



## Expanding Access to Agricultural Pathways Across Georgia

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Contact:  
Jay Ivey

[Jay.Ivey@usda.gov](mailto:Jay.Ivey@usda.gov)

706-  
510-  
5318

**ATHENS, Ga., June 20, 2023** - A \$1.5 million USDA grant will allow the University of Georgia to help advance agricultural initiatives and innovative food production in Georgia as part of the USDA's Food System Transformation framework.

The UGA Archway Partnership will administer the grant using its nationally recognized and [award-winning model](#) of community engagement and facilitation to support agriculture in Georgia. Archway will connect UGA experts with farmers and agricultural producers to determine the underlying needs of Georgia's agricultural community and to help them connect to resources that can help them access new markets and increase sustainability and long-term viability of farming operations.

The goal is to increase supply chain resiliency in urban and rural community food systems and strengthen the food supply chain to create fairer, more competitive, more resilient markets.

"This grant is an opportunity for UGA to put its strengths in community engagement and agricultural innovation to use in important ways for our home state," said University of Georgia President Jere W. Morehead. "We are very grateful to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for their support of UGA's Archway Partnership and Georgia communities."

The grant will support new and existing efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs across the state of Georgia. Projects may target areas of food access; education; business and startup costs for new farmers; as well as development of policies related to zoning and other needs of agricultural production.

Increased access can benefit communities by creating healthier eating habits, more opportunities for agricultural education and exposing more youth to agriculture. Additionally, the USDA funding will support a statewide network of community gardens to increase awareness of urban agriculture, which also can include rooftop farms and vertical growing practices.

"I am thrilled that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be partnering with the University of Georgia for this monumental initiative. Through this grant, our hope is that we will enhance the way of life for countless Georgians through the creation and enhancement of community gardens and other exciting agricultural projects," said Arthur Tripp, Georgia state executive director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency.

The funding for UGA is part of a \$43 million program from the USDA to advance [food system transformation](#), which includes \$10.2 million in new cooperative agreements to expand compost and food waste reduction efforts and \$14.2 million in new grants to support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under 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 [usda.gov](https://usda.gov).

## **Farm Service Agency:**

1400 Independence Ave.

SW Washington, DC 20250

## **Contact:**

FPAC Press Desk

[FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov](mailto:FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov)