



## USDA and DATCP Award \$3.1 Million to Projects that Strengthen Food Supply Chain Infrastructure

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MADISON, Wis. – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced it has partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to award \$3.1 million for 41 projects through the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI) to strengthen local and regional food systems.

Through this program, DATCP will fund 41 projects with Equipment Grants to support middle of the supply chain infrastructure. Additional projects are still being reviewed and will be announced soon.

“We have a proud tradition of agriculture here in Wisconsin, and it’s critically important that we’re able to get food from our farms and producers to our grocery stores, restaurants, and kitchen tables across our country and the world over,” said Gov. Evers. “From the Northwoods to the Fox Valley to the Driftless Area, I’m grateful our partners like Sen. Baldwin are helping bring investments home to Wisconsin to support our farmers and their families, bolster our state’s critical supply chain, build food resilience, and, importantly, help make sure our state’s proud agricultural tradition continues for generations to come.”

Examples of funded projects include:

- Heartland Craft Grains, a family-owned farmstead mill and grain processor near Lodi, WI, will purchase equipment to automate the handling, batching, and dispensing of their finished, value-added processed grains into packaging. These ingredients are then used to add value, flavor and nutrition to other food businesses, such as bakeries, restaurants, tortillerias, pasta makers, brewers and distillers, and more.
- The Sokaogon Chippewa Community in Crandon, WI, will purchase manoomin (wild rice) processing and storage equipment to provide opportunities for at least 20 underserved, tribal producers. Manoomin production capacity is currently severely limited by lack of larger-scale, collective processing equipment. This project is part of a set of proposals coordinated by the Great Lakes Intertribal Food Coalition (GLIFC) designed to form a statewide network of mid-supply-chain infrastructure-supporting economic opportunities for underserved producers across the state.
- The Driftless Berry Grower group, under the leadership of Good Thunder Farm in Richland Center, WI, will purchase 12 pieces of equipment for storage, juicing, freeze drying and distilling elderberries, aronia berries, and currants. This group of 12 small, beginning berry farmers will build middle of the supply chain infrastructure for processing these crops of growing importance and popularity in Wisconsin, strengthening rural economies.
- Northeast Wisconsin Hmong Professionals of Appleton, WI, will purchase a delivery vehicle and cold storage equipment to establish a Hmong Food Hub for distributing cultural and specialty crops. This project will support wholesale readiness, provide cold chain distribution access, and enhance market opportunities for local, underserved producers.
- Stock Family Farm of Helenville, WI, recognizes the shared challenges faced by small-scale farmers in their region and will purchase cold storage and distribution equipment

to serve as a hub for locally produced food aggregation. Centralizing transportation infrastructure will enhance the resilience of an estimated 10 individual farms, and strengthen the entire local food system in Southeastern Wisconsin by establishing a more reliable and accessible source of local food for communities falling within classified food desert boundaries.

“Projects funded through RFSI are building strength and resilience in Wisconsin’s food system, diversifying agricultural markets, creating new revenue streams for small and mid-sized producers, and providing economic opportunities for local communities,” said USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs Under Secretary Jenny Lester Moffitt. “USDA is grateful for Wisconsin’s support strengthening local and regional agricultural supply chains.”

This awarded funding is part of the \$420 million available through the RFSI grant program to build capacity within the middle of the supply chain and support local and regional producers. It is funded by President Biden’s American Rescue Plan. 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 Equipment Grant awardees can be found at <https://datcp.wi.gov/Documents2/RFSIEOAwardList.pdf>. For more information, visit the AMS Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure webpage at [ams.usda.gov](https://ams.usda.gov). The status of state and territory RFSI programs is available on the program’s state grant webpage.

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