



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Transportation and Marketing
Local Food Promotion Program

Fiscal Year 2021 Description of Funded Projects

Number of Grants Awarded: 84
Amount of Funds Awarded: \$37,544,466.62

For more information, please visit the grant program's website:
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp>

NOTE: The below project descriptions were provided by the grant recipients.

Alaska

Recipient: Ketchikan Agricultural Producers Association
Project Type: Planning
Award Amount: \$198,500.00
Match Amount: \$49,625.00
Total Project Amount: \$248,125.00

From Food Desert to Food Oasis: Creating Food Security Via a Food Hub in Rural Alaska

Ketchikan, Alaska is a food desert. Located on beautiful Revillagigedo Island in Southeast Alaska, 95% of our food supply is imported via sea barge. Despite the unique challenges that this region brings agricultural producers, several are working to create food security and economic opportunity through agricultural development. But the deck is sorely stacked against these producers. Alongside the difficulties that face any producer, these businesses also grapple with supply issues, high freight costs, and logistical challenges associated with producing in a region with no road system connected to a larger community. COVID-induced supply chain issues starkly highlighted the tenuous link our community has to a steady supply of food. This project seeks to change that. We will lower the barrier to entry for current and prospective farmers, ranchers, and value-added producers in this region by creating a food hub. The feasibility study will 1.) Analyze market potential, capacity, and partners in the region 2.) Determine the optimal business model based on needs across the local food value chain 3.) Assess a regional hub's financial viability, assess impact on economic development 4.) Provide direction on the launch of the enterprise. The project team will share findings with other rural communities in island-bound Alaska, and advocate for the creation of other regional hubs with the aim to create a hub network throughout the region. Research will also provide direction on Alaska-specific crops that can be cultivated easily in the Southeast climate that are traditionally wild-harvested, such as mushrooms, berries, kelp, seaweed, and other aquatic plants.

Recipient: E.C. Phillips & Son Inc.
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$749,975.85
Match Amount: \$74,997.59
Total Project Amount: \$824,973.44

Creating a Custom Mariculture and Seafood Processing Food Hub In Southeast Alaska To Build Up Local Production, Manufacturing and Consumption

In Southeast Alaska alone, the seafood industry is a \$200-250 million industry, directly employs about 10% of Southeast Alaskans, and on average catches ~200 million pounds of fish a year. Despite how integral seafood is in the region, 90-95% of seafood is transported out. While most of Alaska's seafood is leaving the state, 95% of Alaska's food is imported via barge. E.C. Phillips (ECP) plans to address this disconnect in food distribution by keeping seafood local through community partnerships with food service, retail outlets, alternative forms of food distribution and Alaska Native organizations in the region. ECP is uniquely one of the few remaining locally owned and operated and year-round seafood processors in Alaska. Because of our local and year-round presence, we will 1) expand ECP's processing capacity through equipment, technology and efficiencies 2) double the # of seafood harvesters, 3) establish local networks to distribute new and existing value-added products to the community and 4) address food insecurity by educating residents on Native foods. The project hopes to connect local harvesters and food entrepreneurs to local markets, by revamping facilities to accommodate personal fish boxes, small, individualized orders and educational materials to teach locals how to safely handle, process and cook Alaskan seafood. By increasing traceability, consumers can know which fisherman caught their product, in what waters and aboard which vessels. Ultimately, ECP will aggregate locally caught or farmed seafood products and complete value-added processing in Southeast Alaska so locals have a way to eat local fish.

Arkansas

Recipient: Winrock International
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$750,000.00
Match Amount: \$187,500.00
Total Project Amount: \$937,500.00

Strengthening Farm to Food Assistance Value Chains: A Systems Approach to Community Food Security

The local and regional food sector's response to COVID-19 demonstrated that connecting communities experiencing food and nutrition insecurity with product from local farms is a systems-level solution that provides affordable, fresh food to the country's most vulnerable populations, supports small farm viability, and builds supply chain resiliency. The "farm to food assistance" market channel can be a consistent market for local and regional farms and food businesses, such as food hubs, but it presents similar challenges as institutional procurement—like food safety, supply chain logistics, consistency, and scale. Food hubs and local food businesses are looking to formalize and enhance their farm to food assistance value chains, aiming to increase disaster preparedness, diversify market channels, and

support community food security. To make these efforts sustainable and viable, food hubs and local food businesses need better understanding of the regulatory environment, evaluation skills, logistics expertise, technical assistance for navigating different market channels, and partnership development support. The project aims to leverage the Wallace Center's value chain development expertise and national practitioner networks to better understand this growing market channel for local and regional food businesses and build capacity in the farm to food assistance value chain, with twin goals of increasing access to this market channel for small farmers while increasing access to locally produced food for food insecure communities.

Arizona

Recipient: Barrio Grains LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$228,607.00

Match Amount: \$57,152.00

Total Project Amount: \$285,759.00

Southern Arizona Local Wheat and Flour Promotion Expansion Program

Arizona has a robust farming economy with over 26 million acres in production. Grain production represents a good portion of the farming economy with a total value of \$32 million. However, most of the grains are grown as commodity and processed in large milling facilities. The market value is relatively low. There is an opportunity in Arizona to develop a regional grain economy by promoting the production of locally grown heritage grains and then processing them through stone-mills with limited bleaching and processing of the flours. This creates value-added grain products that are healthier and more wholesome. There has been great desire from Arizona growers to expand heritage grain production, however there is a lack of available processing and packaging facility to support the increasing market demand. Barrio Grains was awarded a 2019 LFPP Planning Grant allowing Barrio Grain to explore the possibility of establishing a community-based local grain enterprise to process, aggregate, market, and distribute locally grown and processed wheat in Southern Arizona. Barrio Grains is now ready to implement the first phase of this enterprise, the goals of which are to 1) develop Southern Arizona heritage grain economy; 2) improve the economic viability of local grain producers and food business owners; 3) expand the local heritage grain market; and 4) stimulate rural/tribal economy's recovery after COVID-19. Barrio Grains' enterprise is expected to aggregate and distribute over 200,000 pounds of local grain in the first years of operation and is expected to retain or create 8-10 jobs through this endeavor.

Recipient: Prescott Farmers Market Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$344,762.20

Match Amount: \$86,408.62

Total Project Amount: \$431,170.82

Seeds for Success: Prescott Farmers Market Food Hub and Business Incubator Pilot in Central Yavapai County

The demand for locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables in Yavapai County is growing fast, and local farmers are struggling to match supply with demand. In addition, the county has seen a surge in people wanting to start or expand small food businesses; however, Yavapai County does not have a single commissary kitchen. With a current growth rate of 11.4 percent over the past 10 years, now is the critical time to help farmers and small food producers scale up to feed their community. Seeds for Success will bridge the gaps in our local food system, creating a resilient network of growers, small food businesses and institutions by 1) aggregating local produce and meats in a central location for distribution to local restaurants and institutions; 2) opening a state-of-the-art commissary kitchen to address the urgent need of food entrepreneurs; 3) developing and piloting a food business incubator program, creating an estimated 30 new careers; and 4) recruiting and supporting new and beginning farmers and ranchers to help them enter the marketplace.

California

Recipient: Valley Vision Inc.

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$173,250.00

Match Amount: \$43,920.00

Total Project Amount: \$217,170.00

Expanding the Local Food System for Yolo County through the Yolo Food Hub

Valley Vision is requesting funding under the LFPP to conduct planning activities associated with developing a local food hub to further support access to and availability of locally produced foods in Yolo County and the Greater Sacramento Region. These efforts are in direct support of Capay Valley Farm Shop, an existing food hub seeking to expand, and other partners, including Yolo Food Bank and New Season Community Development Corporation. The objectives under this project are to first bring together partners across the industry to collaboratively work toward improving the local food system through a food hub. Secondly, the project will determine the needs of local farmers and buyers that could be addressed by a food hub providing services such as value-added processing, distribution and logistics, storage, and packing. Using those needs, our third objective is to determine the operational and financial feasibility of a food hub to serve local farmers and buyers. Our final objective is to determine how a food hub could reach new institutional markets and provide direct training to support staff in reaching those markets. A focus will include connecting small, economically disadvantaged, Veteran and BIPOC farmers to new markets and to improve the resiliency of the regional food system through strengthening local supply chains, thus also contributing to the region's economic recovery from the challenging impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and lengthy stay-at-home orders.

Recipient: Country Butcher

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$150,979.00

Total Project Amount: \$650,979.00

Expanding a Local Meat Processing Food Business To Meet the Demand of Northern California Producers

Rural Northern California livestock producers are facing tremendous local supply chain challenges, crippling their ability to meet market demands for their value-added meat. There is simply not enough capacity to process, package, and store meat, causing deep losses and lost revenue opportunities for producers that threatens their viability. Country Butcher, a local meat processor and butcher shop, seeks to remedy this dire need by expanding its intermediary business operations as a USDA federally inspected meat processing, packaging, and storage facility. The purpose of this project is to expand the processing and storage capacity for locally and regionally produced meat and to encourage the development of value-added products by local and regional livestock producers. The project goal is to expand Country Butcher's local by providing critical access to USDA meat processing and storage services to an additional 40 producers in the rural Northern California region, contributing to an additional 1,870,000 pounds of meat processed and sold into local markets during the project period, directly benefitting local and regional meat producers served by this project. This project will collaborate with an astounding 24 local producers and partners including the California Association of Meat Processors; California State University, Chico; Yuba-Sutter Food Bank; Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce; Yuba-Sutter Economic Development Corporation, among others. The substantial involvement of such reputable partners demonstrates the tremendous need for this project, as well as its deep relevance to stakeholders and positive impacts on the local food system.

Recipient: Asian Business Institute and Resource Center

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$534,714.99

Match Amount: \$214,040.00

Total Project Amount: \$748,754.99

Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Communities: Mutual Support Laced Through Food Supply Chains

The proposed Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Communities: Mutual Support Laced Through Food Supply Chains project is a collaboration of 3 organizations whose goal is to assist the most socially disadvantaged farmers in Fresno County, the largest agricultural producing county in the US, to sell their produce in northern California as part of a large-scale effort to promote Southeast Asian (SEA) specialty crops. The Asian Business Institute and Resource Center will recruit and retain SEA farmers, provide business education, aggregate produce, and arrange for food safety training, GAP certifications, and transportation of crops. Saba Grocers has committed to buying and distributing SEA produce in up to 15 of 70 stores whose produce is sold at corner stores in food deserts. Slow Foods East Bay will identify buyers who want local, good quality produce for their food insecure clientele and run agritourism events

from the Bay Area to Fresno farms. Top Chefs with SEA roots and over 12,000 followers will produce recipes with crops grown by ABIRC farmers and promote them on Instagram and YouTube. These recipes will be absorbed into ABIRC's farm-to-school projects in the third largest school district, one where 100% of students receive free meals, and rural schools whose poverty rates exceed 50%. Key outcomes include food safety training and GAP certifications to increase socially disadvantaged farmers' economic viability, promotion of SEA specialty crops, fresh produce distribution in high poverty neighborhoods, recipes to promote local specialty crops, and the building of a pipeline of buyers for long-term sustainability.

Recipient: Agricultural Institute of Marin

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$675,612.05

Match Amount: \$168,903.20

Total Project Amount: \$844,515.25

Strengthening Regional Food Systems and Culturally Relevant Food Access Through Northern California Mobile Farmers' Markets

The need for flexible, responsive regional food systems in Northern California is growing, especially in the aftermath of the Covid-19 crisis. Mobile farmers markets (MFMs) are an exciting model for strengthening regional food systems, by aggregating and bringing accessible and affordable agricultural products directly to underserved communities. MFMs also have the potential to improve income and economic viability for producers by reaching new markets. With eleven years of combined experience operating MFMs across the Bay Area, the Agricultural Institute of Marin (AIM) and Fresh Approach are leveraging their knowledge to improve and expand the impact of MFMs in Northern California. The proposed project will strengthen regional MFM service by expanding areas served across Northern California, creating a coordinated marketing and promotion campaign, and establishing the region's first network of MFM operators. This new "Northern California Mobile Farmers Market Consortium" will help MFMs in Northern California share and coordinate resources, and will generate at least \$953,00 in sales for farmers, 65,151 customer transactions, and support the operation of 10 new and existing MFM enterprises. This project responds to the need for collaboration and knowledge-sharing among mobile market operators, in order to create and sustain lasting MFM programs - especially those that address the needs of food insecure consumers and support regional farmers. This work aligns with the LFPP's purpose to develop, coordinate, and expand local and regional food business enterprises and associated multi-cultural promotion of local food to shoppers.

Recipient: Community Alliance with Family Farmers

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$578,942.00

Match Amount: \$144,798.00

Total Project Amount: \$723,740.00

Bolstering Farmer-Led Aggregation in California's Central Valley and Central Coast

The project's focus is to recognize the inequities in California's food and farm system, while acknowledging the importance of creating opportunities for small and historically disadvantaged farmers to participate in food and agricultural systems. This project will activate broad, multilingual

partnerships in Central California to help small and socially disadvantaged farmers collaboratively aggregate and sell produce to diverse buyers. The farmer-led aggregation model is akin to an informal food hub and has been highly successful throughout the pandemic aiding small and socially disadvantaged producers with lower volumes to access markets. Immigrants and farmers of color comprise over 25% of all California farms yet these farmers face greater barriers to market access. This can be attributed to linguistic and cultural barriers, technological limitations, and lack of adequate access to technical assistance. We will respond by expanding farmer's capacity to access market opportunities through cooperative aggregation and sales coordination that results in long-term supply and demand relationships. Multilingual and culturally appropriate technical assistance, staffing and trainings will help the farmer-aggregators identify, plan, cooperate and collectively respond to market opportunities. Regional gatherings will create farmer-to-farmer learning and relationships that bolster resilience in historically oppressed, socially disadvantaged communities. Buyers will receive support and brokered connections. Finally, through conference presentations, video case studies, and outreach, we will share the model across state and national networks to ease model replication and scale our project. Farmer-led aggregation is a viable strategy that enables farmers to not only participate in new market opportunities but to proudly lead them.

Recipient: Mandela MarketPlace Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$440,713.90

Match Amount: \$150,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$590,713.90

Expanding Markets for Mandela Partners' BIPOC Farmer Network

Mandela Partners has been operating its in-house produce distribution hub, Mandela Produce Distribution, for the past 11 years, which directly links limited-resource sustainable farmers within 150 miles of its West Oakland hub to Mandela's healthy retail program locations. The distribution hub sources produce from 28 sustainable farmers, known as Mandela's BIPOC Farmer Network. The goal of the proposed initiative is to strengthen sales channel opportunities and markets for Mandela's BIPOC Farmer Network, and increase urban consumer demand for raw and value-added agricultural products. To do this, Mandela Partners plans to increase the Mandela Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program from two to four access points to support low access, low-income residents consume sustainably grown fruits and vegetables; develop a value-added produce product line with food e-commerce clients; and provide food safety technical assistance to strengthen competitiveness of farmers.

Recipient: Foodshed Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$451,600.00

Match Amount: \$112,900.00

Total Project Amount: \$564,500.00

Foodshed Farm Hub: Mobilizing Small Farms and Neighborhoods

Nearly 1 in 3 San Diegans experience nutritional insecurity and the number of local farms has diminished by half since 2000. Foodshed, Inc. is a farmer-owned, cooperatively run distribution company that works at the intersection of farm viability and food insecurity to create mid-tier value chain solutions and reverse these negative trends. We plan to utilize LFPP funds to transition from the subsidized emergency distribution strategy we employed during the height of the pandemic to an operational model that increases retail sales by 25% per year and ensures the products we distribute remain affordable and accessible. To achieve these outcomes, Foodshed staff will engage in conscientious planning with our network of farmers and provide technical assistance to help them achieve ambitious aggregation goals, improve distribution capacity at the Foodshed Farm Hub in central San Diego, engage community health outreach workers to conduct linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach about the value of locally grown produce in San Diego's diverse urban core, and advocate among organizational and institutional collaborators for long-term strategies that improve local food distribution infrastructure and ensure mid-tier value chain investments serve socially disadvantaged farmers and communities. At the end of the project, Foodshed, Inc. will have sufficient revenue to independently sustain operations at the Farm Hub, more than 30 small farms will have an economically viable sales channel to distribute their produce, and more than 5,000 residents of central San Diego will have improved access to fresh, local, fruits and vegetables.

Recipient: The Tides Center

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$198,894.00

Match Amount: \$50,748.00

Total Project Amount: \$249,642.00

Indigenous Farm Hub: Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Planning Grant

One Generation's Indigenous Farm Hub (IFH) is a community-based initiative serving central and northwest New Mexico that teaches Indigenous farming techniques, fosters food, cultural, and land sovereignty within Indigenous agricultural communities, provides training and technical assistance in developing business and marketing plans, and engages new and beginning farmers in work to improve access to affordable, healthy food across areas that are traditionally underserved and marginalized. Through this project, we will conduct research in the form of assessments through partner outreach, community forums, and direct engagement with the Navajo Nation areas of Shiprock and surrounding Chapters including Nenahnezad in San Juan County, Crystal in McKinley County, and rural areas of Sandoval County, in order to better understand the needs of Indigenous communities which experience food scarcity and instability, along with limited distribution markets. This research will be followed by a feasibility study that will help us determine the possible best practices for improved food distribution at

a regional level, resulting in the development of a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Distribution and Marketing Plan, including opportunities for value-added agricultural production. Our ultimate goal is to create an influx of trained and supported farmers throughout New Mexico, with outcomes including first developing new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets; then establishing and expanding a local food business enterprise through development of a cooperative regional CSA network that connects agricultural enterprises in central and northwest New Mexico, and, finally, improving access to healthy and fresh foods in communities that are under-resourced.

Recipient: Multiplier

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$750,000.00

Match Amount: \$254,250.01

Total Project Amount: \$1,004,250.01

Supply Change: Value Chain Innovations for a More Just and Resilient Northern California Marketplace

While wholesale buyers know there is consumer demand for regionally grown products, they usually rely on highly consolidated supply chains, and can be resistant to changing their procurement practices to prioritize local sourcing. Their sourcing priorities focus heavily on low costs, efficiency, scale, and predictability, which can be major barriers to entry for smaller producers. The project will benefit an estimated 270 small and midsize farms and ranches and values-aligned food hubs throughout Northern California, by increasing their connections and relationships with wholesale buyers and increasing their product sales to those buyers. The majority of the project beneficiaries are socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, most of whom are Latinx farmers, and many suffered revenue losses due to COVID-19 restaurant and business closures that disrupted wholesale markets. Project goals include fueling the long-term economic viability of small socially disadvantaged local producers, regional food hubs, and farmer-led aggregators, and increasing the availability of regionally produced sustainable and regenerative products. With this project, KTA intends to provide a model of value chain coordination coupled with targeted farm business advising that can be scaled and replicated by allies in other regions to support small producers and increase consumer access to locally produced agricultural products.

Recipient: Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$98,560.00

Match Amount: \$64,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$162,560.00

Feasibility study for Maritime Collective facility in the City of Santa Barbara's Ocean Dependent Use Zone

This project will fund a feasibility study for a Maritime Collective, a multi-faceted facility with cold storage, seafood processing, and educational programs. The Collective will support the LFPP's purpose of supporting the development, coordination, and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products. The COVID-19 crisis spotlighted the growing need for capacity to store, process, and distribute seafood locally; infrastructure was identified as a top need through a California Sea Grant assessment across California ports and seafood industry roles (C. Culver, personal communication). The Collective will give seafood

producers leverage to control the entry of products into the market, diversify seafood products, add value, and better serve small to medium size buyers, who focus on local markets and present an opportunity to increase seafood harvesters' market share. This project will support our local fishing community by expanding on existing markets, such as our weekly Fishermen's Market which takes place in the Harbor. Our port association, Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara (CFSB), has managed a boat and gear storage yard within the City's Ocean-Dependent use zone for 30+ years. We plan to lease an adjacent existing building in this zone to house the Maritime Collective's cold storage, seafood processing and educational programs. This is a planning grant and will not be used towards construction or purchase of infrastructure. This planning grant will support the stakeholder engagement, analyses, business planning and partnership development needed to raise the funds and implement our Maritime Collective enterprise. Expanding local markets has become more important since the pandemic; this project will result in a direct marketing opportunity for seafood producers that is consistent and complementary to resurgent local interest in seafood.

Recipient: North Coast Opportunities Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$667,590.00

Match Amount: \$167,235.00

Total Project Amount: \$834,825.00

MendoLake Food Hub: Broadening Customer Base, Conducting Community Outreach, Extending Geographical Reach, and Expanding Product Offerings to Serve Community Needs (BOXES) Project

Lake and Mendocino Counties farmers have been stressed by the economic woes of the past year, wildfires, and drought. North Coast Opportunities (NCO) is working with partners to support the viability of small-scale local farmers and increase access to local foods through its MendoLake Food Hub. The goals of the MendoLake Food Hub is to Broadening Customer Base, Conduct Community Outreach, Extend Geographical Reach, and Expand Product Offerings to Serve Community. The project's Needs (BOXES) are to develop resiliency and security in the local food system and ensure the viability of small-scale producers during and beyond times of disaster. The project will develop local produce boxes to sell to non-commercial individual and group customers to expand and diversify market access for local farmers, reaching 700 customers. The project will also, develop Food Hub systems and infrastructure, including warehouse and packing infrastructure and processes to increase Food Hub efficiency. The project will provide direct technical assistance (TA) to 8 producers to help them develop food safety plans and recordkeeping systems for their farm businesses, to increase their capacity to gain GAP certification, and provide group food security training to 35 farmers. The project will conduct comprehensive marketing, promotion, and community education to expand Food Hub buying by non-commercial customers, and update the Local Food Guide, to increase farm viability and consumer access to fresh local foods.

Colorado

Recipient: Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$198,112.00

Match Amount: \$50,786.00

Total Project Amount: \$248,898.00

Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Regional and Native Foods Value Chain Feasibility Study and Pilot Project

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (UMUT), headquartered in Towaoc, CO (a USDA Low Income/Low Access area), is pursuing food sovereignty, health and wellbeing, and economic resiliency through several initiatives. First, the development of a tribally owned grocery store and the launch of a Native food business incubator program. Second, the expansion of several Tribal food production projects to cultivate organic produce and heritage grain. And finally, the development of a Regional Native Food Business (RNFB). Bringing together farming, food production, processing and value-added enterprises, aggregation, retail, and distribution activities will unite a holistic, sovereign Tribal food system resulting in a generational transformation for the UMUT. This LFPP planning grant will support the development of a regional and native food supply chain through a feasibility study, implementation plan, and pilot project. It will also support the UMUT's collaboration with producers and food system organizations in the Four Corners region to source local healthy food for its members. The other initiatives to help the UMUT gain food sovereignty are being supported by other funding sources. The result of this LFPP grant will be the successful launch of a RNFB and strengthened relationships and increased sourcing of regional food products by Tribal enterprises. These are important pieces in the Tribe's goal of increasing healthy, affordable, culturally relevant food and sustainable economic opportunities for its members, leading to food sovereignty for the UMUT.

Connecticut

Recipient: Hartford Food System Inc.

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$146,572.30

Match Amount: \$52,761.25

Total Project Amount: \$199,333.55

Local Food in Hartford: Planning an Urban CSA with Aggregation

Hartford Food System, in partnership with Keney Park Sustainability Project, requests funds to plan an aggregation-based Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share program in Hartford, Connecticut. North Hartford is significantly under-served for healthy food choices, particularly high-quality produce. Surveys of residents in low-income North Hartford indicate that access to better quality fruits, vegetables, and meats are a top priority. Pilot activities during the 2022 and 2023 seasons will help us work through a detailed set of planning questions and base the plan on experience rather than expectations, setting the stage for long-term success and sustainability. We will engage both farmers and urban customers to build the plan around their needs, resulting in a detailed business plan with

break-even financial projections. The work is based on a year of research, social enterprise coaching, pre-pilot activities in 2021, and close collaboration with two organizations that work with new farmers. The CSA will aggregate fruit and vegetables from: new farmers, who are mostly people of color growing in the city, and the currently only reliable source of specialty ethnic crops; 2-3 established farms in the suburbs; and Red Tomato, a Rhode Island-based aggregator of local produce. We will include a SNAP benefit option for payment to increase the reach of the program. We believe that this CSA has the potential to add another high-quality element to the local food options, increasing the well-being of North Hartford residents.

Recipient: Brass City Harvest Inc.
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$107,775.00
Match Amount: \$54,253.00
Total Project Amount: \$162,028.00

2021 LFPP Food Hub Technology and Marketing Development Project

This project will facilitate a technology interface to address the development of multi-tier value chain sales to consumers and various sectors of the wholesale food industry, as well as create brand awareness through targeted marketing efforts for the Brass City Regional Food Hub. The project will be inclusive of a more robust consumer-based online store and wholesale customer order management system that will enable pre-registered wholesale customers to log into the appropriate website portal, review wholesale availability and pricing of locally sourced agricultural products and make the appropriate commodity selections. The project goals are to implement a technology software suite that will enable retail and multi-tier wholesale customers to efficiently place orders. The Food hub will be able to track inventory, invoice, and provide this organization with CRM [“customer relationship management”] data to track customer history and trends. Targeted marketing by a creative marketing group will be utilized to increase consumer and wholesale customer awareness to strengthen the direct-to-customer link in the food value chain offered by the Brass City Regional Food Hub. This project will allow the food hub to maintain a competitive edge against national and regional intermediaries and internet companies selling produce and value-added products whose origin often remains undisclosed to customers. These efforts will render an outcome that will enable the Brass City Regional Food Hub to increase direct-to-consumer sales by 25% and wholesale sales of Connecticut Grown produce and value-added products by more than 75%.

Recipient: Sustainable Planet, LLC
Project Type: Planning
Award Amount: \$41,600.00
Match Amount: \$10,400.00
Total Project Amount: \$52,000.00

Healthy PlanEat Online Platform To Expand Access To Food From Local Sustainable Farms

Healthy PlanEat will enhance and expand its existing online platform where farmers using sustainable growing practices and sustainable food artisans can sell food directly to local customers. There is currently a strong need for direct producer-to-consumer marketing through online platforms. Healthy PlanEat is currently working with over 20 local Connecticut farms and food artisans. The purpose of this

project is to develop new online tools and real-world practices which can be rapidly adopted by small farms so they can effectively distribute food to local customers. During this project, Healthy PlanEat will 1) create a locally focused shipping program where farmers can efficiently ship their food using the Healthy PlanEat online platform, and 2) build features for the Healthy PlanEat online platform so farms and other small businesses can host and manage local pick ups and food aggregation opportunities featuring multiple farms and food artisans. The project goal is to have 10 farms including organic farms ship food locally and to establish 10 new Healthy PlanEat food pick up locations. It is expected this project will allow farmers to increase sales and reach new customers through these innovative distribution methods enabled by technological advancements. The project will be piloted and evaluated so it can be implemented in other states beyond Connecticut. This project aims to specifically benefit smaller farms, woman-owned farms, and veteran-owned farms and result in approximately \$50,000 in local food sales.

Georgia

Recipient: Augusta Locally Grown
Project Type: Planning
Award Amount: \$199,210.00
Match Amount: \$50,000.00
Total Project Amount: \$249,210.00

Augusta Food and Health HUB

Augusta Locally Grown (ALG) seeks to connect producers to consumers at the local level. With 13 years of experience we have seen firsthand the shortfalls of our current food system and identified four primary needs: the lack of a central aggregation point, lack of business knowledge for area farmers, lack of fresh food access for low-income neighborhoods, and the disconnect between medicine and food as a healthcare solution. ALG will use funds for a feasibility study to determine best practices to increase farmer product support and community access with the availability of a new resource site, The HUB. This 35,000 sq ft building will involve expanding ALG's programs to make local food accessible and affordable in the exact same location as the Harrisburg Free Family Health Clinic. Unlike most food hubs, this space will not solely focus on wholesales but will develop innovative, health-focused sales opportunities in creative partnership with farmers, educators, value-adders and healthcare professionals. ALG's space will consist of a teaching/incubator kitchen, online market food storage, food pharmacy, and the year-round location of the area's only fresh food access point. A feasibility study will allow for a workable plan to be implemented across the market area with all stakeholders input accounted for, thus allowing us the best use of The HUB facility and partnerships. The implementation plan from the feasibility study will allow ALG to increase point of sale opportunities for producers, business access to healthy food options for vulnerable consumers, and food education for consumers.

