



## Transportation and Marketing

### Regional Food System Partnerships Program

# Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Description of Funded Projects with a Farm to Institution Component

Farm to Institution broadly refers to connecting local or regional producers, including farmers and ranchers, processors, and intermediaries selling local and regional foods to establishments where people routinely eat meals outside of home, such as schools and early childcare centers, colleges and universities, hospitals, corporate cafeterias, and government agencies and to vendors that sell to these establishments.

This document identifies FY20 funded projects that included Farm to Institution components in their project descriptions. This document may not be inclusive of all FY20 awarded projects that carried out Farm to Institution activities as part of their project. Click on a state abbreviation in the chart below to jump to Farm to Institution projects in the respective state.

State	Recipient	Project Name	Project Type
<a href="#">CO</a>	First Nations Development Institute	Building Sioux Community Food Systems	Implementation & Expansion
	Western Colorado Food and Agriculture Council	Western Slope Food System Partnership	Planning & Design
<a href="#">HI</a>	Hawaii Public Health Institute	Transforming Hawai'i Food Systems Together	Planning & Design
<a href="#">MI</a>	Michigan State University	Strengthening Public and Private Partnerships for a More Resilient and Just Food System in Rural & Urban Communities Across Michigan	Implementation & Expansion
<a href="#">NM</a>	New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association	Scaling Up New Mexico's Value Chain Coordination Network	Implementation & Expansion
<a href="#">OH</a>	Green Umbrella	Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council (GCRFPC) Partnerships for a Healthy Regional Food System	Implementation & Expansion
<a href="#">VT</a>	Tiny Seed Project, Inc.,	Raising Grain: Reviving the Northeast Grainshed	Planning & Design
<a href="#">VA</a>	Appalachian Sustainable Development	Expanding Food and Agriculture Value Chains in Central Appalachia by Creating a Multi- Stakeholder Cooperative	Implementation & Expansion
<a href="#">WA</a>	Northwest Agriculture Business Center	Puget Sound Regional Food System Partnership	Implementation & Expansion

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

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

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



## Colorado

**Recipient:** First Nations Development Institute, Longmont, CO

**Project Type:** Implementation & Expansion (Project region is on North/South Dakota border)

**Award Amount:** \$301,544

**Match Amount:** \$77,068

**Total Project Amount:** \$378,612

### *Building Sioux Community Food Systems*

First Nations Development Institute, a national, Native American nonprofit organization, will work with Spirit Lake Nation and Standing Rock Tribe, federally recognized Indian tribes in North/South Dakota. Collectively, these entities will collaborate to build the organizational and programmatic capacity of Spirit Lake and Standing Rock, enhancing their abilities to reclaim control of their local food systems through building partnerships and community relationships.

Spirit Lake and Standing Rock will work with Native food producers, individual and institutional food consumers, and food market outlets to: increase local production of fresh, traditional, and value-added foods; create and meet the demand for locally-produced affordable, healthy, fresh, and traditional foods; and capture economic opportunities for social enterprise development and recirculation of food dollars in the community.

These models will be documented and publicized in a final, nationally disseminated report and workshop to promote their adaptation in other Native communities interested in food sovereignty.

This project is significant because it serves historically underserved Native communities whose food systems have been disrupted by colonization yet have significant agricultural assets to leverage.

**Recipient:** Western Colorado Food and Agriculture Council, Montrose, CO

**Project Type:** Planning & Design

**Award Amount:** \$108,000

**Match Amount:** \$27,000

**Total Project Amount:** \$135,000

### *Western Slope Food System Partnership*

Demand for local food has grown throughout the Western Slope and the eastern “Front Range” of Colorado. However, farmers, food hubs and distributors servicing our region lack the logistics capacity to aggregate and scale up their operations to sell to institutional and retail outlets. Coordination of relationships across the regional food supply chain (RFSC) is needed to cultivate mutually beneficial partnerships that grow sales into these channels.

This project will connect producers, distributors, mid-tier value chain businesses, and buyers to share accurate, reliable, and timely data. We will build the digital logistics capacity and efficiency of the RFSC to coordinate marketing and crop production with demand planning and inventory management, improve transportation coordination and per-unit hauling efficiency, and design optimum processing and warehousing solutions.

The project will create a collaborative regional food system partnership with shared operational values



and social mission goals. In year one it will establish an agreement to empower small and mid-scale local food producers to share their production data and engage in omni-channel marketing. In year two the partnership will use data generated in year one to develop baseline metrics and strategic market, mid-tier value chain, and infrastructure expansion plans. Success will be measured in stakeholder data sharing engagement, supply chain operational cost reductions, supply chain efficiency improvements, growth of market channels to producers, and year two investment commitments.

