

Open Opportunities

Title: Funding to Strengthen School Food Supply Chain

Amount: \$1.5 billion

Source: Commodity Credit Corporation funds

Description: The Biden-Harris administration is providing up to \$1.5 billion to states and school districts to help school meal program operators deal with the challenges of supply chain disruptions brought on by the pandemic. With funding made available through USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA will provide:

- Supply Chain Assistance Funds: \$1 billion for schools to purchase food for their meal programs
- USDA Foods: \$300 million for states to purchase foods to be distributed to schools
- Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program: \$200 million will be used for cooperative agreements to purchase local foods for schools with a focus on buying from historically underserved producers.

A state-by-state breakdown of funds can be found in [this table](#).

Deadline: Not yet announced (funds will be allocated via formula)

Actions for NFSN Partners:

- Keep an eye out for a forthcoming Request for Applications from USDA for the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program.
- Advocate with your state authority that conducts school food purchasing as they formulate their application to use their portion of the \$200 million in local purchasing funds.
- Be in touch with any local School Food Authorities to offer support in identifying new vendors or diversify supply networks with the Supply Chain Assistance Funds.

Resources for Questions:

- Please click [here](#) to read the USDA press release.

Title: Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA)

Amount: \$400m

Source: American Rescue Plan Act funds

Description: The purpose of this program is to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency and program will award up to \$400 million through non-competitive cooperative agreements with state and tribal governments to support local, regional, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers through the purchase of domestic local foods. Local and regional farmers and ranchers are those within the state or 400 miles of delivery destination. The cooperative agreements will allow for state and tribal governments to procure and distribute local and regional foods and beverages that are healthy, nutritious and unique to their geographic area. The food will meet the needs of the population, and serve feeding programs, including food banks, schools and organizations that reach underserved communities. In addition to increasing local food consumption, funds will help build and expand economic opportunity for local and socially disadvantaged producers.

Deadline: May 6, 2022 (extended from April 5)

Actions for NFSN partners: Be in touch with your state department of agriculture or Tribal government food and agriculture authorities to inform their application. This is the time for government agencies to hear from providers and local producers about how they should structure their proposal – what specifically will make this funding most beneficial?

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement from USDA:
<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/12/06/usda-establishes-food-purchase-program-transform-food-system-build>
- AMS information page:
https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/lfpacap?auHash=sIKGyuyUsmRdAeuCtI576Z2YVOp91_b4AC607Jc8qSo
- FAQ from AMS here: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/lfpacap/faq>
- Presentation from the Wallace Center:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1vdwr6wTd3u72412rTxwGQ2rmzejYI8EHMiNgLrO_RU/edit#slide=id.g10eb9fff5c5_2_0
- Blog posts from the Wallace Center:
<https://foodsystmsleadershipnetwork.org/learn-more-about-usdas-huge-investment-in-resilient-food-systems/>

Title: Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program

Amount: \$100m to facilitate \$100b in loan guarantees

Source: American Rescue Plan Act funds

Description: This program guarantees loans of up to \$40 million for qualified lenders to finance food systems projects, specifically for the start-up or expansion of activities in the *middle* of the food supply chain. The program will support new investments in infrastructure for food aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storage, transportation, wholesaling, and distribution.

Deadline: Rolling

Actions for NFSN partners: Review the eligibility criteria and determine if your project would meet the approved purposes and if your group is eligible. If so, reach out to a lender for more information. To identify potential lenders who could offer these guaranteed loans,

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement from USDA:
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/food-supply-chain-guaranteed-loans>
- Fact sheet on eligible borrowers and uses:
https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/508_rcbs_foodsupplychainloanuarantee.pdf
- Contact with questions: rdfoodsupplychainloans@usda.gov
- FAQ:
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/food-supply-chain-guaranteed-loans/frequently-asked-questions>

Title: Farm and Food Worker Relief Grant Program

Amount: \$665 million

Source: Annual spending and COVID relief

Description: The Farm and Food Worker Relief Grant Program provides approximately \$665 million in Consolidated Appropriations Act funds to provide grants to State agencies, Tribal

entities, and nonprofit organizations with experience in providing support or relief services to farmworkers or meatpacking workers. Awards will generally range from \$5,000,000 to \$50,000,000.

Deadline: February 8, 2022

Actions for NFSN partners: Review this opportunity if you are an organization serving food or farm workers, and/or promote this funding opportunity to your networks who may be eligible.

Resources for Questions:

- **Announcement:** <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/ffwr>

Title: ReConnect Program

Amount: \$1.15 billion

Source: Rural Development funding

Description: This funding is available for projects that serve rural areas where at least 90 percent of the households lack broadband service at speeds of 100 megabits per second (Mbps) (download) and 20 Mbps (upload). USDA will give funding priority to projects that will serve people in low-density rural areas and areas lacking internet access services at speeds of at least 25 Mbps (download) and 3 Mbps (upload).

Applicants must commit to building facilities capable of providing broadband service at speeds of 100 Mbps (download and upload) to every location in a proposed service area at the same time. In making funding decisions, USDA will also consider the economic needs of the community to be served; the extent to which a provider will offer affordable service options; a project's commitment to strong labor standards; and whether a project is serving Tribal lands or is submitted by a local government, Tribal government, non-profit or cooperative.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- Information on ReConnect program and application: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect>

Funding Award Announcements

Title: Technical Assistance Partnerships for Underserved Producers

Amount: \$75m

Source: American Rescue Plan Act funds

Description: USDA will provide approximately \$75 million in American Rescue Plan funding to 20 organizations to provide technical assistance to connect underserved producers with USDA programs and services. Organizations were selected for their proven track records working with underserved producer communities, such as veterans, beginning farmers, limited resource producers, and producers living in high-poverty areas. These organizations will work with underserved producer communities on business and tax planning, financial assistance planning, market planning, farmer advocacy, and business curriculum development.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: See the list of cooperative agreement recipients [here](#). These organizations are resources for “underserved” producers to reach out to for business assistance as outlined in the description above.

