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## USDA Partners with Washington to Award Over \$7.3 Million to Strengthen Food Supply Chain Infrastructure

News Release | Washington | May 30, 2024

Washington

**WASHINGTON, May 30, 2024** - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) today announced it has a cooperative agreement with Washington under the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI). Through this agreement, USDA and Washington are working together to offer over \$7.3 million in competitive grant funding for projects designed to build resilience across the middle of the supply chain. Washington is accepting applications for this Infrastructure Grant funding through July 15, 2024.

In May 2023, [USDA announced](#) the availability of up to \$420 million through RFSI to strengthen local and regional food systems. Through this program, AMS has entered into cooperative agreements with state agencies, commissions, or departments responsible for agriculture, commercial food processing, seafood, or food system and distribution activities or commerce activities in states or U.S. territories. RFSI is authorized by the American Rescue Plan. Updates for each state's Request for Applications for the RFSI program are available on the [AMS website](#).

"This partnership between USDA and Washington is allowing critical funding to reach areas of the supply chain that need it most," said USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs Under Secretary Jenny Lester Moffitt. "The projects funded through this program will create new opportunities for the region's small and midsize producers to thrive, expand access to nutritious food options, and increase supply chain resiliency."

Using RFSI funding, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) will fund projects that expand capacity for processing, aggregation, and distribution of agricultural products to create more and better markets for producers; modernize manufacturing, tracking, storage, and information technology systems; improve the capacity of entities to comply with food safety requirements; and modernize processing and manufacturing equipment. The state's priorities are informed by stakeholder engagement and outreach to underserved producers to better understand their needs.

Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Derek Sandison, underscored the significance of this partnership. "These federally-funded infrastructure grants provide a unique opportunity to complement the work that our agency has already committed to support the local food supply chain for farms, ranches, food processors and food distributors," he said. "We are grateful to the USDA for partnering on a program that helps strengthen and expand local market access for

Washington's small and mid-sized agricultural producers and organizations operating in the middle of the food supply chain. We also appreciate our partnership with the Washington Small Business Development Center to provide technical assistance to applicants," Sandison added.

Those interested in receiving a sub-award should apply directly through [WSDA](#) by July 15, 2024. AMS encourages applications that serve smaller farms and ranches, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, underserved producers, veteran producers, and underserved communities.

Through the program and in addition to the Infrastructure Grant funding, WSDA will support supply chain coordination and technical assistance to farmers and food businesses operating in processing, aggregation and distribution-all critical activities to support access to more and better markets for farmers.

For more information, visit the AMS [Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure webpage](#).

*USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)*

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