## Hawaii

**Recipient:** Hawaii Public Health Institute, Honolulu, HI

**Project Type:** Planning & Design

**Award Amount:** \$249,466

**Match Amount:** \$62,567

**Total Project Amount:** \$312,033

### *Transforming Hawai'i Food Systems Together*

The 'Ike 'Ai Consortium on Sustainable Food Systems ('Ike 'Ai) is a cross-sector, multi-institutional planning, policy, applied research, education, and community engagement initiative designed to collaboratively advance food security, public health, climate resilience and indigenous values. The name 'Ike 'Ai refers to the Hawaiian words for “knowledge” and “food,” respectively. 'Ike 'Ai is a nexus for community, government, educational institutions and private entities who work to integrate sustainable food production, processing, distribution, access, consumption and waste management.

Through the convening of key regional food system actors, this project will strengthen Hawai'i's food system by developing a State Food Policy Framework and Strategy, informed by data products, to prioritize policies and actions required to increase access and consumption of locally produced food. Fundamentally, new investment opportunities and expanded workforce pathways will shape the path to food system sustainability, resilience and equity.

Spotlighting indigenous food producers, local food distributors, university researchers, educators, state officials and recent efforts by community leaders to restore disrupted market chains, the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic has magnified our inability to deliver locally sourced food in times of disaster. As a driver of economic recovery and resilience building, 'Ike 'Ai will be a catalytic vehicle to help restore Hawai'i's vibrant community-based food systems.

## Michigan

**Recipient:** Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

**Project Type:** Implementation & Expansion

**Award Amount:** \$746,480

**Match Amount:** \$189,560

**Total Project Amount:** \$936,040

### *Strengthening Public and Private Partnerships for a More Resilient and Just Food System in Rural*



### *& Urban Communities Across Michigan*

Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) advances regionally rooted food systems through applied research, education, and outreach uniting the knowledge and experience of diverse stakeholders. Partnerships are the core of CRFS' work. Since 2009, the Michigan Good Food Charter has been building strong collaboration infrastructure to support local and regional food systems.

A recent partnership with the MSU Product Center spurred innovation to support food and farm entrepreneurs and link enterprises to statewide resources. Covid-19 has highlighted the essential nature of resilient, and equitable local food supply chains. In this project, we will build upon our existing partnerships and past successes, applying key lessons from COVID-19 to improve coordination, resiliency, and racial equity in targeted local food systems across Michigan.

We have chosen low-resource, rural and urban, communities within SW Michigan and the Upper Peninsula as our food system partnership laboratories for this project. By leveraging existing partnerships and an ecosystem of food system business and policy networks, we will expand our collaborative efforts to connect food and farm enterprises, food hubs, incubator kitchens, and institutional and retail markets. The partnerships will carry forward the work of 21 public and private organizations with over 17 years' experience in developing local and regional food systems. Together we will further integrate local food system expertise to address the needs of low-resource partners, respond to COVID-19, and support economic growth to build a stronger, more resilient, and just local economies.

## New Mexico

**Recipient:** New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association, Santa Fe, NM

**Project Type:** Implementation & Expansion

**Award Amount:** \$999,042

**Match Amount:** \$260,461

**Total Project Amount:** \$1,259,503

### *Scaling Up New Mexico's Value Chain Coordination Network*

"Scaling Up New Mexico's Value Chain Coordination (NM-VCC) Network" will strengthen successful public and private collaborations of New Mexico's Value Chain Coordination Entities (VCCs) in order to develop the long-term economic viability of the state's agriculture producers, while providing increased consumer access to healthy, local food, especially for lower-income populations. Building upon excellent current statewide VCC partnerships that span a breadth of entity types, technical skills, and specializations, the project will strengthen producer resilience and catalyze New Mexico's local food economies by improving shared resources and reducing administrative and technical barriers for participating Value Chain Coordination Professionals (VCCPs).

Occasionally, the food hubs/Transactional Partners (TPs), and the relational specialists/Support Partners (SPs) will engage in a dual track of complementary activities that allow for targeted strategies to meet each group's unique needs. By project's end, the NM-VCC Network will have mutually supportive, shared resources including databases/dashboards for monitoring and reporting on local produce purchase data, Quality Management Systems for institutional and other wholesale procurement, and producer training resources for wholesale production and marketing.



Additional project outcomes will include stakeholder meetings to foster new institutional and buyer relationships, reliable reporting metrics for VCCE work, and shared advocacy efforts to support legislation that promotes market development and/or reduces regulatory barriers. The project will use a collective impact model with backbone leadership, consultant technical assistance, and outside evaluation support so that partners can create a common agenda, develop shared measurement systems, decide upon mutually reinforcing activities, and participate in continuous communication to achieve project objectives.

## Ohio

**Recipient:** Green Umbrella, Cincinnati, OH  
**Project Type:** Implementation & Expansion  
**Award Amount:** \$609,951  
**Match Amount:** \$174,758  
**Total Project Amount:** \$784,709

### *GCRFPC Partnerships for a Healthy Regional Food System*

GCRFPC Partnerships to Build a Healthy Regional Food System leverages local, state and national partnerships to advance collaboration on key projects for building a regional food system that serves ALL residents of greater Cincinnati. The Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council (GCRFPC) convenes stakeholders from across ten counties in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana to advocate for policy, systems, and environment change. We work through policy advocacy, convening community forums, and publishing research on the state of the regional food system.

