producers Cooperative (APC) is the first farmer-owned cooperative established in Tennessee in over 50 years. APC will open a 16,000 square foot USDA-inspected meat processing facility in January 2025, to serve farmers in 26 counties in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. The facility will double the processing capacity in the region. APC will offer regional farmers fee-for-service

processing and the opportunity to sell finished cattle under a cooperative owned brand of meat and value-added products. APC is working with local livestock farmers to develop a pipeline of finished cattle that are bred on a schedule and meet carcass quality standards. In this project, APC will hire a marketing director and marketing consulting firm and partner with Appalachian Resource Conservation and Development Council to conduct market research, develop its brand, implement a marketing campaign, and establish at least 30 accounts with wholesale buyers. The co-op branded sales will allow local farmers to access wholesale markets and serve the region's restaurants, grocery stores, and institutions at a scale individual farmers cannot serve. APC will partner with University of Tennessee Extension to provide the necessary technical assistance and education to producers for them to supply 2,500 head of finished cattle to the cooperative annually. This project will benefit 1,200 family farms in Central Appalachia.

Vermont

Recipient: Vermont Cheese Council Inc, Waitsfield, VT

District: VT-001

Implementation District: VT-Statewide

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$77,948.00

Match Amount: \$19,487.00

Total Project Amount: \$97,435.00

Strategic Planning to Respond to Current Cheese Industry, Market, and Partner Conditions

This project is intended to perform in depth interviews and industry research to assess the supply, support, and market conditions that are currently affecting the survivability and success of cheese producers from Vermont. Cheese provides over \$650 million in annual revenue and represents the largest portion of agricultural revenue for Vermont, where it is also a critical cornerstone for tourism. Vermont Cheese Council is a nonprofit, membership organization that was founded by Vermont cheese producers 25 years ago to support their industry. It provides education, business, and marketing support to Vermont's cheese producers, many whose budgets and staff often can't perform the tasks with which the council assists. This project focuses on gathering market and industry stakeholder data from cheese producers, their suppliers, and those in the regional food distribution system; performing an assessment of Vermont Cheese Council's current operational capacity; and then developing a 2026-2030 Strategic Business Plan and 2026 Operational Plan to respond to cheese producer needs and industry conditions. The intended outcome of this work is to ensure the programs provide value and usefulness to Vermont cheese producers and simultaneously provide value to their supply, distribution, and partner networks.

Recipient: Willing Hands Enterprises, Norwich, VT

District: VT-001

Implementation District: VT-Statewide

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$191,740.00

Match Amount: \$47,935.00

Total Project Amount: \$239,675.00

Harnessing Philanthropy to Increase Sales at Local Farms

Willing Hands' mission is to reduce food waste and expand equitable and reliable access to fresh food. Willing Hands recovers surplus healthy food from grocery stores, wholesalers, and farms and delivers it to more than 85 social service organizations across the Upper Valley region of Vermont and New Hampshire. Willing Hands partners with local farms to invite individuals, often existing farm customers, to purchase Community Supported Agriculture shares or make a monetary contribution restricted to purchasing local food for those in need. This project offers a new market opportunity to local farmers to sell their agricultural produce through the "Give Local Food" program. Activities of the project include advertising, marketing and promotion of the Give Local Food program that will maintain individual farmers branded identity, enabling them to increase their customer base.

Washington

Recipient: Puget Sound Food Hub Cooperative, Mount Vernon, WA

District: WA-002

Implementation District: WA-002

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$91,514.90

Match Amount: \$22,878.73

Total Project Amount: \$114,393.63

Advancing the Western Washington Regional Food Economy and Facilitating Food System Development Through Expansion of Puget Sound Food Hub Partnerships and Services

The Puget Sound Food Hub proposes partnering with the Northwest Agriculture Business Center to solicit regional food systems' stakeholder input and create a business plan and capital plan supporting the expansion of its farmer-owned cooperative food hub. Collaborators include five regional Food Hubs, Washington State University Pierce County Extension, a cooperative grocer, and two organizations serving historically underrepresented communities. Information from these sessions will inform the development of a business plan and capital plan supporting a central distribution facility that increases sales opportunities for over 300 existing cooperative members, provides access to new markets for a conservatively estimated 40 small farms that are not currently cooperative members, and serves over 1,600 existing co-op grocery customers and over 3,400 existing food hub customers. Also, it will create efficiencies that will reduce the Hubs' collective carbon food print. Completed plans will be presented at a stakeholder summit to garner feedback. Project outcomes will include an educated, engaged, and diverse community of food systems stakeholders, who contribute to the development of a tenable

business plan; the completion of a business plan supporting expansion of a mid-tier value chain network that creates opportunity and equity for regional producers; and the completion of a capital plan that details how the expansion will be funded.

Recipient: Whidbey Island Grown Cooperative, Coupeville, WA

District: WA-002

Implementation District: WA-002

Project Type: Turnkey

Award Amount: \$98,884.00

Match Amount: \$24,711.00

Total Project Amount: \$123,595.00

Network Driven Sustainable Market Expansion for Local Agriculture in the Whidbey and San Juan Islands, Washington.

This project will increase wholesale and retail direct-to-consumer sales for small-scale farms through collaborative marketing between two member-owned food hubs located on islands in rural Washington. Whidbey Island Grown Cooperative (WIGC) and the San Juan Islands Food Hub (SJIFH) will expand sales opportunities by revising and implementing a marketing plan; designing and purchasing print and social media promotion; and evaluating the effectiveness of promotion activities. Island farmers and ag producers face barriers in the geographically isolated counties including limited access to markets, and time and knowledge to market their businesses. However, there is significant demand for local products, driven by both community, institutional, and tourist consumers. WIGC and SJIFH provide innovative online marketplaces where producers sell their products through member-owned distribution networks. Using proven strategies from other similarly sized food hubs and USDA Food Hub reports, the project seeks to increase wholesale and retail sales. Shared marketing staff will provide customer service and sales outreach to buyers, create and place marketing materials, recruit and support farmers and ag value-added producers, pilot a food hub-to-food hub sales and network, and increase management efficiencies to increase the viability of the food hubs and its members.

Recipient: Local Inland Northwest Cooperative Foods, Spokane Valley, WA

District: WA-005

Implementation District: WA-005

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$417,083.96

Match Amount: \$104,270.99

Total Project Amount: \$521,354.95

Inland Northwest Food System Development: Optimizing and Expanding a Farmer Cooperative's Local Farm-to-Table Subscription

The Local Inland Northwest Cooperative (LINC) has tested growth opportunities through its local farm to table subscription program (LINC Box), focusing on two key prospects for further development: increasing the variety of subscription shares, focusing on new small- and mid-sized farms and value-added producers; and optimizing geographic reach and efficient routing of subscription deliveries. These

objectives will grow the economic viability of the LINC food hub and its producers, laying the groundwork for long-term expansion of year-round markets for producers and offering continuous consumer access to local foods. Project activities will include conducting market outreach, producer onboarding, and research to optimize year-round subscription offerings. Staff will assess routing efficiencies and partner with 9 businesses in the Inland Northwest Region to establish new distribution locations. The marketing team will work closely with key partners to increase consumer knowledge and purchasing of local agricultural products. Ultimately, these activities will enable market access breakthroughs for the Local Inland Northwest Cooperative and its producers, establishing long-term revenue streams and efficiency necessary for sustainable food chain coordination. Expected outcomes are to onboard 24 new producers, including beginning farmers and undeserved producers, and add an additional 12 new value-added agricultural products as subscription items.