



## **Biden-Harris Administration Announces Intended Investment of Approximately \$300 Million in 50 Projects Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access for Underserved Producers**

**News Release | Rhode Island | June 23, 2023**

### **USDA Farm Service Agency - Rhode Island**

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**WASHINGTON, June 23, 2023** - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced its selection of 50 projects for potential award, totaling approximately \$300 million. These innovative projects will help improve access to land, capital, and markets for underserved farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners. The Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access (Increasing Land Access) Program, which is funded by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, works to increase access to farm ownership opportunities, improve results for those with heirs' property or fractionated land, increase access to markets and capital that affect the ability to access land, and improve land ownership, land succession and agricultural business planning.

"Land access, market access and capital are critical to the success of the hardworking producers who keep agriculture thriving," said J Eric Scherer, FSA State Executive Director in Rhode Island.

"Underserved producers have not had access to the amount of specialized technical support that would increase opportunities to access and capital and benefit the launch, growth, resilience, and success of their agricultural enterprises. The Increasing Land Access Program is part of the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to advancing equity for all, including people who have been underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by inequality, by providing the resources, tools and technical support needed to directly help local farmers and ensure we have a strong agricultural system across the country."

"We are pleased that Rhode Island was able to see one of its applications approved for this grant," Mr. Scherer stated, "and we look forward to working with the recipient." The grant is going to the African Alliance of Rhode Island (AARI) Project Geographic Area: RI: Rhode Island Northeast and Southern New England Target Audience: Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous farmers and People of Color Project Description: For Us, By Us will increase opportunities for farmland ownership and tenure ship through training, capacity-building, and new financing resources for Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous farmers and People of Color engaged in agricultural production in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

The tentative selectees for this grant include national, regional, and local projects that cover 40 states and territories including Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. USDA will work with the selected applicants to finalize the scope and funding levels in the coming months.

[See the full list of Increasing Land Access Program selected projects.](#)

## **Environmental Assessment**

These projects will likely result in the purchase of land, construction of farm infrastructure and other activities that could have potential impacts on environmental resources. USDA has developed a Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Increasing Land Access Program to evaluate the program's overarching environmental impacts as they relate to the National Environmental Policy Act.

The environmental assessment is available [online for public review](#). USDA is requesting comments on the program's potential impact on the environment. The feedback will be incorporated into the final assessment, as appropriate, prior to a decision.

USDA will consider comments received by Friday, July 14, 2023, at 5 p.m. EDT. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent possible. Comments may be submitted:

- Electronically at: [Land.Access@usda.gov](mailto:Land.Access@usda.gov)
- By mail at: Attn: Michael Mannigan, Grants Management Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Outreach Office, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC, 20250-0506

For more information, contact Michael Mannigan at [Land.Access@usda.gov](mailto:Land.Access@usda.gov). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication should contact the USDA Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice).

## **More Information**

The Increasing Land Access Program was [originally announced in August 2022](#) as part of a broader investment to help ensure underserved producers have the resources, tools, programs and technical support they need to succeed and is being funded by the Inflation Reduction Act.

The Increasing Land Access Program is part of USDA's commitment to equity across the Department and steps it has taken under Secretary Vilsack's direction to improve equity and access, eliminate barriers to its programs for underserved individuals and communities, and build a workforce more representative of America. Earlier in the year, the [USDA Equity Commission](#), which is comprised of independent members from diverse backgrounds, released its interim recommendations to remove barriers to inclusion and access at USDA. The program is also an important component of the

Department's and President Biden's vision to [Advance Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#).

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://www.usda.gov).

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