



## **USDA Announces Grants for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production**

**News Release | Virgin Islands | May 27, 2021**

**GAINESVILLE, Fla., May 27, 2021** -The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of up to \$4 million for grants to support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects. USDA's Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production is accepting proposals for planning and innovation projects, and these grants are part of USDA's broader efforts to support urban agriculture.

USDA will accept applications on [Grants.gov](https://www.usda.gov/grants) until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 30, 2021.

"Urban agriculture can play an important role in food justice and equity," said Christy Marshall, Farm Service Agency Executive Director in US Virgin Islands.

"Such projects have the potential to educate, innovate, and unify communities to improve nutrition and food access and increase local food production in urban areas," said Luis Cruz-Arroyo, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist in the Caribbean Area.

### **Planning Projects**

Planning projects initiate or expand efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs. Projects may target areas of food access, education, business and start-up costs for new farmers, urban agroforestry or food forests, and development of policies related to zoning and other needs of urban production.

This is the second year USDA offered this grant opportunity. Examples of previous planning projects include:

- **The City of New Haven, Connecticut** is developing the first New Haven Urban Agriculture Master Plan. The plan will be used to access land and opportunities to increase the production and sale of locally grown foods, build community, improve public health and well-being and provide economic opportunity, particularly in areas with vacant land and limited food access.
- **California's Center for Land-Based Learning** is producing a comprehensive urban agriculture assessment of West Sacramento, mapping and documenting current activities, identifying opportunities for growth, and making recommendations to bolster the layers of positive impact urban agriculture has on communities.

### **Implementation Projects**

Implementation projects that accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor and other

agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers. Projects will improve local food access and collaborate with partner organizations and may support infrastructure needs, emerging technologies, educational endeavors and urban farming policy implementation.

Examples of previous implementation projects include:

- **Arkansas Interfaith Power and Light** is improving access to local food by helping a network of urban gardeners and farmers build infrastructure and become self-sustainable. The organization is educating the community on the environmental benefits of local food and the nutritional value of plant-rich diets, mentoring youth in urban agricultural occupations and engaging more people in local, organic food production.
- **Atlanta's The Greenleaf Foundation** is using the Greenleaf Community Farm as a hub for connecting and supporting entrepreneurial food projects and closing the food system gap in Council District 5. The project includes a community farm, a payflex farm stand and a community gathering space to connect and educate residents. It will also expand the Edible Neighborhoods program to provide equitable access to fresh produce, educate residents on edible landscaping and serve as an entry point into the food system.

## Webinar

A pre-recorded webinar will provide an overview of the grants' purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting an application. The webinar will be posted at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

## More Information

The Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production was established through the 2018 Farm Bill, and, through these grant opportunities, it offers opportunities for engagements as well as cooperative agreements. It includes representatives from many USDA agencies, including the Farm Service Agency and the Agricultural Marketing Service, and is led by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. More information is available at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

Additional resources that may be of interest to urban agriculture entities include [AMS grants](#) to improve domestic and international opportunities for U.S. growers and producers and [FSA loans](#).

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 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](https://www.usda.gov).

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