

Fiscal Year 2025 Description of Funded Projects

Number of Grants Awarded: 7

Amount of Funds Awarded: \$4,712,934.29

Awarded in March 2026

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

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

Kentucky

Recipient: Community Farm Alliance - Berea, KY

District: KY-006

Project Type: Implementation & Expansion

Award Amount: \$956,780.00

Cost Share Amount: \$370,369.00

Total Project Amount: \$1,327,149.00

From Farmers Markets to Processing and Distribution: Supporting Mid-Tier Connectors and Farmers across Kentucky

This Community Farm Alliance (CFA) project, in partnership with regional technical assistance providers, mid-tier value chain entities, and stakeholders, will expand and stabilize Kentucky's local food system statewide. It aims to advance mid-tier value chain development, strengthen direct-to-consumer markets, and integrate local food into public health strategies. Activities include providing technical assistance, expanding farm-to-institution pipelines, and helping producers improve their business growth. The project expects to align food system infrastructure with health and economic goals, create jobs, expand markets, and improve access to nutritious, Kentucky-grown food across rural and urban communities.

Maine

Recipient: Midcoast Council of Government - Damariscotta, ME

District: ME-001, ALL

Project Type: Implementation & Expansion

Award Amount: \$824,723.50

Cost Share Amount: \$268,736.28

Total Project Amount: \$1,093,459.78

Strengthening Regional Food Systems Through Shared Cold Storage and Market Access

This Midcoast Council of Governments project intends to implement a regional infrastructure and technical assistance initiative that expands institutional and wholesale market access for Maine-based

value-added food producers. The project will build a dedicated frozen aggregation function at a North Atlantic Naturals' facility—enabling pooled logistics and shared fulfillment— and pair this dedicated aggregation with a tiered freezer storage subsidy model. In addition, the project will offer a 4- to 6-week technical assistance program that will cover food safety, institutional packaging, pricing, fulfillment, and buyer readiness. Expected outcomes include expanded institutional sales, job creation, and stronger regional value chains.

Massachusetts

Recipient: Berkshire Agricultural Ventures – Great Barrington, MA

District: MA-001

Project Type: Planning & Design

Award Amount: \$242,265.44

Cost Share Amount: \$62,500.00

Total Project Amount: \$304,765.44

Farm-to-Institution Value Chain Expansion in the Berkshire-Taconic Region: A Strategic Planning Initiative

This Berkshire Agricultural Ventures (BAV) project, in partnership with agriculture agencies from New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts as well as agricultural service-providing organizations from the three states, will develop a strategic plan to create and implement a farm-to-institution value chain support program. In serving the Berkshire-Taconic region for this endeavor, BAV and its partners will conduct a comprehensive landscape analysis to identify key gaps in infrastructure. These likely include processing capacity, transportation, and storage; critical capacity building opportunities; policy recommendations; and working with primary entities including farms, institutions, and middle-of-the-value chain operators that can catalyze change to expand and strengthen the regional farm-to-institution value chain.

Missouri

Recipient: Springfield Community Gardens – Springfield, MO

District: HI-007, ALL

Project Type: Implementation & Expansion

Award Amount: \$959,400.00

Cost Share Amount: \$269,550.00

Total Project Amount: \$1,228,950.00

Fresh Links: Missouri's Rural/Urban Food Hub Connection

This Springfield Community Gardens project will develop mid-tier value chain coordination models in Missouri through a partnership among Springfield Community Gardens (Springfield), KC Farm School (Kansas City), and Rustic Roots Sanctuary (St. Louis) food hubs. Each hub brings strengths from its local context, and the project will provide training on product aggregation and expanded market access to growers so they can ultimately sell to larger hubs and increase direct sales. The project will also create a documentary to raise awareness on food insecurity, lower chronic disease, and increase sales. Further, Missouri State University Center for Ozarks Poverty Research will evaluate activities to provide relevant insights for potential replication and scalability in other regional areas.

North Carolina

Recipient: Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project – Asheville, NC

District: ME-011, ALL

Project Type: Implementation & Expansion

Award Amount: \$644,683.00

Cost Share Amount: \$161,191.00

Total Project Amount: \$805,874.00

Leveraging Farm to School and Early Care Connections to Build Regional Local Food Economies

This Farm to Education Collaborative project will expand market opportunities for farmers, enhance local and regional food systems, and support economic growth for communities across North Carolina by connecting farmers with Early Care and Education and K-12 systems. Through five unique Regional Food System Learning Labs, the project will develop training, technical assistance, and resources on farm-to-institution models that focus on local food procurement and complementary educational strategies. Best practices will be shared through statewide systems and a Community of Practice, where Learning Lab teams will mentor other practitioners. Through this Collaborative, school and Early Care and Education connections will increase consumption of local food, expanding market opportunities and profits for farmers while helping strengthen the regional food system.

Ohio

Recipient: Rural Action, Inc. - Athens, OH

District: NJ-012

Project Type: Planning & Design

Award Amount: \$125,682.35

Cost Share Amount: \$42,733.10

Total Project Amount: \$168,415.45

Piloting the Appalachian Ohio Farm-to-Freezer Initiative

With this project, Rural Action, specialty crop producers, and Ohio University's Voinovich School will determine the feasibility of farmer-led aggregation, processing, marketing, and distribution of value-added produce in Appalachian Ohio. The project includes piloting the aggregation and processing of seasonal produce, developing ten value-added products, and conducting a study to assess the technical, financial, operational, legal, and marketing feasibility of a produce processing cooperative. Longer-term efforts include planning and designing cooperative activities among specialty crop growers to access larger local and regional markets, reduce on-farm food waste, increase profitability, and access new wholesale markets interested in supplying frozen products—as well as increasing their direct-to-consumer customer base through year-round sales.

Wisconsin

Recipient: City of Milwaukee – Milwaukee, WI

District: VA-004

Project Type: Implementation & Expansion

Award Amount: \$959,400.00

Cost Share Amount: \$350,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$1,309,400.00

FEED MKE Regional Expansion: Building a Statewide Network of Public-Private Partnerships, Technical Assistance, and Value Chain Infrastructure to Support Wisconsin's Distressed Communities

This FEED MKE Regional Expansion Partnership project will strengthen Wisconsin's regional food system by coordinating regional value chains, broadening market access, delivering technical assistance, and expanding infrastructure for food recovery and composting to reduce waste and nourish communities. Collaborators will engage through structured workgroups, shared data systems, and regular stakeholder convenings to guide implementation, evaluate progress, and ensure accountability on project implementation. The project will create new partnerships, deploy community toolkits, and build conditions for replication and growth of improved food recovery and composting practices statewide. The project aims to support many local businesses in strengthening their food recovery practices while broadening distribution and food system connectivity to better serve Wisconsin's low-income rural communities.