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement from USDA:
<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/11/24/usda-announces-american-rescue-plan-technical-assistance>
- List of cooperative agreement organizations:
https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001d6q_z5qTpDu07puQ10IHSGDnQC2bRUiZ8z9zecwDcgeipSLLpq8inYtA2p1YaMuz7WOPL6qSCZvpsYG9wDu33OnXR4NFTWxJw6QcmiTPYI6b0bDqZ-X_xGyv3GYAPNWpGp-dKxr-8acaXwAk_BJIYEnPRsJEtTZCw1if-CFYqvbIRZJca pziTkhQBM9WSloKLq16fom0TWZhsl-5mD8p37I3sazEVvSzgBOjGmHt0DJ-TvUZNbUPbb3EnaX4XeT&c=7_RQ3x2eeUO-vSZhbeGQ5NO1_gI_Id75PWJnP878TNYkpNBOfRieAg==&ch=g221i2yeC8LWc-8owl6kPuNj65Ybrsij_in-1Rgw6sQCkuaMzchFLw==

Title: USDA Announces \$90.2 Million in Grants Awarded to Strengthen Local and Regional Markets for U.S. Agricultural Products

Amount: FMPP: \$37.5m; LFPP \$37.5m; RFSP: \$14.8m

Source: Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program and Regional Food System Partnerships Farm Bill funds

Description: Funding through Local Agriculture Markets Program (LAMP) to strengthen and explore new market opportunities for local and regional food businesses.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- FMPP Awards: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp/awards>
- LFPP Awards: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp/awards>
- RFSP Awards: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/rfsp/awards>
- Announcement:
<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/11/23/usda-announces-902-million-grants-awarded-strengthen-local-and>

Title: Meat and Poultry Inspection Readiness Grant Program

Amount: \$32m

Source: Annual appropriations funding

Description: With this grant funding, meat and poultry processing businesses can cover the costs for improvements such as expanding existing facilities, modernizing processing equipment and meeting packaging, labeling, and food safety requirements needed to achieve a Federal Grant of Inspection under the Federal Meat Inspection Act or the Poultry Products Inspection Act, or to operate under a state’s Cooperative Interstate Shipment program. These changes will allow these facilities to serve more customers in more markets.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement:
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/press-release/usda-invests-32-million-strengthen-us-food-supply-chain-solidifies-commitment-helping>
- Grant program information: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/mpirg>
- See the list of awarded projects in your area:
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/FY21MPIRGDescriptionofFundedProjects.pdf>

Title: USDA Rural Development Awards

Amount: \$86m

Source: Annual appropriations funding

Description: 218 investments that USDA is making in six programs specifically designed to help people and businesses in rural areas. These programs include Tribal College Initiative Grants, Rural Community Development Initiative Grants, Housing Preservation Grants, Delta Health Care Grants, Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grants and Water and Waste Disposal Grants.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement:
<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/11/18/usda-invests-86-million-improve-equitable-access-jobs-business>
- See list of awards here:
https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/usda_rd_nr_equity_chart.pdf

Title: The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Farm to Food Bank Funding

Amount: \$7.5m

Source: Annual appropriations funding

Description: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) announced the award of more than \$7.5 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Farm to Food Bank Project funding to 29 states and territories that administer The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Farm to Food Bank Grants support the harvesting, processing, packaging or transportation of food donated by agricultural producers, processors, or distributors for use by emergency feeding organizations, like food banks.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- List of awardees and further information:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/fy-2022-farm-food-bank-project-summaries>

Other Announcements

Title: Federal Micro-purchase Threshold

Amount: N/A

Source: N/A

Description: A Food and Nutrition Service memo dated November 17, 2021, clarifies for child nutrition program regional directors and state agencies that the federal micro-purchase threshold is \$50,000; it also updates the requirement to recommend equitable distribution of micro-purchases (awarding micro-purchases to a wide variety of people) rather than requiring it.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: Spread this news among child nutrition program providers who are responsible for procurement, and their administrators.

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/updates-federal-micro-purchase-threshold>

Title: Tribal Homelands Initiative

Amount: N/A

Source: N/A

Description: U.S. Departments of Agriculture and the Department Interior have created the Tribal Homelands Initiative. This collaborative effort will improve federal stewardship of public lands, waters, and wildlife by strengthening the role of tribal communities in federal land management. Through a [joint Secretarial Order](#) (PDF, 270 KB), the two Departments codified a policy to facilitate agreements with tribes to collaborate in the co-stewardship of federal lands and waters.

The Departments also committed to ensuring that all decisions relating to federal stewardship of lands, waters, and wildlife include consideration of how to safeguard the treaty, spiritual, subsistence, and cultural interests of any Indian Tribes. The Order additionally directs the Departments to ensure that tribal governments play an integral role in decision-making related to the management of federal lands and waters through consultation, capacity-building, and other means consistent with applicable authority.

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/11/15/agriculture-and-interior-departments-take-action-strengthen-tribal>
- Copy of Joint Secretarial Order: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/joint-so-3403-stewardship-tribal-nations.pdf>

Title: FDPIR Self-Determination Demonstration Project

Amount: \$3.5m

Funding Source: 2018 Farm Bill

Description: USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) awarded \$3.5 million to eight tribal nations for a project that, for the first time, will offer them greater flexibility in their administration of the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).

Deadline: N/A

Actions for NFSN partners: None

Resources for Questions:

- Announcement: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/news-item/fns-0010.21>