



USDA Establishing New Urban Service Center in Louisiana

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Louisiana

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Alexandria, Louisiana, July 25, 2023 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is opening 17 new Urban Service Centers in the next year including one in New Orleans and investing in new partnerships to support urban agriculture.

"Providing urban agricultural producers with the same level of support as all farmers and ranchers is key to equitable USDA assistance," said Ronald Guidry, Jr., Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director in Louisiana. "Through local-level partnerships, USDA will learn how to expand our networks, infrastructure and services to urban producers as they strengthen resilient local food systems and nutrition access for all communities."

Urban Service Centers

The Urban Service Centers will be staffed by FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employees and will offer farm loans, conservation, disaster assistance and risk management programs. USDA works with agricultural producers through a network of more than 2,300 Service Centers nationwide and the new Urban Service Centers will strengthen services to urban agricultural producers.

"Every producer deserves USDA support in their own community, whether that community is in an urban or rural setting," said Richard Kacir, NRCS State Conservationist in Louisiana, "We encourage people in urban communities to connect with us and learn what programs and services we have to meet their unique needs."

Urban Service Centers are also home to Urban County Committees, which help with the local administration of FSA programs. FSA is accepting nominations until August 1, 2023, for county committee members for elections that will occur later this year.

The grand opening of the New Orleans Urban Service Center will be held on August 24th, 2023, at the center located at 2520 Bayou Road New Orleans, LA 70119. Additional details about the event will be released soon.

Support for Urban Agriculture

To help strengthen Urban Service Centers and Urban County Committees, USDA is investing American Rescue Plan funds into partnerships with community-based organizations. This is part of USDA's broad support for urban agriculture and innovative production.

FSA has awarded cooperative agreements to organizations located in cities where USDA is opening Urban Service Centers or will have an urban county committee, including Sprout NOLA. Through outreach, engagement, education, research and technical assistance, Sprout NOLA, and other community-based organizations and stakeholders, will work to improve the coordination and effectiveness of USDA programs and services for urban and innovative producers and help mitigate economic disruptions by funding projects designed to increase equity in urban food systems.

More Information

The new cooperative agreements and Urban Service Center is part of USDA's broader USDA investment in urban agriculture in New Orleans. Other efforts include:

- [Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production competitive grants](#), including one to Grow Dat Youth Farm for a mobile food access expansion project that will respond to the unhealthy relationship to local food systems experiences by young adults in New Orleans.
- Partnering with Sankofa community garden in St. Claude Court in the lower 9th ward to grow the [People's Garden initiative](#).

To learn more about Urban Service Centers, [download our fact sheet](#) or [visit our Urban Service Center webpage](#). Visit farmers.gov/urban for more information on programs and services for urban producers.

This Urban Service Center in New Orleans was announced last week [by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Deputy Secretary Xochitl Torres Small](#) as part of a significant investment in urban agriculture. The announcement included a total of 10 new urban county committees and 17 new Urban Service Centers. Locations with new Urban Service Centers include:

- Albuquerque, N.M.
- Atlanta, Ga.
- Chicago, Ill.
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Dallas, Texas

- Detroit, Mich.
- Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Los Angeles, Calif.
- Oakland, Calif.
- Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.
- New Orleans, La.
- New York, N.Y.
- Philadelphia, Pa.
- Phoenix, Ariz.
- Portland, Ore.
- Richmond, Va.
- St. Louis, Mo.

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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