Recipient: Georgia Organics Inc.
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$687,489.79
Match Amount: \$171,872.45
Total Project Amount: \$859,362.24

Cultivating Farmer Champions: Farm to Chef and Farm to ECE Campaign

The Cultivating Farmer Champions campaign connects and cultivates food economies through public-private partnerships, strengthens capacity and regional food system development through community collaboration, and develops marketing strategies for local food producers. Georgia Organics will build a more resilient local food system by diversifying and increasing sales from small farms in Georgia to chefs working in or outside of traditional brick-and-mortar restaurants (caterers, pop-ups, food trucks) and in early care and education (ECE) sites. We will accomplish these goals through three objectives: 1. Provide technical services in farm systems management, business planning (including diversifying income streams), food safety, and organic certification to small farms in Georgia, especially those owned by socially-disadvantaged farmers, to meet the demand and need for local, safe, consistent, and organic agricultural products in Georgia's food marketplace; 2. Strengthen local food system resiliency by cultivating a diversified market base of chefs working in or outside of brick-and-mortar restaurants and in ECE sites through an expanded Farmer Champion branding campaign that celebrates and recognizes chefs and ECE centers for purchasing from Georgia's small farms; 3. Facilitate opportunities for connection and collaboration between chefs and farmers through Farmer/Buyer events (Mix and Mingle event; Progressive Meet and Greet; direct one-on-one match making, including ECE centers; Farm Tours for Farmers and Buyers). Expanding our Farmer Champion campaign broadens the pool of chefs sourcing from farmers, increases distribution of local and organic food from Georgia producers, and addresses equity, considering the challenges faced by BIPOC and women chefs related to opening traditional restaurants.

Recipient: Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$664,177.10

Match Amount: \$187,500.00

Total Project Amount: \$851,677.10

Growing Healthy Food Access Through Public Transportation in Metro Atlanta

The Fresh MARTA Markets (FMM), a public-transit based food distribution program in Atlanta, provides convenient access to bring affordable, fresh produce into food desert communities and expands marketing and distribution opportunities for Georgia's small and medium sized farmers to sell their produce. Launched in 2015, FMM has grown to operate in five multimodal transit stations. The project provides convenient access for pedestrian and transit dependent individuals to purchase and learn to prepare healthy produce. Since 2017, we have served over 154,000 attendees and offered more than 170,000 pounds of produce. The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) operates the markets in partnership with Community Farmers Markets (CFM) and support from Open Hand Atlanta, Wholesome Wave GA, Urban Recipe and local growers. Under this federal funding request, the FMM will enhance sustainability for local farms and food enterprises and grow consumer access by 1) expanding market opportunities linked to public transportation targeting low income (LI) low access (LA) areas, 2) increase consumption and support the regional food economy through aggregation, distribution, and education, 3) strengthening farmer economic viability and organizational capacity; and 4) disseminating findings and models based on this work. During this grant, FMM will serve 250,000+ attendees and source \$100,000 of produce from local farms. This project is ongoing, has enhanced its sustainability, and will expand operations through September 30, 2024.

Recipient: The Common Market Georgia Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$739,352.40

Match Amount: \$89,250.00

Total Project Amount: \$828,602.40

Connecting Southeast Farms to Anchor Institutions

The Common Market Georgia is a 501(c)3 nonprofit local food distributor founded in 2016 with a mission to connect communities with good food from sustainable family farms in the Southeast. We achieve our mission by working as an intermediary in indirect producer to consumer marketing to increase access to and availability of local food. Food arrives from regional farms and is stored and packed in Common Market's Atlanta warehouse to be delivered to our customers' loading docks on our refrigerated trucks. Each day, cases of fresh produce, meats and dairy leave our warehouse destined for school lunches, hospital meals and college cafeterias in the region. The twin health and economic crises of the past year revealed the importance of local food sourcing, its affordability, and the supply chains to make it possible. We seek to expand our farm to institution model to new schools, colleges, and hospitals in the Southeast, increasing the visibility and community benefit of local food systems. The "Connecting Southeast Farms to Anchor Institutions" project seeks to build on our 5+ years of experience facilitating regional food chain coordination in Atlanta to forge new and deeper value chains with institutions throughout Georgia and Alabama. We aim to work with at least 35 farmers, ranchers and processors in GA and AL; increase the seasonal availability of produce; and harness the buying power of institutions in Atlanta and Birmingham metros and generate \$2 million in annual sales of local farm food by the end of the grant.

Recipient: UGROW Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$745,500.00

Match Amount: \$187,500.00

Total Project Amount: \$933,000.00

Local Food, UGROW, Inc. Food and Wellness Hub Initiative

UGROW Inc dba The Food Mill built a collaborative operating model that includes an ecosystem of like-minded businesses, nonprofits, organizations, and individuals each working to address the inequities of the Columbus, Georgia food system. The Food Mill requests an LFPP implementation grant to activate components of our Food and Wellness Hub that will support markets for local producers and small food businesses and improve access for Columbus' food insecure. The project will activate two new sales channels for local producers that will increase access for low-income individuals - A Food Hub and indoor Farmer's Market open six days a week and a Mobile Market. This will 1). Local producers will increase produce sales, 2). Low-income residents will be able to use their SNAP benefits to purchase produce in areas that are currently considered food deserts; and 3). Residents will learn the benefits of seasonal buying. Build out a Shared Kitchen Space that will strengthen small food businesses and access to local food. This will 1). Small food businesses will be able to plan for growth with access to a state-certified kitchen; 2). Feeding agencies will be able to increase the preparation and distribution of prepared meals; 3). Entrepreneurs can participate in culinary incubator classes for business development and other mentoring/technical assistance; and 4). Residents will learn how to prepare

seasonal produce. Lastly, develop and educate the next generation of food entrepreneurs on principles concerning nutrition, healthy eating, food safety and fresh local food sourcing through a partnership with a local public school. This will result in 1). Youth will learn healthy eating habits, principles strategies of sourcing local foods, and food safety; and 2). Youth will learn about food system careers through a hands-on curriculum. 3.) Community members will have access to shared kitchen space to produce small business products and testing for recipes. Funds will not be utilized for gardening or production related activities, although STEAM education will be involved in our organizational programming in a separate department.

Hawaii

Recipient: Sustainable Molokai

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$199,890.00

Match Amount: \$60,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$259,890.00

‘Umeke ‘Ai O Molokai: Food Hub Facility for the island of Molokai

Sustainable Molokai (SM) is seeking funding to do the background work to build a Food Hub and Food Bank facility to support the needs of Molokai’s local food system. Almost every island in Hawai’i has dedicated food hub and food bank facilities; Molokai does not—instead, elements of our food hub activities operate out of multiple locations in association with smaller facilities owned by others and with limitations on our access. Since 2019, SM has produced new farmers and producers through its farmer training programs, which has increased food production through our food hub and food bank activities. With the impact of the pandemic, more of our residents rely on food bank distributions—as do our food producers as a secondary sales channel for excess products. For the last five years, SM has considered a dedicated food hub facility, but only now sees the volume of demand, production, and distribution that warrants active planning to that goal. Therefore, this project aims to complete a needs assessment, feasibility study, site assessment, conceptual design and programming, and architectural design for a dedicated facility. This facility intends to support local farmers, value-added producers, local consumers, those in need, and creation of new food business enterprises. SM’s connections to the Hawai’i Good Food Alliance and Hawai’i Food Hub Hui will also play a role in securing funding for the eventual construction of the facility as both organizations are working to raise money to fund food hubs around the state.

Recipient: Adaptations Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$581,460.00

Match Amount: \$155,628.00

Total Project Amount: \$737,088.00

Adaptations Food Hub Expansion: Increasing local agricultural product aggregation and distribution for markets in the state of Hawaii

Adaptations is a USDA certified organic farm and regional food hub operation on Hawai'i Island that aggregates, stores, distributes, markets, and supplies local food to markets across the State of Hawai'i. The food hub will scale its operations through the proposed USDA LFPP project to increase aggregation and storage capacity at its newly acquired warehouse facility as well as improve coordination and relationships with producers and consumers to increase sales and market share. By the end of the project, Adaptations expects to increase sales to at least \$1 million annually and source local produce and value-added local food products from at least 180 small and mid-sized farms, generating at least \$600,000 in payments for producers each year. Adaptations is a founding member of the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui network, which will be used as a platform to share project results, exchange information, and enhance cooperation among 12 community-based food hubs statewide.

Recipient: Counter Culture, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$748,857.00

Match Amount: \$200,060.00

Total Project Amount: \$948,917.00

Farm Link Hawaii: Expand Online Grocery Technology, Inter-Island Transportation Network, And Farmer Outreach To Increase The State of Hawaii's Local Food Production And Consumption

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerated both a consumer shift to buying groceries online and an already-growing consumer demand for local food. The demand for local food is largely unmet at Hawaii's grocery stores—where consumers do the majority of their shopping. And, since online grocery firms, such as Amazon/Whole Foods and Instacart, operate on top of the same broken supply chain models and brick-and-mortar retail stores, their online offerings similarly exclude products from local small and medium-size farms and ranches. In the midst of this revolution of consumer convenience, there is an opportunity to develop a new model that is inclusive of small and medium-size local food producers. New software technology has emerged that can empower local and regional food aggregators to enter the online grocery arena and provide customers with convenience, reduce the logistical burden of procuring from many small producers, and gain deeper insights into unmet consumer demand—something not possible in the physical grocery store. The proposed project builds upon Farm Link Hawaii's pioneering work over the past five years as Hawaii's leading online local food marketplace and transportation network. As a result of this project, Farm Link Hawaii will implement cutting-edge online grocery technology to increase market opportunities for local producers, expand neighbor island freight consolidation services to reduce cost of shipping to the Oahu market, and increase Hawaii producers' access to market demand data to help them target their productions and reduce food waste.

Idaho

Recipient: FARE Idaho

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$58,013.00

Match Amount: \$5,801.30

Total Project Amount: \$63,814.30

Nose to Tail--A Multispecies Whole Carcass and Sub-primal Processing and Promotional Training Program.

The pandemic has disrupted national and regional meat supply chains, increasing meat prices and affecting reliable availability. These disruptions have reduced or eliminated specialty and value-added products, deeply impacting livestock producer's businesses and livelihood. To relieve pressure on local meat processing facilities in Idaho, caused by the pandemic and the labor shortage, FARE Idaho will administer eight interactive, educational in-person trainings that will be recorded in real-time and turned into a video series for participants to review following each training. Each in-person training will provide the steps from start to finish for butchering whole, multispecies (hog, lamb, goat, poultry, fish, and sub primal and primal cuts of beef) carcasses in-house. Each training will have technical assistance focused on: marketing unique meat cuts, utilizing all parts of the animal- from nose to tail including offal meats and rendered fat. Training will also focus on reducing meat waste and supporting, promoting, and increasing livestock producer's profitability through relationship building, marketing, and the direct sales to chefs, meat markets, and restaurants. Each recorded training will serve to supplement the training and will be housed on the resource page of FARE Idaho's website. These videos will be a resource that can be referred to by chefs, aspiring butchers, ranchers, and livestock producers, and will be free for public use. Additionally, this project will serve to develop a network of interested producers, processors, and consumers; and create the necessary resource bank to build communities within and between the livestock producers and the restaurant communities.

Illinois

Recipient: FamilyFarmed

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$544,929.00

Match Amount: \$188,563.00

Total Project Amount: \$733,492.00

Market Readiness for Local Farmers and Growers

Market Readiness for Local Farmers and Growers works to train, develop, and expand local and regional food businesses in the Chicago metro area by equipping farmers and growers with accessible farmer training, financial planning tools, market access and readiness education, and food safety resources. FamilyFarmed provides this through a multi-pronged approach that seeks to meet local and regional food businesses "where they are." Our Farmer Training program brings together farmers and growers for intensive yet accessible Farmer Training workshops, led by our expert FamilyFarmed team. These

workshops provide local farm businesses with the tools and resources to compete in an ever-evolving local food landscape, teaching best practices for operations, financial resilience, and food safety protocols. For local food businesses seeking a broader outlook, FamilyFarmed has launched the Farmer Training Accelerator. Providing a two-month cohort-based program, the Accelerator provides business training focusing on Marketing and Distribution, Manufacturing and Production, Financials and Funding, and the creation of value-added products for increased revenue potential. The third element of the program works to provide greater resources to Spanish-speaking local and regional food businesses. By translating our Whole Success and Direct Market Success manual, Spanish-speaking farmers and growers will now have access to the resources that have been the foundation of our successful Farmer Training program for decades. With this multi-pronged approach, the Market Readiness for Local Farmers and Growers program will train, develop, and expand local and regional food businesses in the Chicago metro area.

Recipient: Central Illinois Farm-Fresh Enterprise Development Cooperative

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$189,565.60

Match Amount: \$50,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$239,565.60

Bridging the Gap Between Local Farmers and Consumers in Central Illinois through a Cooperative Food Processing Facility

The Central Illinois Farm-Fresh Enterprise Development Cooperative (FarmFED Co-op) will fill a critical need in our region by connecting rural producers with institutional and retail buyers in Central Illinois through the processing and freezing of local produce. The region has seen steady growth in fresh produce output by small and mid-scale growers in recent years, but despite its rich agricultural resources, Central Illinois lacks the infrastructure for local growers to reach larger buyers within our region, limiting their business growth and also restricting access to high-quality fresh food by their own community members. A planning process was begun in March 2020 to determine the structure, opportunities, and hurdles of a facility that would freeze bulk produce from local growers and make it available to institutional buyers in Central Illinois. Now, with a cooperative formed to put this plan into action, FarmFED Co-op seeks funding to complete its planning process as it prepares to begin operations in 2023, gathering and analyzing information critical to the sustainability of the cooperative. Project outcomes will include a completed plan to promote the cooperative; a landscape analysis that will identify the Central Illinois market for frozen local produce beyond our initial targeted research; a detailed design and purchasing plan needed to build out and operate an efficient, food-safe, fresh produce processing facility; a protocol for ensuring transparency of values-based characteristics of produce, an analysis of the facility's food safety needs, and the establishment of contracts with growers and buyers for the facility's inaugural season.

Recipient: McHenry County College

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$84,150.00

Match Amount: \$23,980.00

Total Project Amount: \$108,130.00

McHenry County College: Campus-Based Food Hub Feasibility Study

McHenry County College (MCC) requests an LFPP Planning grant to complete a feasibility study to determine a food hub model that will strengthen the local food system. The Center for Agrarian Learning (CAL) at MCC provides non-credit community education in farm viability. CAL operates a greenhouse and farm as part of its programming and has a vision for adding a food hub to aggregate products grown on campus and from area farms to create a year-round sales channel for local producers. An Entrepreneurial Agriculture degree program offers a credit-based training option for beginning farmers, and those students would also benefit from a food hub on campus by direct experience in aggregation and food safety. The concept was developed after a thorough needs assessment of the county environment uncovered a lack of infrastructure for small-to-medium sized producers looking to increase production or venture into wholesale markets. The program will be one of the few campus-based food hubs in the U.S. training the next generation of food system professionals with real-world experience from production to wholesale, and potentially retail. To accomplish this project, MCC will create a strong, diverse planning team to guide the process that will include local farmers, wholesale distributors, and other community stakeholders that share in the vision. At the conclusion of the project, MCC will select an operating model that best supports the findings from the study and prepare for the implementation phase.

Iowa

Recipient: Iowa Farmers Union Education Foundation

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$296,203.05

Match Amount: \$75,752.00

Total Project Amount: \$371,955.05

Growing Local Food for Iowa - Feeding Iowa's Children and Improving Local Food Education

Core partners such as the Iowa Farmers Union, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and SPPG have been working to improve Iowa's local food systems through research, support programs, education, policy, and advocacy. These partners have jumpstarted the growth in demand for local products by targeting education and support efforts to childcare homes and centers, as well as increasing supply by connecting with and supporting the five Iowa food hubs. While demand for local product has grown, there is still room to expand to more communities. This requires continued outreach to smaller institutions, further supports to food hubs for transportation and the beginning of a larger, state-wide education and marketing campaign. Through these three activities, the Growing Local Food for Iowa project will stimulate demand to create more supply and encourage Iowa producers to participate in the local food system. Activities for this project include the expansion of the current "teacher box" program through Iowa food hubs to serve eighty new sites. Research into piloting a new "drop site" program and finally generating reports on capital and other resources saved through this pilot program. This project also begins greater outreach to Iowa citizens, by researching, developing, and implementing a state-wide education and marketing campaign to advertise local product availability, seasonality, and where local product can be purchased. This project is expected to serve over 300,000 Iowans through existing and new partnerships.

Recipient: Resource Conservation and Development for Northeast Iowa Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$483,647.57

Match Amount: \$48,364.76

Total Project Amount: \$532,012.33

Revitalizing Northeast Iowa Orchards: Assisting Farmers And Businesses by Developing A Strategic Marketing Campaign and Providing Access to A Mobile Juice Press

Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) works with partners from throughout our region to explore natural resource based economic development opportunities while at the same time protecting and enhancing natural resources. This project aims to create economic opportunities for rural Northeast Iowa producers by providing emerging and expanding orchard owners access to an Orchard Education and Training Initiative, Driftless Area Branding Campaign, and access to a mobile juice press and trained operators. This project builds upon conversations to allow rural producers to overcome barriers and have an opportunity to sell to cider makers (Convergence Cidery), local food enterprises (Oneota Co-op, Iowa Food Hub, and Decorah Farmers Market), and other regional stakeholders. As a result, small family farms in rural Iowa will be able maximize their production capacity by utilizing 2nds and “defective” apples/pears that previously had no revenue value. The increased economic potential will lead to more orchard owners being able to maintain and expand their operations, thereby allowing for the long-term sustainability of these orchards past the lifetime of the grant and expanding consumer access to locally produced food in the Driftless Area.

Kansas

Recipient: Prairieland Food Coop Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$222,212.04

Match Amount: \$104,598.32

Total Project Amount: \$326,810.36

Prairieland Market: Expanding Capacity, Increasing Demand, and Improving Access to Local Food in North Central Kansas

Located at the crossroads of Kansas, Saline County has long been an area that has shown great interest in locally-grown and organic foods. Though the interest is evident (based on previous market studies, and needs assessment), there is a significant need for a stronger connection between local farmers, consumers, and the food insecure areas of the community. Specifically, there is a need for an expanded well-organized local food distribution system. Prairieland Market is well-positioned to bring together and connect those elements by expanding capacity and providing enhanced marketing throughout the area, resulting in engaging more farmers and providing more local foods to consumers. The goals of this project are to increase access to local food and to expand capacity to meet the needs and demand in Saline County and the neighboring counties in north central Kansas. To accomplish these goals, we will develop a comprehensive marketing plan, increase the number of participants and variety of offerings in our CSA program, and provide more prepared foods made with local meats, cheese, eggs, and produce. This project will connect local growers to consumers by implementing a strategic marketing plan to build

awareness and consumption of local foods in north central Kansas; support the processing, aggregation, distribution, and storage of local and regional food products marketed locally by creating an expanded, well-organized local food distribution system through its CSA program and retail store featuring prepared foods.

Kentucky

Recipient: The Kentucky Horticulture Council Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$630,894.07

Match Amount: \$206,248.00

Total Project Amount: \$837,142.07

Reducing food loss through post-harvest improvements and market expansion

Kentucky's fruit and vegetable operations are expanding rapidly, increasing 46% between 2012 and 2017, and generating a market value of almost \$160 million. With high local demand and high potential grower returns – especially on small acreages – specialty crops are increasingly attractive and profitable enterprises for Kentucky farm families. Significant barriers exist that reduce economic potential, including the critical issue of food product loss and food waste and the complexities of navigating intermediated marketing channels. This project focuses on reducing post-harvest product loss through improved practices and technologies and preparing growers for new market channels through Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification and on-boarding. The Kentucky Horticulture Council, the University of Kentucky, Cultivate Kentucky, the Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association, the Kentucky State Horticulture Society, Local Food Connection, and other stakeholders will partner to provide direct technical assistance, educational programs, and innovative tools and resources to help prospective and established specialty crop growers reduce post-production losses and enter new markets. Specifically, 2,500 growers will participate in general educational programs and 100 in GAP-specific programs; 250 growers will receive direct technical assistance to improve sales through post-harvest marketing improvements and 80 growers will receive GAP certification technical assistance, with 12 completing an on-boarding program after completing a third-party audit. Expected outcomes include better educated prospective, new, and experienced produce growers as well as increased capacity and expanded markets for Kentucky produce growers and regional food businesses. These improvements will increase access to and availability of fruit and vegetable products grown in Kentucky.

Maine

Recipient: The Sustainability Lab d/b/a Fork Food Lab

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,785.00

Match Amount: \$304,288.00

Total Project Amount: \$1,054,073.00

Fork Food Lab 2.0: Providing Technical Assistance to Scale Local Food Companies

Since its launch in 2016, Fork Food Lab has facilitated the startup and scale-up of 120 enterprises, including food producers, caterers, food trucks, new product lines, and cooking classes and competitions. As Maine's only commercial kitchen incubator, Fork has reached full capacity. Through a USDA Implementation Grant, we will execute Fork Food Lab 2.0, an expansion that will help us 1) scale up our internal systems to support 75 members; 2) create new value-added services, including cooperative purchasing and centralized marketing; 3) become USDA-certified for meat processing; 4) create a table-top manufacturing and packaging layout that will position members for wholesale production; 5) develop Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, HACCP plans that reflect best practices in food safety; and 6) provide new educational and culinary programming for Fork members. By expanding the capacity of Fork Food Lab, this USDA Implementation Grant will facilitate the development of value-added products from \$1 million in Maine fish, meat, dairy, eggs, grains, and produce, resulting in the creation of 246 jobs and \$17 million in economic impact by 2025.

Recipient: Maine Organic Milk Company, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$646,663.00

Match Amount: \$162,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$808,663.00

Maine Organic Milk for Maine People

Milk represents Maine's second most valuable agricultural product. While all of Maine's dairy farmers face viability challenges, the nearly 1/3 of commercial-scale dairy farms selling into the organic market face additional challenges, as none of the national organic processors operate in-state processing. These producers' are especially vulnerable to processors' shifting market and supply strategies and/or corporate sales and mergers. In 2018, several organic dairy farms in Maine were dropped by their processor. This prompted Maine Farmland Trust to apply for and receive a 2018 LFPP Planning grant to assess the feasibility of launching a Maine organic milk brand to build consumer loyalty and demand for Maine-made organic milk. The study, guided by an advisory panel of producers concluded there is high consumer interest in a Maine organic milk brand. The study also determined that processing infrastructure and milk supply logistics support a new brand launch. As a result, in 2021, the Maine Organic Milk Company LLC (MOM Co.) was founded. This project will fill a void in the marketplace for Maine-branded organic dairy products ensuring a market driven need for Maine's organic dairy farms. MOM Co., made up of four farmers who participated in the original advisory panel, will source milk from CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley (Maine's largest organic processor) who will then transport the raw milk using their in-state trucking mechanism (M.A. Haskell Trucking) to Pineland Farms Dairy Company in Bangor, where it will be co-packed into fluid milk and cheese products branded as Maine Organic Milk Company to be distributed through 39 retail accounts across Maine.

Recipient: Community Shellfish Company, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$419,848.50

Match Amount: \$148,287.50

Total Project Amount: \$568,136.00

"Merroir - The Taste Of Maine's Seafood" Merroir. A Marketing Plan Using Custom Video & New Media Technology to Bring Consumers Closer to Their Seafood Source

Merroir.me is a new brand experience bringing customers' closer to their seafood and the people who harvest it. Deep storytelling through original videos will educate the shopper and create a new selling environment to promote Maine sea farmers and fishermen and the wild fish they harvest at sea. Initially, Merroir.me will stimulate market development in Connecticut and Providence, RI by creating a promotional marketing effort which introduces local buyers to Maine's seafood products while expanding awareness and demand for wild-catch and farm-raised Maine seafood. Under this project we will launch a new website and mobile app to educate customers and direct them to a local participating fish counter in 26 Connecticut towns and Providence, RI to purchase the freshest seafood from Maine. The website will be supported by a marketing launch and social media advertising plan to generate awareness, create a group of passionate and culinary minded consumers, and drive in-store purchases.

This marketing plan incorporates a "loyalty shopper" program. Fifty videos about individual Maine sea harvesters will be produced; 100 video recipes using Maine's seafood will be produced and made available through the site. This plan will promote Maine's local seafood and aquaculture enterprises, providing value-added and return a greater portion of each sale back to the harvester, fisherfolk and seafarmers.

Maryland

Recipient: M3 Coop Feasibility, LLC

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$196,563.40

Match Amount: \$26,880.00

Total Project Amount: \$223,443.40

Building a Mid-Atlantic Meat and Milk Cooperative

The Mid-Atlantic region faces unique challenges in food security such as food production, particularly livestock production, declines while the population continues to grow. The pandemic raised awareness of the importance of a decentralized food system and increased the demand for local food connections. There is growing consumer interest in supporting conservation-based agriculture and small, diversified farms. However, these farmers have difficulty satisfying this demand due to the scale inequalities. The goal of this project is to connect regional producers to the large consumer market in nearby cities through the creation of a cooperative (M3 Coop). M3 Coop will aggregate products from its members in an effort to overcome existing barriers through shared governance, processing, marketing and distribution, education, and technical support – issues each farm must now face alone. This grant project will explore the feasibility and potential profitability to farmer-members of forming an

agricultural cooperative to meet the market opportunity. Serving in the vital role as mid-tier value-added aggregator, M3 Coop will catalyze the evolution of the Mid-Atlantic food system and increase the economic viability of small dairy and livestock farming in the region while increasing the resilience of the regional food system. This project will allow the nascent M3 Coop to hire a project director to bring farmers into the coop, build the organizational structure, and establish protocols and essential food-chain relationships. The Cooperative will also hire an expert consultant to conduct a feasibility study and business analysis.

Recipient: Steward Foundation Inc.

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$197,064.00

Match Amount: \$20,654.00

Total Project Amount: \$217,718.00

Planning for a Pacific Aquaculture Marketing and Innovation Center to Grow and Strengthen the Pacific Northwest's Local and Regional Aquaculture Producers

Aquaculture is one of the fastest growing food-producing subsectors globally, yet the United States has fallen behind, ranking 17th globally in terms of production, and importing 90% of our seafood consumption. Moreover, the entire west coast of the United States is home to only 9% of all aquaculture farms in the country. To address this disadvantage, the Steward Foundation, in conjunction with our three Partner Organizations, the Oregon Aquaculture Association (OAA), Northwest Aquaculture Alliance (NWA), and California Aquaculture Alliance (CAA), is seeking grant support to begin formally planning the Pacific Aquaculture Marketing and Innovation Center (PAMIC). Establishing such a Center would provide important new support for local and regional aquaculture producers and food businesses in the Pacific northwest – aiding business formation, accelerating growth, creating jobs and better serving regional consumers. As a planning grant, expected outcomes include the explication of community needs through a stakeholder survey and needs assessment, identification of the physical infrastructure requirements for such a Center to meet those needs, and the development of business and marketing plans for the formation of the Pacific Aquaculture Marketing and Innovation Center (PAMIC).

Recipient: Wholesome Harvest Co-op

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,141.00

Match Amount: \$193,821.00

Total Project Amount: \$942,962.00

Wholesome Harvest Co-op: Regenerating and Integrating Economic-Food Systems in Northern Appalachia

The local food community in the Western Maryland region is emerging from the substantial upheaval caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic. Wholesome Harvest Co-op (WHC) is a consumer cooperative grocery store and commercial kitchen in a rural multi-county and tri-state region, designated as Low Income and Low Food Access by the USDA Economic Research Service. WHC opened in late 2018 and was still establishing itself in the community when the pandemic hit. With the support of previous LFPF funds, WHC remained open for much of the pandemic. However, revenue dropped substantially and

WHC was faced with the same challenges as other small local businesses. This project will support the economic and social recovery of the local food community through our collectively owned retail/kitchen space. WHC will build on accomplishments of its previous LFFP grant by increasing member-owner and consumer engagement in local food networks, strengthening vendor relationships and local food supply chains, and increasing entrepreneurial activity by leveraging the commercial kitchen as a resource. Since 2018, WHC has become a recognizable name in the local food community by more than doubling our number of member owners, nearly tripling the number of local agricultural vendors, and making healthy food more accessible to SNAP beneficiaries. We are confident that with LFFP implementation funding we will continue to build strong partnerships and revenue streams to fuel economic sustainability for the local food future in Northern Appalachia.

Massachusetts

Recipient: Boston Area Gleaners Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$446,543.00

Match Amount: \$118,258.00

Total Project Amount: \$564,801.00

Local Food Promotion by Boston Food Hub Benefits Area Growers and Food Businesses

The traditional gleaning model used by Boston Area Gleaners has been successful at reducing on-farm food waste, but is limited by its reactive nature and its reliance upon farmers continuing to subsidize the hunger-relief sector through donation. Our Boston Food Hub program, started in 2018, is designed to support our regional farms by activating an in-depth aggregation, distribution, storage, and marketing model that focuses on system-wide creative solutions that prioritize the economic resilience of our regional farms. This food hub is unique in that we source and market surplus produce that growers cannot sell, otherwise known as on-farm food waste. Our current focus is to increase sales through properly staffing our sales and operations teams. This project aims to: cultivate and facilitate regional food chain coordination in rural and urban Eastern Massachusetts, create new business opportunities for growers that reduce on-farm food waste, and increase local food availability and access for consumer-serving local and regional food business enterprises. We intend to reach 61 project beneficiaries who produce and/or utilize locally produced agricultural products. Boston Food Hub aims to increase customers by 97% and sales of local and regional products by 116%. 71 farms will report an increase in revenue, and seven jobs will be maintained or created. Importantly, Boston Food Hub will increase the volumes of fresh, local produce moving from regional farms to consumers by 1,100,000 pounds over the project period, emphasizing service to low income and low access consumer-facing food business enterprises in Eastern Massachusetts.

Recipient: Berkshire Agricultural Ventures

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$498,068.00

Match Amount: \$49,807.00

Total Project Amount: \$547,875.00

Expanding Urban and Rural Access to Local Food and Creating Year Round Markets for Local Food Producers Using Farm to Home Distribution Strategies

Berkshire Agricultural Ventures (BAV) is an experienced technical and financial assistance provider helping farms and food enterprises improve and scale their businesses in the Berkshire-Taconic regional food system of Massachusetts, New York, and Connecticut. In the proposed 3-year implementation project, BAV will partner with Berkshire Organics, a local food hub and online food marketplace, to grow sales for local producers and improve access to local foods for customers. With BAV's support, Berkshire Organics can better meet the needs of local producers by providing year-round sales opportunities through an online marketplace and home delivery service that can address accessibility barriers for customers, such as transportation, work and life schedule conflicts, and local food affordability. The goals of the project are to: 1) improve profitability of an existing local food hub and online marketplace, Berkshire Organics, to increase its capacity for local food purchasing and distribution; 2) strengthen Berkshire Organics' staffing and resources to improve operations and increase purchasing of local food; 3) strengthen partnerships with local producers to increase local food supply and support producer profitability; 4) market and promote local food products to increase access, awareness, and sales of local food; and 5) improve local food access for low-income, low-access households. The final outcomes will increase annual local food sales from \$700,000 to \$1,038,580 for Berkshire Organics, which will directly grow the revenue for 80 producers and promote local food to 16,277 people.

Recipient: World Farmers Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,211.41

Match Amount: \$214,172.82

Total Project Amount: \$963,384.23

Expanding Sales for Immigrant and Refugee Farmers and Increasing Food Access for Low Income Families through New Market Opportunities

This project will support and facilitate sales for the 322+ immigrant and refugee farmers in our Flats Mentor Farm (FMF) program through several market channels. Through this project, World Farmers will increase sales of locally-grown cultural crops to diverse communities and consumers, increase accessibility of cultural crops to low-income communities, facilitate development of new cultural value-added products, and overall expand aggregation, processing, and distribution efforts to increase sale of locally- and immigrant-grown crops and food products throughout Massachusetts. Building on previous successes and lessons learned, World Farmers will achieve this by fostering growth of farmer capacities, developing new market opportunities including those of value-added products, refining World Farmers' and FMF farmers' market promotion strategies both digital and print, and increase adoption of our state-administered food safety program widely recognized by institutional buyers. Our overarching goal is to increase sales of cultural crops locally grown by immigrant farmers, for immigrant communities. Our outcomes are to increase the sales and profits of local immigrant and refugee farmers while ensuring each farmer has secure and stable markets in place, and to facilitate access to and sales of fresh, local, and culturally important produce to marginalized cultural communities in Massachusetts.

Michigan

Recipient: Mighty Fine Poultry Processing, LLC

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$200,000.00

Match Amount: \$20,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$220,000.00

Expanding the Local Meat Economy by Linking Meat Processing with Distribution in SE Michigan

Bringing local meat products from farm to market is a significant challenge. Local poultry is especially problematic because of a lack of fee-for-service USDA-inspected processing options for independent producers, with only 30 such businesses remaining in the entire country, and even fewer dedicated distribution efforts to bring local poultry products to market. Solving the problem is complicated, since small poultry processing facilities that only do the work of slaughter and processing rarely make enough to cover costs. Thus, new business models for small-scale, USDA-inspected, fee-for-service poultry processing efforts are badly needed. Mighty Fine Poultry Processing has proposed that one possible solution is to build small processing facilities near populated areas, where there exists an opportunity to add onsite retail as well as external distribution channels to create a financially feasible overall effort. This project seek funding seek funding to (1) address the detailed design and function of the onsite market and market kitchens, (2) develop external distribution channels, (3) develop food safety plans, (4) develop site plans, (5) document design changes in facility plans, (6) publish the design, and food safety documents produced here, and (7) to conduct an independent feasibility study.

Recipient: Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$607,115.00

Match Amount: \$161,860.00

Total Project Amount: \$768,975.00

Operationalizing Best Practices for Local and Regional Value Chains

Program partners throughout the US, and many in Michigan, have spent decades developing initiatives to support local and regional food producers access steady, high-volume markets of institutional food service providers (IFSP), via food safety certification assistance, value chain coordination, and promotion. ValleyHUB at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), a social enterprise farm and food hub, an active partner in this work, has experienced firsthand the challenges both growers and IFSPs have in increasing capacity. KVCC requests funding to continue ValleyHUB's work to support farm-to-institution supply chains in Southwest Michigan, and to fill gaps that have been identified from our work. We propose continuing our outreach and marketing work with institutional and retail buyers but shifting the focus of our farm food safety work to a flexible, responsive approach that provides the appropriate level of food safety assurance for the farm size and customer type. We will add an additional focus on workforce development, training, and capacity building for IFSP staff to increase the demand for local and regionally produced agricultural products. This project will grow KVCC ValleyHUB's throughput of locally and regionally produced food products from \$330k to at least \$750k annually and establish a sustainable level of operations to continue to provide ongoing educational opportunities.

Minnesota

Recipient: Renewing The Countryside II

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$740,328.00

Match Amount: \$186,504.00

Total Project Amount: \$926,832.00

Fortify and Multiply Farmers' Markets Hubs to improve Community Health and Farm Viability

This project will create functional and efficient connections between small-scale local farmers, institutional and wholesale buyers, consumers, and those suffering from food insecurity. Aggregation programs create opportunities for farmers to access local buyers, increase profits, and grow sustainable businesses, while providing buyers with expanded local product choices. By developing and expanding ten Farmers' Market Hubs in Minnesota, aggregation of product, online ordering, and utilization of farmers' markets help overcome wholesale barriers, including buyers' needs for product volume and consistency, online ordering capacity, regular delivery, compliance with food handling regulations, and reducing cost. Farmers gain efficiencies through group marketing, licensing, insurance, invoicing, and order management without added costs of a brick and mortar food hub. Renewing the Countryside, MN Farmers' Market Assn, MN Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, MN Dept of Agriculture, MN Statewide Health Improvement Partnership Coordinators, local farmers' markets, and others will build on five years of preliminary work to develop and expand our Farmers' Market Hub model to five new Hubs and further develop five existing Hubs. We expect that 240 farmers will gain the potential to increase the amount of local food sold and consumed within 10 communities. 800 food insecure individuals, including those homebound, in treatment centers and seniors, will gain access to local food through subsidized Market Share boxes. Over 60 schools, hospitals, retail establishments, health and human services entities will participate in purchasing and serving local food.

Missouri

Recipient: Root Cellar Grocer, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$588,421.00

Match Amount: \$213,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$801,421.00

Adapting the Mid-Missouri Local Food System to a Post Pandemic Market

Consumers are demanding more online ordering and delivery options in their grocery buying experience. Hyper-consolidated mega-grocers are racing to meet that demand. Food hub networks provide a critical alternative to link local producers with consumers wanting to purchase food that meets their values and lifestyle. The project will create a necessary connection for local food producers without the resources and skills to deliver those advanced consumer experiences. The project will take an entire supply chain coordination approach. The project team will focus on recruiting new farms, processors, and value-added producers in partnership with a land management focused non-profit. In

addition, the team will prioritize eliminating barriers, improving coordination, and telling farmer/vendor stories throughout the supply network, including a partnership with a small business development shared kitchen. A mobile, consumer-facing digital app will be developed to ensure an expanded and resilient market for the growing list of locally produced products. The application will streamline and personalize subscriptions and orders for delivery or curbside pickup from Root Cellar, a well-established local food hub. Additionally, the project will utilize a variety of media channels to promote and expand the purchase of locally grown and processed foods.

New Mexico

Recipient: Three Sisters Kitchen

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,898.51

Match Amount: \$187,475.00

Total Project Amount: \$937,373.51

Three Sisters Kitchen: Nourishing New Local Value-Added Food Producers

Located in downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico (NM), Three Sisters Kitchen is a multi-use community food space with two commercial test kitchens for value-added food business training and incubation, product formula development, and small-batch production; a Local Foods Shop and Café for retail sales and consumer engagement; a Community Dining Room for meals and events; and a demonstration kitchen for community foods education. In NM, where 3% of foods consumed are locally grown, small producers and aspiring value-added food entrepreneurs need access to commercial kitchen space (for research, development, and processing), technical assistance (to ensure food safety, regulatory compliance, and concept viability), new market channels (to grow and diversify sales), marketing support (to effectively reach new consumers), and financial management support (to sustainably grow their businesses). The purpose of this project is to increase local food markets and market opportunities for new value-added food businesses. The program connects food entrepreneurs with processing space and technical assistance, local producers, industry mentors, and regional distributors. Our goals are to serve: 30 value-added food businesses, who will benefit from HACCP planning, accounting, marketing, and distribution support, and kitchen access; 20+ local producers sourcing ingredients for value-added products; and over 25,000 consumers during the 36-month grant period. Anticipated outcomes include \$200,000 in new or increased sales for local producers through wholesale and retail sales, including on-site and on-line sales and subscription boxes via Three Sisters Kitchen's Local Foods Shop, at farmers markets, and through a regional distribution network.

Recipient: Rio Grande Community Dev. Corp.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,982.55

Match Amount: \$218,131.80

Total Project Amount: \$968,114.35

Rio Grande Local Foods Logistic and Distribution Program (RGLDP)

The Rio Grande Local Foods Logistic and Distribution Program (RGLDP) develops the capacity of local farmers, ranchers, food producers, and intermediaries to increase and diversify sales to retailers, food-

manufacturers, and institutions in the north-south I-25 corridor from Taos to Las Cruces, NM. The I-25LFDP supports processing, sales, promotion, and distribution by scaling capacity and providing in-person and online T/TA, including food safety certification training. The RGLDP is led by Rio Grande Community Development Corporation (RGCDC), manager of the South Valley Economic Development Center (SVEDC), which includes the Mixing Bowl (MB) program, the largest food-industry business incubator in New Mexico, and Delicious New Mexico (DNM), a proven distribution infrastructure, and includes partnerships with Agri-Cultural Network, a cooperative of local farmers; the Hispanic-American Institute, a nonprofit experienced in institutional marketing; Mayordomo Food Systems (MFS), a small enterprise software provider; and New Mexico Fresh Foods, the first High Pressure Processing (HPP) facility in the Southwest. The RGLDP will build on RGCDC's innovative and cost-effective value chain infrastructure DNM and its experienced food incubator MB, both located at SVEDC. The RGLDP will help local food producers grow 15% annually by providing 1) T/TA in agricultural product and business development; 2) access to SVEDC's processing, aggregation, and storing capacity; 3) T/TA to meet GAP requirements; 4) access to MFS tools including tracking the exact location where produce is grown; 5) inventory to multiple buyers; 6) use data to develop business. The I-25LFDP will help participants respond to market requirements of volume, quality, supply, food safety, and price.

New York

Recipient: Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$713,774.20

Match Amount: \$289,746.00

Total Project Amount: \$1,003,520.20

The Development, Expansion and Promotion of Farm and Food Producers in the Catskills Region

The project will cultivate the local food economy through public private partnerships with the Catskills Food Hub and area farm and food producers; support the development of business plans and marketing plans for food producers and small to mid-sized farms through consultation and existing infrastructure resources; support the development and expansion of value added production in the county and surrounding region through the use of the Catskills Commercial and Teaching Kitchens'. It will strengthen capacity of the local food system through community collaborations and expansion of mid-tier value chains for at least 20 farm and food businesses, small food processors, and food entrepreneurs in the economically deprived but growing USDA identified Sullivan-Warwarsing REAP Zone, Opportunity Zones, and Low Income (LI) and Low Access (LA) Tract 36105950700 in Sullivan County, New York, ensuring the foundation for a strong pandemic recover. The project will support the development, approval, licensing, processing, packaging, marketing, storage, sales, and distribution of farm and food products in and around Sullivan County through educational workshops and technical assistance, linkages between food entrepreneurs and Sullivan County and surrounding county farmers to source local ingredients for product development, access to a shared-used, fully-inspected,

commercial incubator kitchen, along with access to the Catskills Food Hub and by providing financial assistance for any necessary food safety certifications, the implementation of business and marketing plans, commercial kitchen use, schedule process and the NYS Ag & Markets 20-C Licensing process. Overall, increasing access to direct and wholesale opportunities for food and farm producers, while increasing the sales and sustainability of the Catskills Food Hub, which in the end strengthens our local food system.

Recipient: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$200,000.00

Match Amount: \$50,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$250,000.00

Feasibility study for the creation of a food hub and networking system in Schuylerville, NY. Incorporating school systems, low-income populations, and local agriculture producers.

School lunch programs in the Tri-County area (Saratoga, Warren, and Washington counties) have had difficulty in obtaining the NYS 30% Initiative due to the challenges of sourcing from existing food hubs, and from individual farmers. Local growers, similarly, have had difficulty in accessing institutional markets due to the quantities required of the industry. Low-income populations in the Tri-County area have little access to low-cost local foods, which can provide greater nutrient density than their conventionally grown counterparts. This project will research the feasibility of creating a food hub in Schuylerville, NY. As a part of this study, and resulting business proposal, a plan for addressing the needs of low-income communities, growers, school lunch programs, and other institutional buyers will be included. A small-scale food hub will be created, to act as a proof of concept, and facilitate school lunch programs in obtaining the NYS 30% Initiative through cooperative bidding. Creation of a business proposal for the food hub will include the input of local growers to better understand and incorporate their needs. Included in the business proposal will also be a plan for making local foods more accessible to low-income populations in the Tri-County area. We expect to find that the addition of a food hub in Schuylerville, NY will create a more robust local food economy, generate more revenue for local growers and school lunch programs, and create a more equitable food system.

Recipient: Council on the Environment Inc. dba GrowNYC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$688,168.26

Match Amount: \$172,125.00

Total Project Amount: \$860,293.26

Diversifying the Next Generation of Wholesale Suppliers and Buyers

For the past 45 years GrowNYC has developed innovative models to meet its two-part mission: regional farm viability and the equitable access for all New Yorkers to locally-grown foods. Current demand for local foods in New York City's wholesale marketplace is booming, and yet new farmers, low-resource farmers, and socially disadvantaged farmers face numerous barriers to these sales opportunities such as lack of formal food safety plans and access to financial planning tools. Focusing on graduates of GrowNYC's Farm Beginnings program, this project will pair technical assistance in food safety and financial planning with marketing, aggregation, and distribution services via GrowNYC Wholesale, which

currently serves more than 300 buyers such as food businesses, institutions, and nonprofit programs purchasing local foods in volume. To drive demand in underserved communities of New York City, GrowNYC will partner with organizations working on food access at the neighborhood level. These partners will act as “microhubs” by functioning as anchor buyers while facilitating the incorporation of more local foods into the business and program models of local businesses and organizations. The outcomes of this project will include training 12 farmers in food safety and business planning and increasing sales of local foods grown by participating farmers by more than 25% over the course of the grant.

Recipient: Urbane Development Group, LTD

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,975.42

Match Amount: \$188,575.00

Total Project Amount: \$938,550.42

Mangrove Incubator Kitchen at Caton Flats: A Community Wealth Hub Building Sustainable Food Businesses In Brooklyn By Connecting High-Barrier Entrepreneurs With Local and Regional Farm Sourcing.

The Mangrove Incubator Kitchen establishes a transformative hub from which Central Brooklyn food entrepreneurs will build community wealth rooted in a local and regional food chain. With a focus on elevating BIPOC, immigrant and low-income owned enterprises, the Mangrove Incubator Kitchen will expand local and regional food markets in Brooklyn by offering best-in-class commercial production space with acclaimed business development curriculum, direct-to-consumer CSA offerings and a range of cultural culinary events. Incubator members will be shepherded by sector-specific mentors and experts and will be supported by an ecosystem of community institutions. The Mangrove will serve as an aggregation point for local and regional farm products, where incubator members and commercial users leverage their cooperative purchasing power to create economies of scale for local farm suppliers. Sitting below more than 250 units of affordable housing, the Mangrove will connect residents above with local farm subscriptions. Area chefs and member businesses will showcase, educate and entertain intergenerational eaters at the demonstration kitchen. The Mangrove system will connect to faith-based and social services organizations, ensuring that high-barrier entrepreneurs are invited and encouraged to start something enduring at the incubator kitchen.

North Carolina

Recipient: Carolina Farm Stewardship Association

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$746,219.77

Match Amount: \$190,699.98

Total Project Amount: \$936,919.75

Building the Capacity of Food Hubs to Participate in the Food as Medicine Marketplace

New food-as-medicine marketplace opportunities are opening up for food hubs and farmers. However, to access these new markets, food hubs need to increase their organizational capacity and the capacity of the farmers they buy from. This project will increase the organizational capacity of seven partnering food hubs and the farmers they work with by implementing quality management systems, developing standard operating procedures, implementing food safety plans, providing direct technical assistance to farmers, providing food safety training and direct technical assistance to farmers in writing, implementing and obtaining GAP certification. The project will benefit 415 farmers selling products through the participating food hubs, and an additional 180 who participate in a CFSA workshop and/or receive direct technical assistance on food safety, for a total of 595 beneficiaries. Of those, 60% (353) will be historically underserved and/or socially disadvantaged. This project will result in 400 farmers learning about and increasing their knowledge of food safety and prevention; 240 increasing their knowledge about new market opportunities; 300 jobs maintained; 260 farmers reporting increased revenue; and 66 new farmers selling to food hubs.

Recipient: L&M Companies Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$429,240.00

Match Amount: \$107,314.00

Total Project Amount: \$536,554.00

Cabbage Mobile Processing & Distribution: Expanding Local Grower Opportunity by Creating New Value-Added Products for the Local Market

This project will work to create economic benefits for traditional and a new, specialty variety of flat cabbage grown by farmers beginning in North Carolina and expanding to Georgia and Florida. The market for processed cabbage products is highly demanded, but transportation costs to and from large processing facilities hundreds of miles away are often more than the value of the actual return to the grower. L&M and our partner, Ripe Revival, will create a mobile processing unit with specialized processing equipment, be trained to operate with appropriate food safety standards, and execute a local/regional marketing strategy for new cabbage products. This project will be providing local and minority growers with an opportunity to produce new, value-added products, decrease farm waste, and generate income by processing the cabbage within a 50-mile radius of the farms. The unit will have the capability to convert flat cabbage into new value-added cabbage tortilla wraps, and regular and flat cabbage into bagged slaw and chopped mixes for distribution to local retail and foodservice partners. Our goal is to engage as intermediary between producers and retailers, foodservice, and consumers, increasing access to new, locally grown cabbage products, while increasing grower returns by 25% and expanding the base of local cabbage farmers. This project is a sustainable and scalable solution for on-site processing for cabbage and other products such as broccoli for growers throughout the Southeast.

Recipient: Equiti Foods, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$288,340.00

Match Amount: \$28,834.00

Total Project Amount: \$317,174.00

Generating Economic Opportunities for Farms: Seasonal Local Sourcing and Statewide Promotion of Local Agriculture through Medicaid

At the regional level, Equiti Foods will generate economic opportunities for small farmers by processing Grade B produce and seasonal excess for our “Good Bowls” product, which is a healthy, affordable, good-tasting frozen meal based on the Mediterranean diet with a southern twist. Equiti Foods supports healthy food access among low income and minority populations using a cost-offset/sliding scale model. We partner with local businesses to produce the bowls, sourcing ingredients from local farms creating new economic opportunities for both farmers and local commercial kitchens. We use social franchise and pay-it-forward co-branding models with marketing to promote local food, driving more business to CSAs and farmers markets. An initial COVID-related pay-it-forward pilot with a small farm and commercial kitchen resulted in nearly \$1000 in increased revenue in 2 weeks. We request funding to develop infrastructure to expand and support a network of partner farms in our region by: 1) developing an online marketplace for farms to sell excess or Grade B commodities to Equiti Foods and others; 2) creating and testing new recipes for Good Bowls based on seasonal farm supply trends; and 3) enhancing a digital platform for selling and distributing co-branded Farm/Good Bowls direct-to consumer. At the state level, we will leverage our experience and our founder’s extensive food systems networks to assist 8 Food Hubs and affiliated farmers.

Recipient: The Produce Box, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$399,100.00

Match Amount: \$101,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$500,100.00

Expanding Distribution and Marketing of Locally and Regionally Grown Fresh Fruits And Vegetables to Food-Insecure Families in North Carolina

North Carolina farms need a way to market their produce and increase on-farm revenue. Low-income families living in food deserts need an easy, affordable and convenient way to get fresh fruits and vegetables to their homes. Residents in low-income areas need jobs. The Produce Box is a woman-owned food business enterprise partnering with 150 stay-at-home parents, who hand-deliver local produce, dairy, meat and artisan products to NC residents and supports 50+ North Carolina farmers annually. Thirteen years ago, we created one of the first successful multi-farm ecommerce solutions, and have scaled our program to serve 14,000 members. We will increase access and availability of locally grown produce and value-added products by making it easy to order and receive fresh produce every week. Expand The Produce Box’s reach and the local and regional food system infrastructure by offering home delivery of local produce in food-insecure target areas, resulting in long term economic and social impact in our communities. Create positions for Neighborhood Ambassadors, helping these residents to act as active participants in the program. By expanding into food-insecure areas within our current delivery areas, we will generate jobs for at least 70 individuals, encourage active participation from community members and generate additional income for our farm partners. It will also create opportunities to recruit at least 10 new farmers, focusing on black and minority owned farms.

Recipient: Mother Earth Food Inc.
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$749,973.00
Match Amount: \$249,991.00
Total Project Amount: \$999,964.00

Mother Earth Food Hub: Supporting Farmers through Home Delivery and Wholesale Markets

Mother Earth Food (MEF) is a local food hub and grocery delivery company sourcing products from the surrounding region's vibrant food community of local and regional farms, food vendors and restaurants, and delivering to the front doorsteps of our community members. Mother Earth Food's mission is to co-create resilient and sustainable local food systems. MEF is a central food hub for receiving, storing, and distributing fresh local produce, sustainably and humanely raised/caught meat and seafood, fresh bakery, and all categories of sustainably sourced groceries, wellness products, and specialty products. By working hand in hand with local and regional producers, and connecting them to a broad network of food-conscience consumers, MEF maximizes local food penetration into our community. Through the Mother Earth Food Hub Expansion project, 301 current and 50 additional local and regional farmers and value-added producers will gain or maintain access to both existing and new retail and wholesale customers. With increased capacity in our warehouse and a robust and aggressive marketing plan, MEF will double sales to retail customers through the home delivery service, implement a wholesale buying option to serve wholesale customers who wish to purchase local foods, and increase the number of farmers and local producers who sell their products through MEF. MEF will provide direct delivery, wholesale delivery, storage services, and contract distribution throughout our service area. This project will generate over \$10M in sales and \$5.7M in revenue for local and regional farmers and producers during the 3-year project period.

Ohio

Recipient: Farm Fair, LLC
Project Type: Planning
Award Amount: \$170,440.00
Match Amount: \$42,925.00
Total Project Amount: \$213,365.00

Advancing Regional Food Systems through Standardized Data, Terminology, and Procedures: Exploring the Impact of a Food Hub Association

The food hub industry has significantly grown in size, capacity and sophistication over the last decade. These critical components of regional food economies have collectively built a \$1B market through grit and entrepreneurial drive. Along the way, food hubs nationally have encountered similar challenges and opportunities as they pursue financial sustainability, and most hubs attempt to address them independently. This means many hubs are not exchanging best practices, leveraging shared infrastructure, or growing a coordinated movement. Drawing on learnings from other sub-industries in the food economy (i.e. Organic, non-GMO, etc.), this project will explore the creation of a food hub association to support holistic, efficient growth throughout the food hub industry at-large. Project partners will research and interview food hubs and related supply chain partners about the role such an

association could play and will identify concrete priorities of food hubs and food hub networks. Specifically, partners will explore how technical needs (like data standardization) and marketing needs can be addressed industry-wide with an association. In order to ensure that findings are reflective of historically oppressed groups in the food system and that the association can shift power in the marketplace - both core goals of project partners -Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) producer and community representatives will also review research and advise on its relevance to their communities. At the project's close, a recommended path forward for a food hub association, a legally established entity and a framework that outlines specific foci of an association will be presented.

Oklahoma

Recipient: Oklahoma State University

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$388,224.00

Match Amount: \$97,056.00

Total Project Amount: \$485,280.00

Providing online and in person education and extension materials to inform producers on direct to consumer meat sales and marketing

Local foods have been increasing in popularity, and the desire to not rely solely on large scale food production intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, large packing plants were hit hard by COVID-19 related closures, causing temporary disruptions in meat supply. Direct to consumer meat sales and custom harvest is not a simple endeavor for ranchers. There are many food safety rules, and sales regulations that need to be understood before a rancher can begin selling direct to consumer or retailer. Even with knowledge of the rules and regulations, understanding how to market their products and how to reach consumers whether through direct sales or a farmers market is an additional hurdle. This work aims to provide both educational reference materials such as fact sheets that will be made publicly available, as well as in-person workshops, and an online course. Topics covered will include, but are not limited to, consumer marketing through online media, direct to consumer marketing through farmers markets, niche marketing including halal and kosher slaughter, rules and regulations dictating meat sales, harvesting animals, and determining pricing structures. Given the experiences of the OSU extension team behind this proposal, as well as input from our collaborators we believe that we can create a comprehensive and successful program that will reach a wide variety of constituents including the historically underserved. Our collaborators include the Food Safety Division of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, the Oklahoma/Texas Meat Processor Association, local businesses, and the Department of Veterans affairs.

Oregon

Recipient: Oregon Coast Visitors Association Inc.

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$735,200.00

Match Amount: \$217,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$952,200.00

Capturing Value by Keeping Local Seafood Local: Expanding Regional Distribution Networks and Support for Seafood and Aquaculture Producers on the Oregon Coast

On the Oregon Coast, a strategic alliance of community food system and economic development partners have identified local seafood businesses who demonstrate a need to expand operations and cultivate new markets to meet regional demand and increase business viability in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This project's goal is to improve income and economic opportunity for local producers' jobs, and to strengthen our regional capacity to capture more value from locally produced foods. Pre-COVID, producer surveys conducted in our region had shown an imperative for shortening supply chains to meet an increasing market demand for local food. Replacing non-regional with locally produced food products creates an economic multiplier for these goods, but our region lacks sufficient infrastructure and coordination to ensure local products are sold here instead of products from abroad. Nearly a decade of highly collaborative food system assessments and planning have revealed new public-private partnership opportunities and community collaboration to expand mid-tier value chains and increase availability of local foods. This project will implement route optimization, backhaul opportunities, aggregation and cold storage development, strategic region-to-region coordination and application of technical assistance to help producers scale. This project focuses on three objectives: 1) Add value to locally harvested seafood and aquaculture products through support of the newly emerging Newport Ocean Cluster project, 2) Increase availability of local seafood and aquaculture products by coordinating Regional Distribution Networks and Market Channels in collaboration with the Oregon Food Hub Network, 3) Strengthen capacity of food system partners to cultivate the regional economy.

Recipient: Revel Meat Company

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$661,000.00

Match Amount: \$169,632.00

Total Project Amount: \$830,632.00

Strengthening the Competitiveness of the Pacific Northwest's Local Meat Producers & Processors through Revel Meat Co's Expanded Traceability Program

With the growing concern around farm practices and interest in local food, consumers are regularly asking where their meat comes from and how it was raised. Revel Meat Company, one of the last USDA Meat Processors and Wholesalers in the State, serves as a key intermediary between local and regional small and midsize ranchers in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) and consumers who want to support their local food system and care about the quality of their meat. While customers understand that purchasing from farms through Revel Meat Co. (Revel) means they are buying from high quality local producers, the time is now to provide enhanced transparency and traceability that will allow these producers to reach new customers and differentiate their products in the marketplace. Revel is proposing the creation of an Expanded Traceability Program that will allow all ranchers within their broad network full traceability of their products back to the pasture they were raised on and the breeding pair the animal came from. Doing so will require training and technical assistance to a network of ranchers, additional monitoring of animals via an RFID ear tag system and logistical support, and enhanced promotion and rebranding of products that will help farmers market their products more effectively and efficiently to customers.

Recipient: Oregon State University
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$591,951.00
Match Amount: \$189,053.00
Total Project Amount: \$781,004.00

Meat of the Middle: Expanding Niche Meat Production and Processing through Training, Education, and Peer Support

In order to create stronger and more plentiful mid-tier niche meat supply chains, both meat producers and processors need additional training, business coaching, and peer support. There are currently a lot of very small meat producers and meat processors, but there are much fewer that operate at a mid-scale serving local and regional meat to intermediate market channels, such as restaurants, food service, and retailers. To build stronger businesses, both meat producers and processors need to learn how to scale efficiently, sustainably, and in a financially sound manner. This proposed project will provide virtual short courses, business mastermind groups, coaching, peer support, and create durable learning tools for at least 1,800 farmers, ranchers, meat processors and butchers who want to learn and improve their skillsets. The project will be national in scope, but with special emphasis on rural America where most meat producers and processors are located. The three organizations leading this effort, the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network (NMPAN), American Association of Meat Processors (AAMP), and Kitchen Table Consultants (KTC), already have a considerable national network and proven track records. The organizing team expects participating meat producers and processors will be able to communicate and work more effectively with one another, build business-to-business relationships, create aggregation models that serve multiple producers in a region, learn important financial benchmarking skills, write marketing plans (producers), and learn to scale effectively while staying true to their values. These businesses will also create more living wage jobs and significant economic impacts in their regions.

Pennsylvania

Recipient: SBK Cafe And Market, LLC
Project Type: Implementation
Award Amount: \$750,000.00
Match Amount: \$187,500.00
Total Project Amount: \$937,500.00

Value-Added Production Expansion, Diversification, and Co-Packing to Reduce On-Farm Food Waste

Small Batch Kitchen was founded in 2014 with a focus on sourcing from and supporting local producers while creating healthy, delicious value-added products to sell through direct-to-consumer and wholesale channels. We have also been contracted to process custom, small-scale batches of value-added agricultural products for local farms. Through this work, we have found that local producers lack options for addressing excess produce harvested on the farm. This results in lost revenue and contributes to on-farm food waste. Producers who would like to have their excess produce turned into value-added agricultural products face barriers to entry including limited processors who offer co-packing services, large minimum order requirements, and time constraints. Our Value-Added Production Expansion,

Diversification, and Co-Packing to Reduce On-Farm Food Waste project will address these issues by diversifying and expanding our production capabilities and will allow for the development of a small-batch co-packing program that will increase revenue of small local producers and reduce on-farm food waste in Pennsylvania. By diversifying our product line, increasing sales to current wholesale customers, and developing a co-packing program specifically targeting small and mid-sized producers, we will be able to increase our purchasing and processing of local and regional farm products by 300%, creating 8 jobs and increasing farm revenues for 30 small and mid-size producers in our region.

Recipient: Disruptive Industries, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$750,000.00

Match Amount: \$281,504.00

Total Project Amount: \$1,031,504.00

Coordinating Local Supply Chains for Growth and Optimizing Distribution Channels for Supply

Small farms in Eastern Pennsylvania struggle to accurately forecast their output, identify consistent sales outlets, and bring their products to market in an efficient manner. Given the overhead transportation costs associated with reaching larger markets, many small farms are limited in where they can sell their products. Weak forecasting and unpredictable weather leave farmers scrambling to sell crops before they spoil—often to large wholesale markets that pay them just above the cost of production. Local food hubs have grown out of this need, though they struggle to work with large numbers of local farmers, maintain and grow multiple sales channels, and promote local products effectively. Food hubs often incur exorbitant costs to manage a large number of small farms, and they struggle to manage and promote mixed retail and wholesale sales channels that would benefit producers financially. Also, their operational systems do not integrate with one another, creating unnecessary administrative costs. The purpose of this project is to increase supply chain efficiency in order to positively impact 75-plus local and regional producers by: Establishing forecasting systems with anticipated demand schedules, creating better systems for recording and distributing farmer availability, establishing shared aggregation and transportation systems On the demand side, this project will: Expand retail sales through an ecommerce platform, expand website to manage retail and wholesale sales channels and associated inventory systems, expand existing website to increase efficiency of sourcing, packing, and delivering products in order to decrease prices for consumers while maintaining profitability.

Recipient: Keystone Development Center Inc.

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$106,901.84

Match Amount: \$26,710.00

Total Project Amount: \$133,611.84

Establishing a Regional Food System in Southern Alleghenies PA

The Pennsylvania Agricultural Ombudsman Program in partnership with many regional partners in the Southern Alleghenies region, are assessing the feasibility of a robust local food system in Pennsylvania. Agriculture, the number one industry in the Southern Alleghenies, has been stressed due to falling milk prices, an aging workforce, and a lack of local marketing opportunities. Additionally, community members face challenges buying local food due to low income and low access. The COVID-19 pandemic

revealed the vulnerability of our global supply chain, and closer to home, it has put a spotlight on the fragility of our regional food system. Southern Alleghenies partners are looking to build a more resilient food chain that will support regional farms and increase community members' access to healthy, locally grown food. The purpose of this project is to conduct a feasibility study assessing the agricultural capacity of our region including raw product availability, aggregation/distribution gaps, and barriers to farm-business diversification or value-add opportunities. This process will connect and cultivate private-public stakeholders, including a team of trusted community leaders, experienced farmers, and collaborators with a high level of related expertise. Focus groups will identify needs, gaps, and barriers, develop a shared vision, and identify solutions that will support a mid-tier value chain to establish a regional food system. Specifically, we want to explore a food hub's impact on regional farmers' economic opportunities by finding new and more profitable end-users. Finally, we want to increase local food consumption in schools within the food desert neighborhoods of Altoona, PA.

Recipient: Marie Stanley, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$325,635.00

Match Amount: \$108,593.00

Total Project Amount: \$434,228.00

Fulton Kitchen Food Hub Expansion and Minority Business Empowerment

Fulton Kitchen is a food hub and incubator in Pittsburgh's Manchester neighborhood of 4,000 residents, an underserved area of concentrated poverty with limited access to grocery or locally grown food. Fulton Kitchen is poised to help launch minority-owned food businesses to support Pittsburgh's COVID-19 recovery while expanding markets that serve local consumers. The primary goal of this proposal is to secure funds to (1) expand the reach and scope of services currently offered through our commercial kitchen; (2) increase indirect producer-to-consumer marketing of locally produced food products; (3) increase the number of successful minority-owned food businesses; and (4) contribute to local mid-tier value chain to include our minority food producers. Fulton Kitchen has established strong strategic partnerships with two of the region's most impactful non-profits specializing in small business incubation in the food sector - Catapult Greater Pittsburgh and Food21. Through this partnership, qualified minority-owned food businesses will occupy space at Fulton Kitchen in 15-member cohorts. Funds from this grant will enable the expansion of our commercial kitchen capacity, providing greater cold storage and access to specialized equipment to enable scaling of production to more than 40 small businesses. Fulton Kitchen is a significant participant in Pittsburgh's value-added food chain. Through its own investments, it has established a unique community asset ready to serve the community. Through its partnerships with impact-driven nonprofit leaders, it provides a much-needed focus on the development of minority-owned food businesses.

Recipient: Primal Supply Meats, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$749,350.00

Match Amount: \$188,300.00

Total Project Amount: \$937,650.00

Primal Supply Meats: Advancing Sales and Market Opportunities for Pasture-Raised Meat in the Greater Philadelphia Region

Primal Supply Meats is a woman-owned and operated butchery and local meat sourcing company committed to providing sustainable, pasture-raised meat to the Philadelphia region. We source directly from local farmers who raise healthy animals on pasture in their natural environments and manage their land responsibly. We partner with local processors, and practice whole-animal butchery to supply source-identified meat to professional kitchens and individual consumers. Our goal is to build on the success of our 2018 LFPP project “Scaling a Regional Supply Chain to Provide Locally-Sourced, Pasture-Raised Meat to Philadelphia” by advancing sales and market opportunities for pasture-raised meat in the greater Philadelphia region. Over the course of this project we will: 1) Develop digital sales platforms and technology solutions for improved e-commerce capabilities and inventory management of perishable products. 2) Further our processing relationships and obtain federally inspected USDA certification for cut-and-wrap services in our butchery in order to launch a wholesale program supplying local grocers and food retailers. 3) Increase our market reach with a direct-to-consumer shipping program, expanded home delivery services, and targeted marketing efforts to promote increased access, education, and drive overall sales of pasture-raised meat in our region. Over the course of this project, we expect to generate \$9 million in revenue for local farmers and processors.

Rhode Island

Recipient: Southside Community Land Trust

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$153,470.90

Match Amount: \$58,188.00

Total Project Amount: \$211,658.90

Planning for Rhode Island Crop Aggregation and Distribution

SCLT is developing our plans for crop aggregation and distribution in order to increase consumption of locally produced agricultural products and to develop new market opportunities for the farmers that we serve. These are important goals because poverty and poor nutrition are causing dire health consequences for many of our area residents. To address these issues, SCLT has been operating a crop aggregation program in its current facilities for the past five years. It has opened up new markets for farmers, helping them to sell to local retailers and restaurants. However, our current facilities do not support optimal operations or growth. As part of the project, SCLT will complete an operations plan and pilot for the new facilities including a schedule for drop offs and deliveries and recommended fee structure. It will also include development of GAP and FSMA plans related to equipment and space use as well as farmer and staff training. It will include assembling an advisory group to help connect the new facility with local restaurants and shops and implementation of both a survey and one-on-one outreach among potential customers to identify high demand crops and other products. As a result of the project, we expect to increase the number of days per week that we can offer services thereby increasing volume of food distributed and the number of farm operations that benefit.

South Carolina

Recipient: Gullah Farmers Cooperative Association

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$388,960.00

Match Amount: \$106,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$494,960.00

Gullah Farmers Cooperative's Regional Wholesale Success Project

The purpose of this project is to ensure that the Gullah Farmers Cooperative's Packaging and Processing Facility can – in a financially sustainable way – maximize local, wholesale produce sales for socially disadvantaged and other small farmers in our region. Led by farmers, the facility centers the needs of experienced, highly productive, socially disadvantaged wholesale farmers who have historically had limited access to sales relationships, infrastructure, and other supports that can secure an appropriate share of the wholesale market (services are open to all local small farmers). Recently the Cooperative launched a 10,000 sq. ft. packing and processing facility to provide critical infrastructure connecting GAP-certified small farmers to local/regional wholesale markets. After six years of pilot operations and capital investments, the facility is on track for \$50,000+ in sales in just its first five months. Many socially disadvantaged farmers in our emerging procurement program, and on the waiting list, have limited resources and need additional support to be competitive. This project prioritizes efficiencies, financial modeling and operational investments that will enable the operations to scale smoothly, as we already have piloted relationships with the local school systems (more than 30,000 children), and buying relationships with local hubs and food service such as Sodexo. With investment in regional wholesale success (business efficiencies and capacity, the procurement program for socially disadvantaged farmers and regional sourcing plans, outreach and sales), we will grow sales by \$700,000 for these farmers over three years and achieve financial sustainability for the operations.

Texas

Recipient: Farmshare Austin

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$41,226.45

Match Amount: \$10,306.61

Total Project Amount: \$51,533.06

Balancing Mission and Revenue: Farmshare Austin Farm Business Plan.

As a non-profit farm committed to teaching new farmers and increasing food access, Farmshare Austin is striving to reach a sustainable balance between fulfilling our mission and generating revenue. To meet these goals, Farmshare identified the need to develop an overall organizational sustainable financial plan, including a 5-year organizational vision and 3-year business plan. We are currently completing that process under the guidance of the Food Finance Institute. During this process, we identified another key need: a farm business plan specific to Farmshare's dual needs of farm-generated income and education and food access goals. In its 20-week beginning farmer training intensive called Farmer Starter,

Farmshare Austin teaches how to create a farm business plan. However, evaluating the at times competing needs of a non-profit farm is more complex and beyond the current capacity of the young organization. In this project, Farmshare will work with the Food Finance Institute to learn how to balance mission and farm revenue generation and will develop a farm business plan to meet those needs. Farmshare will then share the knowledge gained during this process with current Farmer Starter students by incorporating skills learned into the current farm business planning curriculum. In addition, Farmshare will share this knowledge through webinars and/or conference presentations to Farmer Starter alumni and other beginning farmers in Texas and beyond. This project creates internal capacity within Farmshare and shares this knowledge with other beginning farmers, many whom are socially disadvantaged farmers, to build their farm business planning capacity.

Recipient: Desert Spoon Food Hub

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$445,018.90

Match Amount: \$44,524.00

Total Project Amount: \$489,542.90

Advancing the Local Food Economy in the Paso del Norte Region: Increase Market Share of Locally Produced Agricultural Products in the Retail Food Sector

The Paso del Norte region encompasses Doña Ana County, New Mexico, and El Paso County, Texas, delineated by the U.S.-Mexico border and Ciudad Juarez to the south. Residents in the region face a constellation of challenges, from high rates of diet-related diseases to food insecurity. Gaps in the region's food system infrastructure have left many producers without clear lines to consumers for their products while, at the same time, consumers lack access to healthy and affordable food. While there has been a lot of hardship due to the Covid-19 pandemic, one notable positive to come from the experience is that many people have rediscovered the joy of cooking. Consumer shifts around value and lifestyle have created an attractive opportunity for local producers to capture increased market share over the next three years by focusing on improved representation and promotion of locally and regionally produced agricultural products in the retail food sector. Desert Spoon Food Hub has proved to be an effective vehicle to improve food availability within the region and promote the economic advancement of small to mid-sized local producers. This project will strengthen and expand the organization's services to provide critical support for producers and local retailers to respond to the continued growth in consumer demand for local foods. The project objectives will increase the competitiveness and broaden the availability and market share of locally produced agricultural products in retail markets.

Washington

Recipient: Seattle Economic Development Fund dba Business Impact NW

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$160,284.50

Match Amount: \$40,701.10

Total Project Amount: \$200,985.60

Value-Add Infrastructure and Capital Access Accelerator for WA Farmer and Rancher Pilot

While large-scale farms and cooperatives have access to the funding and expertise needed to execute infrastructure projects critical for creating value-add products, small to midsize farmers and ranchers often lack the capital, capacity, and training required. Among Business Impact NW farm and ranch owner clients, 50% indicate an interest in diversifying their revenue streams by adding value-add products. The Value-Add Infrastructure and Capital Access Accelerator for WA Farmer and Rancher Pilot project will provide targeted training, mentorship opportunities, access to markets, and capital needed for small to midsize WA farmers and ranchers to execute value-add and infrastructure projects. The pilot project will assess the needs of local ranchers and farmers and bring together a collective of regional food system stakeholders and technical assistance providers to ensure participants' success. Each cohort participant will leave the program with a vetted business feasibility plan for adding or expanding on-farm infrastructure, access to capital to execute their project, and ongoing one-on-one support. Through the program, farmers and ranchers will also explore the feasibility of additional infrastructure investments that can help support the neighboring farmers' or ranchers' operations. This comprehensive training program and access to capital will enable more Washington small to midsize farmers and ranchers to bring their value-added products to market, which will diversify their revenue streams, create jobs on WA ranchers and farmers, and support the resiliency of the WA regional food system.

Recipient: Taproot A Lopez Kitchen

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$297,070.00

Match Amount: \$77,689.00

Total Project Amount: \$374,759.00

Taproot A Lopez Kitchen, San Juan County, WA – Expanding Markets for Farmers and Value-Added Agriculture Producers in San Juan County

Taproot A Lopez Kitchen (Taproot) is community kitchen and food storage provider. Its primary purpose is to create and sustain jobs that feature abundant fresh farm produce of the island archipelago that comprises San Juan County (SJC), Washington. Wage levels of SJC residents are among the lowest in Washington State. Housing costs are among the highest. SJC needs jobs that can provide residents financial security and businesses that can leverage the agricultural resources of SJC to create a healthy and diverse economy. Taproot provides value-added producers and farmers with the kitchen and storage facilities to create and store their products. It is certified by the State and County for food production. 2020 was Taproot's first full year of operation as a community kitchen and, while development of its client base was impacted by COVID-19, it also provided opportunities for growth in local food distribution by the San Juan Islands Food Hub (SJIFH) which delivers local produce as well as finished value-added products among the islands and to the mainland. SJIFH rents Taproot's kitchen as part of its distribution infrastructure. This project increases opportunities for value-added producers and farmers by: (1) broadening the types of products that can be processed and packaged at Taproot; (2) providing a strong educational and mentoring program (including business start-up, financial considerations, food safety, equipment training and scholarships); and (3) hiring staff to manage the cooking and storage facilities. The resulting growth in Taproot's income is projected to cover these costs after grant funding ends.

Recipient: Island Grown Farmers Cooperative

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$748,388.00

Match Amount: \$191,540.00

Total Project Amount: \$939,928.00

Expansion of a small-scale farmer-owned meat cooperative in Northwest Washington in increase sustainability via local value-added meat product sales

Island Grown Farmers Cooperative (IGFC), a farmer owned co-op based in Skagit County, WA, processes four species of livestock for over 75 farms in five counties into USDA-inspected individual cuts and value-added products. In response to member and customer demand, IGFC will use the LFPP funding to expand its production and retail and wholesale sales. IGFC, established 20 years ago by farmers in the San Juan Islands, was the first entity in the US to operate a USDA-inspected Mobile Processing Unit (MPU). The MPU travels to member farms to slaughter beef, lamb, pigs and goats on site. Covid-19-related stresses to both sales and the meat supply chain have strengthened the need for our expansion to increase our retail sales via new channels, such as on-line and through food hubs in the region. IGFC will utilize LFPP funds to collaborate with the North Cascades Meat Producers Cooperative for the first time, greatly expanding the number of small farmers who process their meat with IGFC. We will also develop a marketing plan and website for greater outreach through a collaboration with the Northwest Agricultural Business Center, based in Mt Vernon, WA. IGFC will also develop an efficiency analysis that can be shared with other small-scale meat producers around the country through a collaboration with the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network. During the grant period, IGFC plans to expand to include over 120 farms, to increase production by 25% and to increase retail sales by 48%.

Recipient: North Cascades Meat Producers Cooperative

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$299,192.00

Match Amount: \$79,532.00

Total Project Amount: \$378,724.00

North Cascade Meats project to increase access to USDA large animal processing services for small farms

North Cascades Meat Producers Cooperative (NCMPC) is owned by 62 farms located in the North Puget Sound region. We need to establish a lower-cost business model to support our farmer and rancher-owners, so they can be more profitably turn live meat animals into packaged USDA- inspected meat products. Our goal is to increase our current USDA inspected butcher and processing services to small farmers and ranchers in Northwest Washington, so that they can sell in retail and wholesale packs of meat to grocery stores and restaurants, or at farm stands and farmers markets. There are three primary objectives that we will fulfill with our project includes: 1) Prepare for and hire a qualified processing operations Manager and processing staff, 2) Operate a new modular processing facility at our new aggregation and storage site, where we can accommodate producers with smaller lots by combining harvest of livestock. 3) Provide expanded wholesale opportunities, through our marketing brand, North Cascade Meats, and in cooperation with the Puget Sound Food Hub Cooperative, as well as our network of farm stands. Achieving this goal to provide expanded slaughter processing facilities, and a regional

aggregation site, will help local meat producers to capture a larger share of the sales dollar from their efforts. The expected outcome is that NCMPC will have the ability to harvest and process up to 30 cattle, or cattle equivalents, per week, for livestock producers in NW Washington (under USDA inspection). Annually, this would generate a minimum of \$4.5M in local farm income.

Recipient: San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$162,264.00

Match Amount: \$40,566.00

Total Project Amount: \$202,830.00

Multi-use Food Center Planning Project: Increasing Value-added Production and Expanding Markets in Rural Island Communities, San Juan County, Washington

The Multi-use Food Center Planning Project aims to increase economic opportunities for farmers and value-added producers in San Juan County, Washington by expanding markets, organizational and infrastructure capacity, and access to healthy local food. Island farmers and producers face barriers in the geographically isolated county (served by the Washington state ferry system), including limited access to markets and a lack of adequate processing and storage facilities.

However, there is significant demand for local products, driven by both community, institutional, and tourist consumers, as well as additional potential for agritourism. This county-wide endeavor is led by nonprofits, the Lopez Island Family Resource Center and Taproot Community Kitchen, working in collaboration with the San Juan Islands Food Hub, a multi-stakeholder cooperative. The LFPP grant would enable this public-private partnership (PPP) to 1) develop a business and marketing plan to determine an ownership model, a financial stability strategy, and an operations plan; 2) identify key elements for the design of the facility; and, 3) increase knowledge of wholesale and retail food safety regulation and best practices among facility users. The Multi-use Food Center would serve as a replicable pilot project to develop mid-tier value chains among the county's islands and with neighboring counties on the mainland by providing access to processing and value-added production, dry/cold/frozen storage, and educational/incubator space for use by both non-profits and entrepreneurs who buy directly from local farmers.

West Virginia

Recipient: Appalachian Abattoir, LLC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,568.00

Match Amount: \$127,589.00

Total Project Amount: \$627,157.00

West Virginia Branded Beef: Expanding into Wholesale Markets and advancing West Virginia's Livestock Value-Chain

West Virginia has a well-developed livestock industry producing high-quality beef while there is growing interest from retailers in sourcing from local producers. However, wholesalers and grocery chains are currently limited to out-of-state suppliers who meet their requirements for practices in food safety,

traceability, and packaging quality that are not available locally. Unfortunately, due in part to this lack of capacity at local harvest facilities, most of WV's farmers market their cattle to operators who finish cattle for harvest in other markets. With the collaboration of project lead Buzz Food Service/Appalachian Abattoir, a family-owned distributor and USDA meat-processing business that invested in a new, state-of-the-art facility adding live animal harvest September 2021; the West Virginia Cattlemen's Association, with a strong membership of 400 cattle producers in the state looking to improve market diversification and expand and adjust production if an accessible, value-added market was available; and educational resources and support from WV University Extension Service, WV Department of Agriculture and Eastern Community College; this project seeks expand the capacity of the local meat value-chain, improve economic opportunities for WV's 12,000 cattlemen and women, and increase local access to WV beef products by cultivating the vibrant public-private partnership focused on the WV Branded beef program and aggregating, processing, distributing this product in new wholesale/retail channels. By working together, this team will develop a WV Branded Ground Beef program to diversify market opportunities for all WV beef producers and meet identified wholesale market demand for local West Virginia beef.

Wisconsin

Recipient: Wood County

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$199,779.54

Match Amount: \$53,017.00

Total Project Amount: \$252,796.54

Central Wisconsin Farmers Market Food Equity Project: Improving Foodshare Access At Farmers Markets Through Community Investment and Engagement

Many farmers markets throughout the state, especially in rural areas, have shared the same story: they ran an EBT/FoodShare program on a limited budget, until funding or resources ran out. Our survey of 15 market managers across Wisconsin in 2020 revealed that for a farmers market EBT/credit/debit program to be successful, it needs to include: 1) Financial support for markets to run a token system or for individual farmers to purchase their own EBT/credit/debit machines 2) Incentive programs to use EBT/FoodShare, such as Double-Your-SNAP-Dollar. While these programs are resource intensive, preliminary research has shown that an investment in farmers markets can have an exponential impact on the economy (Ledesma et. al, 2021). For example, Farm 2 Facts (F2F) demonstrated a stunningly high percentage increase in SNAP sales in the Village of Brown Deer, WI, with the net percentage increase being over 500%, after their implementation of F2F. Our program proposes to establish a Central Wisconsin Farmers Market Collaborative (including Stevens Point, Marshfield, Wausau, Waupaca, Adams-Friendship, and Wisconsin Rapids) to support individual markets to:1) ascertain the readiness of

their communities to invest in EBT/credit/debit services at the market; 2) develop a business plan (in communities with sufficient readiness) to fund starting a new, or strengthen existing EBT/credit/debit services at the farmers market; 3) evaluate the economic and social impact of well-supported and sustained EBT/credit/debit services on market vendors and local businesses, SNAP-eligible residents (fruit and vegetable purchases, inclusion), and partner entities and residents generally; and 4) establish ongoing impact and needs assessment to ensure EBT/credit/debit programs are sustained while also evolving in response to local needs to ensure that the market is accessible to all members of the community, including low-income, minority and differently abled.

Recipient: FairShare CSA Coalition

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$190,611.00

Match Amount: \$20,563.00

Total Project Amount: \$211,174.00

Building capacity and increasing access through aggregated CSA

The pandemic underscored the need for alternative markets—especially on the part of beginning and historically underserved growers—that can be more resilient to unexpected disruptions and ongoing fluctuations in demand. Yet, growers have identified several obstacles that limit their ability to prepare for and participate in more complex direct markets like CSA, restaurants, and grocery stores. Connecting producers to these markets through an aggregation model can be an effective means of lowering these barriers. Through this planning project, FairShare CSA Coalition—in conjunction with project partners and collaborators, including three aggregators—will assess the feasibility of establishing aggregated vegetable sales through direct markets, focusing especially on CSA and working closely with Hmong growers within the state. In addition to determining whether an aggregated model can meet the needs of both producers and consumers, we anticipate a number of additional outcomes for participating growers, including expanded access to markets and critical infrastructure, strengthened skills relevant to selling into CSA and other direct markets, and increased revenue streams.

Recipient: Board of Regents of the Univ. of Wisconsin System

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$365,176.56

Match Amount: \$48,777.00

Total Project Amount: \$413,953.56

Increasing The Production, Processing, and Sale of Locally-Grown Hazelnuts in the Upper Midwest

Recent improvements in hazelnut genetics, harvesting technology, agronomics, and post-harvest processing capacity delivered by the Upper Midwest Hazelnut Development Initiative have made hazelnut production in the Upper Midwest an economically viable option for growers (Fischbach, 2020). The timing is perfect as global hazelnut demand exceeds supply and the Midwestern agricultural economy is in dire need of new crops and new opportunities. The next step in fully actualizing the vision of bringing a local hazelnut economy to the Upper Midwest is assisting early-adopter hazelnut growers in establishing region brand identity, expanding markets, and facilitating industry expansion through support of producer-consumer relationships. The American Hazelnut Company (AHC), launched in 2014 and owned and operated by early-adopter growers, was formed to enable growers of the early

generation genetics to harvest, process, and bring their hazelnuts to market. The AHC, its growers, and the emerging hazelnut industry in the Upper Midwest need assistance developing a regional brand identity for Midwest-grown hazelnuts, growing consumer awareness in the Upper Midwest about hazelnuts, and developing product branding targeted to specific market segments and outlets. This project will provide a set of marketing and branding tools for all existing and future hazelnut growers and hazelnut product manufacturers in the Upper Midwest, which will lower friction costs to bringing product to market as expansion proceeds. In addition, the project will enhance the brand and marketing capacity of the AHC to increase sales of locally grown hazelnuts to local consumers in the Upper Midwest.

Recipient: REAP Food Group Inc.

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$200,000.00

Match Amount: \$56,284.00

Total Project Amount: \$256,284.00

Creating a Wholesale Farm Fresh Atlas Program for Wisconsin

The purpose of the project is to design and pilot 1) a wholesale Farm Fresh Atlas and create 2) wholesale-ready program to increase the sales from small-and medium-scale farmers to institutional buyers in southern Wisconsin. The project aims to establish a digital wholesale version of the direct-to-consumer Farm Fresh Atlas and build a Wholesale Readiness program for farmers interested in scaling up to sell to a variety of wholesale buyers (aggregators, food hubs, grocery stores, restaurants, institutions). This planning project will pilot this program in southern Wisconsin though many of the technical assistance materials will be available and useful to producers and buyers statewide.