The project goals are to increase institutional and consumer purchasing of local foods. The key objectives and activities of this partnership are to:

- Increase institutional local food purchasing by advocating for more institutions to adopt formal local food purchasing policies and for policy change to create financial flexibility for schools to purchase locally;
- Increase consumer demand for local foods by implementing a comprehensive regional local food marketing strategy in partnership with key institutions and working with anchor institutions and corporate partners to create employee incentives for purchasing local food;
- Improve household access to local food by convening market managers and farmers to implement strategies for improving the efficiency and convenience of farmers' markets, and expanding neighborhood-scale distribution of local foods to corner stores in low-income neighborhoods;
- Expand organizational capacity for local food systems change advocacy by facilitating ongoing meetings of the GCRFRPC and investing in evaluation and analysis of the impacts of our collective work.

## Vermont



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**Recipient:** Tiny Seed Project, Inc., East Hardwick, VT

**Project Type:** Planning & Design

**Award Amount:** \$246,893

**Match Amount:** \$171,309

**Total Project Amount:** \$418,202

### *Raising Grain: Reviving the Northeast Grainshed*

The Northeast Grainshed Partnership consists of a diverse and growing number of key stakeholders in the Northeast (New England, New Jersey, and New York) regional grain system: grain growers, processors, producers, organizations, institutions, researchers, and the public. The Partnership operates as a networking hub and planning initiative, primarily to connect grain-related businesses and organizations. The Partnership's vision is to revive a functional and resilient regional grain system.

The project goals are to:

- Establish a framework for a regional grain system, leveraging the Northeast Grainshed as both a networking hub for partnership stakeholders and a planning initiative that connects businesses and consumers.
- Unite the Northeast region under one staple crop 'brand' through a coordinated consumer awareness and education campaign to bring attention to the Northeast's unique contribution to the local food industry and increase demand for regionally produced and processed grains.

The Partnership will meet both goals through our collective expertise, experience, and enthusiasm among grain growers, private industry partners, non-profits, and land grant universities. For example, GrowNYC, a project partner, has 50 years of experience supporting New Yorkers in accessing local food through their Greenmarkets network.

Over the project period, the Partnership will develop an Action Plan with methods to achieve the following: increased communication and networking between farms and grain-based businesses; a consumer education campaign to raise the profile of regional grains; identification of stakeholder needs, missing or weak links in the regional grain system, and missing partners; and development of a framework for a Northeast regional grain system.

## Virginia

**Recipient:** Appalachian Sustainable Development, Bristol, VA

**Project Type:** Implementation & Expansion

**Award Amount:** \$999,968

**Match Amount:** \$386,265

**Total Project Amount:** \$1,386,233

### *Expanding Food and Agriculture Value Chains in Central Appalachia by Creating a Multi-Stakeholder Cooperative*

The project, Expanding Food and Agriculture Value Chains in Central Appalachia by Creating a Multi-Stakeholder Cooperative, brings together 5 innovative anchor organizations and established food hubs



who will connect with an estimated 15 additional food hubs throughout Central Appalachia to design a scalable and collaborative model to access mid-tier markets.

The project goal will address the needs of underserved farmers, processors and rural communities in low wealth and depopulated counties in six states. Each partner brings unique expertise, shared values, and tested approaches to reframe a regional food system that ensure access to healthy, local food through equitable supply chains that create viable, rural livelihoods for producers and processors.

Over the past five years, project partners have invested in infrastructure, staffing and distribution partnerships in their sub-regions. As a collective marketing and distribution network, partners are prepared to formalize a cooperative model to leverage scarce resources, attract new public and private investment, and better serve all stakeholders in all regions of Central Appalachia.

## Washington

**Recipient:** Northwest Agriculture Business Center, Mount Vernon, WA

**Project Type:** Implementation & Expansion

**Award Amount:** \$994,400

**Match Amount:** \$248,609

**Total Project Amount:** \$1,243,009

### *Puget Sound Regional Food System Partnership*

The Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC) recognizes that the Puget Sound region is fertile ground for the development of a cohesive collaboration of existing agencies and entities with the common goal of developing a vibrant and sustainable food system.

NABC will serve as the project manager, leverage long-standing relationships, and work in partnership with multiple local, state and federal governmental agencies, nonprofits, lending institutions, institutions of higher learning, producer-owned cooperatives, food producers and others. This project starts with a baseline of service to nine established producer-owned processing, marketing, and distribution cooperatives and more than 200 agricultural producers that currently serve more than 300 supermarkets, institutional food service providers, restaurants, and food banks, throughout a 10-county region of the Puget Sound, working to feed over 4.6 million people.

NABC proposes facilitating the formation of a qualified and capable body of collaborators to work together as a forward thinking and responsive agent to:

- Support the development of necessary infrastructure projects for value-added food processing and distribution and provide hands on technical assistance to farms and food businesses to support expansion and gain access to capital.
- Create a network of independent farmer-owned food hub cooperatives, which leverages efficiencies in marketing and production planning, business operations, logistics, financial and risk management, and improves profitability.
- Implement a replicable food access model in which food hubs, farmers, and food banks collaborate to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables