



Fiscal Year 2020 Description of Funded Projects

Number of Grants Awarded: 44
Amount of Funds Awarded: \$13,514,045.47

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

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

Alaska

Recipient: Kodiak Harvest Food Cooperative, Kodiak, AK

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$292,940.75

Match Amount: \$73,235.19

Total Project Amount: \$366,175.94

Kodiak Harvest Food Cooperative Local Food Access Project

The study "Food Security in Alaska" by Ken Meter et al., found that "95% of the \$2 billion of food Alaskans purchase is imported – meaning \$1.9 billion leaves the state each year." On the Kodiak Archipelago, natural disasters such as earthquakes or the 1964 tsunami--which destroyed all of downtown Kodiak--threaten food security because of our reliance on imported goods via barge or air cargo. A long transportation chain further degrades food quality as fresh produce loses nutritional content to oxidation after harvest. Kodiak Island has numerous small-scale farms, ranches and a robust commercial fishing community that lack a centralized marketplace to connect consumers with local food products. The Kodiak Harvest Food Cooperative has the support of over 500 members working together to overcome these barriers to achieve their mission and "provide Kodiak communities with quality food choices that are locally sourced, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible while promoting education and engagement." The goal of this project is to expand the Kodiak Harvest Food Cooperative (KHFC) to connect local producers with Kodiak's consumers by expanding operations and establishing an online food hub for food producers to connect directly with consumers; support the processing, aggregation, distribution, and storage of local and regional food products marketed locally or regionally; and, assist producers to develop and implement food safety plans and achieve food safety certifications. We expect to see an increase in consumption of and demand for local and regional food products and opportunities to support future local food business development.

Arizona

Recipient: Merchant's Garden Agrotech, Inc., Tucson, AZ

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$99,992.00

Match Amount: \$29,799.00

Total Project Amount: \$129,791.00

Local Greenhouse Leafy Greens Promotion Program

Tucson, AZ is rated as the fifth poorest metropolitan area in the U.S. Based on Census data, the poverty rate in Tucson is 23.4%, significantly higher than the national level (14%). Approximately 1 in 4 people in Tucson live in poverty. The overarching goal of the project is to develop a local/regional fresh produce enterprise to promote locally grown leafy greens and other fresh produce in Southern Arizona and to increase the availability and access to locally grown fresh produce while offering a sustainable community solution of creating jobs and improving the economic viability for small food producers. The program will lead to increased access and consumption of locally/regionally produced fresh produce; increased customer base and the sales of local fresh produce; newly developed market opportunities for serving local food markets; improved the food safety; expanded local/regional fresh produce enterprise; and maximized the impact on beginning, veteran, and socially disadvantaged farmers in LI/LA communities of Southern Arizona.

Recipient: Pinnacle Prevention Corp., Chandler, AZ

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,000.00

Scaling Regional Food Solutions for Arizonans

Arizona food economy is among the leading producers of fruits and vegetables in the country. A small number of large-scale operations account for the majority of agricultural sales with the majority of that product moving out of the state. While Arizona boasts strong assets in food production and distribution out of the state, in-state access to local foods from on-farm agriculture accounts for less than 5% of sales. One of the primary barriers limiting the ability for local agriculture to scale in Arizona is the lack of infrastructure to support storage, aggregation, transportation, and distribution, and lack of facilitation of food chain coordination. The project aims to address expansion needs and barriers by implementing cost effective and streamlined transportation chains and to expand and cultivate new online marketing channels to improve operational efficiencies for the Arizona regional network of on-farm agriculture producers. The goals of this project are to increase access to local food to underserved communities and to expand food system infrastructure and operational coordination across the central and southern regions of the state to meet needs and demand. The short-term outcomes of this project will result in increased sales, increased access to new customers, and increased leveraging of resources for local food producers. The long-term outcomes will result in improved transportation efficiencies, a shift in the

system, and social norms that better support farmer livelihood, and diversified purchasing mechanisms for expanding local foods across Arizona.

Recipient: Rosebird Gardens, LLC, Kingman, AZ

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$229,600.00

Match Amount: \$57,438.40

Total Project Amount: \$287,038.40

Establishing a Network of Local Food Distribution and Improving Food Access in Rural Northern Arizona

Kingman is a growing population center of 30,000 people on historic Route 66 in the high desert of Northern Arizona that is currently experiencing unmet demand for fresh, locally produced food. The family-owned farms in the region provide both income and healthy produce to local community members. However, the quantity of fruit and vegetables produced by these farms is not yet able to meet consumer demand or reach families in more rural areas. The purpose of the project is to expand the year-round availability and accessibility of locally and regionally produced agricultural products in Kingman, Arizona and surrounding regions to assist local farmers and food producers in meeting consumer demand. The goals of this project are to (1) provide local farmers with the training and infrastructure to successfully build their individual businesses, (2) improve collective marketing of Rosebird Gardens partner farms, (3) build a local food aggregation model that supports hyper-local farms but sources regionally when necessary, and (4) expand the size of the current CSA program and distribution model to meet the needs of rural community members. Implementation of this project will increase local farmer income and the quantity of locally and regionally produced fresh produce and food products available for consumption by community members.

Arkansas

Recipient: Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development, Little Rock, AR

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,956.00

Match Amount: \$125,468.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,424.00

Forging Value Chains (FVC) - A National Program to Increase Quality, Capacity and Effective Market Coordination Among Local and Regional Food Enterprises

There is a widespread need for accessible training, technical assistance, and research to support the expansion and resilience of equitable regional value chains and to increase the competitiveness and viability of the businesses that comprise them. The Forging Value Chains project aims to increase the capacity of small/mid-size farms and food businesses to 1) create collaborative value chain relationships for greater, more stable market opportunities; 2) navigate wholesale marketing channels for improved financial viability, and 3) adopt and implement a culture of quality and food safety for increased market access. To achieve these goals, we will develop and deliver skill-building resources, technical training,

peer learning opportunities, and knowledge products focused on building capacity in three critical areas: value chain coordination, quality management, and food safety. We will develop and deliver comprehensive technical training curricula, launch two national Communities of Practice, facilitate a peer mentorship program, conduct research on best practices and innovations, develop and pilot a Value Chain Coordination Impact Framework, and create a national resource library for regional value chain development. The project will increase the capacity of over 4,500 individuals who work in and support producers and regional food businesses engaged in intermediated markets, resulting in more profitable and competitive regional value chains, increased adoption of Quality Management Systems, and increased utilization of the USDA GroupGAP program.

California

Recipient: Community Partners, Los Angeles, CA

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$99,467.00

Match Amount: \$29,023.00

Total Project Amount: \$128,490.00

Zero-waste Food Enterprise Planning Project: Developing New Value-added Products and Market Opportunities

The project addresses a need to increase the capacity to develop and distribute local/regional agricultural products to improve food security in low-income South Los Angeles (SLA) neighborhoods. The project will establish a network of partner farms and food producers who can inform and benefit from the Enterprise's food production/waste reduction programs. A business plan will lay the foundation for this enterprise that trains/employs SLA youth to use Zero-waste principals to develop new value-added agricultural products utilizing partner farms' produce, and advocate for/support other SLA food producers to do the same. Partners will assess the feasibility of creating a college accredited program to sustain/replicate the enterprise and determine how an existing mapping app could promote the network and new products. This multi-sector network creates a blueprint to increase food security in SLA through a new zero-waste enterprise that creates local/regional food products for consumers, increases revenue streams for farmers and producers, reduces farm/community food waste, and creates jobs for youth.

Colorado

Recipient: Mountain Roots Food Project, Gunnison, CO

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$99,963.00

Match Amount: \$25,014.00

Total Project Amount: \$124,977.00

Mountain Roots - Southwest Colorado Local Food Hub-to-Node Connectivity Project (Planning)

Southwest Colorado is a sparsely populated 26,000-square-mile region of rural open space, high mountains, desert sage, and lush river valleys, where more than 10 census tracts in our service area are

low-income/low-access. As demand for local food increases, the region has seen an emergence of more than one hundred small-scale producers and at least six start-up enterprises functioning as intermediaries. Producers are interested in scaling up farm businesses; buyers in four key markets (wholesale, retail/individual, institution, and SNAP recipients) expressed increased interest in local products. Our areas of abundant supply are not connected to the areas with the highest market demand. Mountain Roots' Hub-to-Node-Connectivity planning project will engage the region's producers, buyers, and intermediaries in roundtables to map assets and to study the specific barriers to accessing local foods, make matches between producers and buyers to field test top strategies identified in a season-long pilot, then collaboratively design a regional business development plan that will expand up to six intermediary enterprises, expand producer capacity, and link these enterprises in more efficient and effective hub- to-node network. The expected outcomes are that producers gain increased access to wider regional markets and increased sales; buyers have access to consistent sources of local products in larger volumes over a longer period; regional food economies are connected and cultivated through strengthened partnerships collaborative network design. This useful model can be adapted by other rural communities wishing to expand mid-tier value chains, producer capacity, and market opportunities using a hub-to-node design that is better suited to rural regions.

Recipient: Onward! A Legacy Foundation, Cortez, CO

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$323,444.00

Match Amount: \$80,960.00

Total Project Amount: \$404,404.00

Southwest Colorado Mobile Juicing Services: Providing Farmers and Businesses with Value-added Market Opportunities

This project will help create economic benefits for the rural southwestern Colorado farmers. Although nearly 50,000 bushels of apples grow on these unique trees each year, most end up rotting or being eaten by foraging animals. This project will generate income for local farmers by turning such apples into marketable pasteurized juice for retail consumption and unpasteurized juice for cider production. Cider makers, food hubs, and other local enterprises will use this value-added, heritage apple juice in the products they market and sell. MORP will acquire a mobile juice press, be trained and certified to operate the press, and provide mobile juicing to farmers in southwestern Colorado. As a result, small family farms that have not seen reliable markets for their apples in decades will receive revenue from their fruit. With time, this will lead to more orchard owners maintaining their historic and unique fruit trees because of the economic value of doing so. These orchards are irreplaceable building blocks for a restored economy based upon the legendary quality and diversity of Montezuma Valley Fruits.

Connecticut

Recipient: City Seed, Inc., New Haven, CT

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$100,000.00

Match Amount: \$33,669.50

Total Project Amount: \$133,669.50

Establishment of CitySeed Incubates Shared Use Commercial Kitchen

CitySeed proposes to launch New Haven's first private membership-based Commercial Kitchen and Food Business Incubator. This will be New Haven's first commercial kitchen, with an additional focus on supporting under-resourced, under-funded entrepreneurs (particularly people of color, women, and immigrants). Funds will enable us 1) to outline a business model and operational plan for CitySeed Incubates that supports food-based business incubation and acceleration of early stage food ventures; 2) to determine the physical and technical feasibility of potential CitySeed Incubates facility locations; and 3) to engage a diverse network of community partners in informing and supporting the launch of CitySeed Incubates, including building a membership recruitment pipeline. A USDA Planning Grant will facilitate the development of about \$62,000 in local Connecticut food products and create 36 jobs during the grant period.

Recipient: Oakridge Dairy LLC (DBA Modern Milkman), Ellington, CT

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,000.00

Modern Milkman Weekly Staple Box: Delivering Safe and Healthy Food & Connecting Farmers and Food Companies with their Communities with Fresh, Quality Local Products

We provide farm-fresh refrigerator staples like milk, cheese, yogurt, butter, eggs, along with local baked goods, shipped right to the door, and managed with a simple online or mobile application. We offer transparency in our operations to connect with new customers, sharing the 120-year history and the story of how Oakridge Dairy milk, as the base product of the subscription package, is produced locally in Ellington, CT, bottled down the road in Bolton, CT at Fish Family Creamery, and delivered to area customers the next day, along with other farm and local food product add-on. The IT platform enables local food distribution in a convenient weekly staple box subscription service including products like the incredible Fiery Red Pepper and Dill & Spring Onion Cottage Cheese Dips from Courtney's Dips and Sauces of Berlin, CT; Farm Fresh Eggs from Hillandale Farms in Bozrah, CT; Farm-made Yogurt from Woodstock Creamery at the Valleyside Farm in Woodstock, CT; along with fresh butter and a rotating weekly cheese selection from Liuzzi's in Hamden, CT and Smith's Country Cheese in Winchendon, MA; hand-crafted Arethusa sour cream from Litchfield, CT like it used to be made; and a special treat of small-batch granola, a fresh baked cookie of the week, or a braided loaf of rich egg and milk Swiss Wecka Bread from famous LuAnn's Bakery in Ellington, CT. We're building upon our relationship with the surrounding community to break away from volatile swings of the commodity markets, creating a direct market to serve quality local products to a portion of the 20 million people

within 100 miles, starting within 10 miles around the farm. We build with expansion for efficiency and cross promotion for all of the farm and food company partners involved to keep local, strong in these critical times.

District of Columbia

Recipient: Freshfarm Markets, Inc., Washington, DC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,297.55

Match Amount: \$125,220.21

Total Project Amount: \$624,517.76

Pop Up Food Hub: Innovation for Food Distribution in the Mid-Atlantic

FRESHFARM seeks to expand our innovative model of local food aggregation and distribution that creates new and diversified income streams for farmers while expanding consumer access to locally produced foods. The program will grow four-fold by expanding from Washington, DC to the greater DC-Metro area, including Northern Virginia and Maryland. 40 farmers, 125 community-based organizations, and over 17,000 residents will experience the benefits of local food systems thanks to this project. The Pop Up Food Hub (PUFH) utilizes farmer's markets infrastructure and logistics to make local agricultural products available to individual customers, small businesses, and community-based organizations that have been excluded from participating in the local food system. Through a combination of direct-to-consumer (farmers market), subscription (CSA), and wholesale food sales, the program will grow sales directly to 40 local farms. Timing is essential for this expansion, as recent weaknesses in the national food supply chain have driven new customers to the local food supply. The pilot has established proof of concept, including the sizable market among underserved residents and symbiotic partnerships with local farms. FRESHFARM is uniquely positioned with expertise and capacity to immediately take advantage of this punctuated moment for local food systems.

Florida

Recipient: Tampa Metropolitan Area Young Men's Christian Association, Tampa, FL

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$58,006.00

Match Amount: \$14,502.00

Total Project Amount: \$72,508.00

Veggie Van—A Mobile Marketplace Expansion Planning

The Tampa YMCA launched the Veggie Van, a mobile food market, in 2015 to ensure that individuals most in need have access to nutritious produce by bringing it directly to them. This increased access means fewer individuals living in food deserts and/or swamps in the community go hungry. The Veggie Van served 18,869 individuals/families (duplicated) a total of 37,738 bags of fresh produce which is the equivalent of 339,642 pounds of produce or 283,035 meals. The Veggie Van seeks funding support to investigate how it can partner with local farmers to add more locally-grown produce to the existing operation. Funds will be utilized to hire a food access consultant to lead the development of two plans:

1) A plan for purchasing locally-grown produce directly from farmers for Veggie Van food distribution and 2) A plan to expand and increase local food distribution to communities in the highest need. These plans will result in a road map to work with local farmers to increase the distribution of local produce, clients' knowledge of the local farms in the area, and expand services in a sustainable manner.

Recipient: The Natural Resources, LLC, Hilliard, FL

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$490,577.81

Match Amount: \$164,121.00

Total Project Amount: \$654,698.81

Building a Sustainable Food Hub: Farm2Fork Connection

This project is a collaborative and comprehensive response to critical food system infrastructure, health and employment need facing residents of North Florida and South Georgia ("the Region"). We will focus on the development, coordination, and expansion of a community food hub, improving food marketing, distribution, access, and education by partnering with, promoting, and expanding the distribution channels of food business enterprises that engage as intermediaries in producer to consumer marketing and producer to wholesale marketing - to address root causes to health issues and support a diverse community with self-reliant small farmers and food distributors, and sustainable employment opportunities for years to come. At its core, Farm2Fork Connection will increase access to and availability of locally and regionally-produced agricultural products and, in doing so, will meet the food needs of low-income residents, educational institutions, and select other foodservice channels while increasing our community farmers' and food distributors' resilience and expertise for years to come. We will provide a long-term solution to the critical food system infrastructure, health, and employment needs of the Region. We will be a catalyst for community transformation, easily scalable and replicable - and a major step forward in a collaborative effort to establish a sustainable food hub. With this enhanced infrastructure and our strong history of operating success already in place, this one-time infusion of federal dollars will immediately elevate our current efforts, getting sustainably produced and nutritious local food on to the plates of those that need it most.

Hawaii

Recipient: Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative, Kailua-Kona, HI

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,995.15

Match Amount: \$128,946.00

Total Project Amount: \$628,941.15

Scale-up and Expansion of Hawaii Ulu Cooperative

The proposed project builds upon the pioneering efforts of the Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative (HUC) over the past 3.5 years to revitalize breadfruit as a viable crop and dietary staple in the State of Hawaii. From a severely underutilized and largely forgotten indigenous starch only a decade or two ago, breadfruit is now emerging as one of the islands' best hopes for increased food security, climate change

resilience, economic diversification, and cultural preservation. However, with 96% of Hawaii farmers being small-scale, highly diversified, and generally lacking in a professional capacity, and with major gaps remaining in consumers' familiarity with breadfruit, tremendous work is still needed to fully realize the crop's potential. The proposed project provides the resources and community collaborations needed to deliver this growing movement from a state of "demonstration" to successful "deployment" as a commercially viable anchor of the islands' local food system. Specific activities include: 1) targeted promotion and education of breadfruit as well as other local and indigenous starches ("co-crops") in partnership with the State Department of Education (HIDOE), restaurants, retailers, hospitals, prominent chefs, and Hawaiian cultural practitioners; 2) supply chain development through farmer capacity building and key infrastructure upgrades; and 3) market diversification focused on online, CSA, and retail-oriented channels in order to address COVID-19-related market trends and to stabilize and increase local grower returns.

Indiana

Recipient: This Old Farm, Inc, Colfax, IN

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$498,114.00

Match Amount: \$140,500.00

Total Project Amount: \$638,614.00

Local Meat Market Expansion Implementation

Our global pandemic has changed our world and brought the need for local food marketplaces to the forefront. Meat shortages have been seen as the larger commodity hog and beef facilities struggle to stay open. Meanwhile, in Colfax, IN This Old Farm Meats and Processing has continued to have beef, pork, and poultry available for sale from our network of local farms. Livestock producers have a hard time getting a market ready product produced. This Old Farm has worked for the last 10 years to help producers grow their markets by offering meat slaughter and processing services as well as aggregation of local meat products for wholesale sale. Currently This Old Farm is a rural business. To reach a ready retail market, This Old Farm looks to open a new Urban Old World Style Butcher Shop every 2-3 years starting in 2021. To meet the increased demand, farmer outreach programs will be expanded. Educational programming will be offered for youth, beginning farmers, as well as existing farmers that are new to selling direct to consumer. The pandemic has brought many farmers to us that had previously only sold through traditional markets. This new interest in local sales needs to be matched with education and appropriate services to help them stay engaged. To further encourage farmers to continue to direct market, Research and Development on shelf stable and other market ready product lines that can better compete in today's marketplace will be supported.

Iowa

Recipient: Practical Farmers of Iowa, Ames, IA

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$66,958.00

Match Amount: \$17,392.00

Total Project Amount: \$84,350.00

Growing Pasture-Raised Meat Supply Chains in Iowa

To transform Iowa into a scene reminiscent of a verdant patchwork quilt - symbolic of a diverse and healthy landscape - we must create stable market incentives for pasture-based livestock agriculture. If viable markets existed, farmers would experience control over marketing decisions and increased profitability. This would improve their quality of life and more farmers would transition to diversified production systems. Farmers currently have a greater proportion of consumers' attention and willingness to spend money on local food. The combination of an innovative market serving a network of regenerative farmers plus eager, conscientious consumers contributes to a resilient, healthy food supply. A critical mass of like-minded, regenerative livestock farmers exists in Iowa, and they're ready to work together on something larger than is achievable as individuals. These farmers have identified marketing as their largest obstacle; either spending the majority of their energy direct marketing under their brands or undercutting themselves by selling livestock at conventional auctions in order to avoid marketing altogether. A middle ground exists, but key links in the supply chain need to be in place to conceive a viable business. This project will provide the connections necessary to establish market alternatives and develop farmers to be innovative entrepreneurs. Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) will hire an agriculture marketing consultant to work with a group of 60 farmers, including three market-savvy farmers who will develop a business plan for a pasture-raised, Iowa-based meat company. This project supports small farm viability, environmental stewardship, and supply chain resiliency.

Kentucky

Recipient: Four Hills Farm, LLC, Salvisa, KY

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$465,892.00

Match Amount: \$304,638.00

Total Project Amount: \$770,530.00

Expansion of Lamb Mid-Tier Value Chain

Four Hills Farm (FHF) is an experienced small business (LLC) and sheep farm with a solid twelve-year track record for aggregating, processing and marketing fresh lamb to wholesale accounts. Small and mid-sized sheep farms in the Midwest and Southeast regions do not typically have access to wholesale markets that provide consistent and profitable returns. This is due to their inability as individual enterprises to supply the volume, consistent quality, logistics, and marketing needed to deal directly with major grocery store chains. Four Hills Farm has created a year-round market for our network farms to supply a major retailer. In addition to offering a steady, stable price, FHF has created a significant opportunity for farmers to expand their sheep enterprises and make continuous production

improvements over time. Currently we sell fresh lamb weekly to a nationally known supermarket chain with stores in Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. We have an opportunity to increase sales with this customer into the Mid-West Region. By meeting our two objectives, both lamb supply chain and market expansions, we propose to increase lamb sales 65% in the next three years. The LFPP grant will result in 35 farms (22 new) in our network having access to a steady profitable wholesale market with growth opportunities and \$1.8 million dollars of lamb sold annually, with proceeds of which will be distributed to farms and related businesses in rural Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina.

Louisiana

Recipient: Twin Parish Port District (Port of Delcambre), Delcambre, LA

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$73,480.00

Match Amount: \$18,370.00

Total Project Amount: \$91,850.00

Acadiana Regional Seafood Hub Planning Study

Demand for seafood in south Louisiana has increased in recent years. As more fishermen are looking to direct sales and to processing their own catch, a need has arisen for more outlets for them. This proposal seeks to establish a regional seafood hub in a multi-use facility in southwest coastal Louisiana that will act as an intermediary for indirect producer to consumer marketing and sales for fishers who work the coastal waters. Fishermen along the coast need a central location to be able to make their product more accessible to the public. This project will fund a feasibility study, a business development plan, and coordinated outreach efforts to producers, food business entrepreneurs, and institutions. The seafood hub facility will have a commercial shared kitchen designed to allow producers to create and test value added products and to conduct food demonstrations. It will provide an area for packing, storing and preparing shipments of frozen seafood and value-added products for retail and online sales. The project will include outreach to a limited number of regional specialty markets to expand distribution outlets for producers participating in the seafood hub. Informational and educational materials and outreach to producers will focus on the benefits of participating in the seafood hub and the benefits of agritourism activities. Expected outcomes establish a location for a food business enterprise that aggregates seafood products, creates value added products, and packs/stores/ships products. An additional outcome identifies and educates interested seafood producers and informs institutional demand for regional products.

Maryland

Recipient: Montgomery County Food Council, Bethesda, MD

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$100,000.00

Match Amount: \$92,713.00

Total Project Amount: \$192,713.00

Increasing Economic Opportunities, including Market Access and Business Scaling, for Farmers and Food Entrepreneurs in Montgomery County, Maryland through the Expansion of the MoCo Made Program

Montgomery County Food Council (MCFC)'s LFPP project aims to increase food producers' access to customers, infrastructure, and financing in Montgomery County, Maryland. It builds upon MCFC's 2017-20 MoCo Made Pilot, which connects food producers to wholesale and retail markets, increases the visibility of locally produced food, provides educational resources for food producers, supports local procurement expansion, and convenes farmers and packaged food producers. The pilot introduced the use of marketing, product labels, and signage allowing consumers to identify and purchase locally-produced food. Surveys indicate that 69% of pilot participants benefited from their involvement in the program, including increased brand recognition and sales, and access to new wholesale and retail customers. MCFC seeks to evaluate strategies to further increase the production capacity of small food producers, to better understand their infrastructure needs and barriers, and to facilitate farmers' access to cooperative farm-to-table aggregation and distribution opportunities and build upon the pilot's successful Food and Beverage Guide which marketed 73 local food producers at 15+ local retailers. This project will increase opportunities for 550 local farmers while also increasing the consumption of, and access to, locally produced food in Montgomery County. This implementation project will reach an estimated 5,694 beneficiaries in Montgomery County, including 5,073 residents, 550 local farmers and food producers, and 26 retailers.

Massachusetts

Recipient: Sustainable Business Network of Massachusetts (SBN), Cambridge, MA

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$100,000.00

Match Amount: \$25,001.13

Total Project Amount: \$125,001.13

Adding Value to Massachusetts Farmer and Fisher Wholesale Viability

As weaknesses in the global food supply chain are exposed with each passing year, the importance of building and sustaining local food systems year-round has become more and more clear. In order to increase consumer access to locally-sourced food and increase food producer profits and viability, SBN seeks to conduct a market assessment to identify 3 consumer- demanded and underproduced value-added local food products. A pilot launch will assist 2 local farmers or fishermen in creating 2 of the market assessment identified products, taste-testing the products among consumers, and connecting the food producers to 20 interested food buyers. The expected outcomes of the market assessment and

pilot launch are, to determine demand across income levels for 3 underproduced value-added local food products, including culturally connected foods that serve lower-income communities; identify technical assistance resources that local farmers and fishermen need to produce demanded value-added products; and to facilitate farmer and fishermen connections to wholesale and institutional channels willing to sell demanded value-added food products. This planning project will assess the feasibility of creating a new Value-Added Training & Matching Program within SBN's annual Local Food & Specialty Crop Trade Show programming. The Value-Added Training & Matching Program would pair value-added food producers to food buyers, provide year-long value-added technical assistance to farmers and fishermen, and educate farmers, fishermen, and wholesale & institutional buyers on consumer demand for value-added local food products.

Recipient: Tufts University Boston, Boston, MA

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$499,999.00

Match Amount: \$126,233.00

Total Project Amount: \$626,232.00

Promoting year-round Distribution of Local Produce Grown by Small, Beginning, and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers through Development of New product Lines and Distribution Strategies

New Entry supports 20+ beginning and limited resource and socially disadvantaged farmers to build thriving farm businesses by providing aggregation services and facilitating market connections through a food hub. This project will add value to in-season production to increase distribution of local produce to 8 food access partner sites as well as to an existing and expanded customer base throughout Greater Boston. Our target market includes: senior citizens served by four community senior centers, low income clients served at several food pantries, and current and future customers of the New Entry CSA. We propose to develop two distinct value-added and minimally processed product lines, one targeted for our food access work (senior centers and emergency feeding programs) and the other as high-value products for our existing and future CSA customer base. New Entry's Food Hub currently distributes for a 20-week period (June-October), this project would expand the Food Hub's local food distribution for an additional 10 weeks to all of its Greater Boston customers and food access partners. We propose to increase sales revenues for local farmers by partnering with Commonwealth Kitchen and Western MA Food Processing Center to capture bulk peak-season produce and facilitate minimal processing. Anticipated project outcomes include \$450,000 in increased purchasing from local farmers; 120 farmers trained on scaling up production, value-added, extending the season, and food safety; reducing food waste; and increasing the accessibility, duration, and quantity of healthy, local produce made available to Greater Boston residents regardless of economic standing.

Michigan

Recipient: Damian's Craft Meats L.L.C., Ann Arbor, MI

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$95,535.00

Match Amount: \$25,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$120,535.00

Developing Southeast Michigan's Local Meat Value Chain via Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration, Feasibility, Business Planning, and Facility Design

The disparate impact of the dual public health and economic crises from COVID-19 is acutely felt by the meat industry, making this moment even more urgent. This window of disruption presents an opportunity to reverse patterns of inequality, consolidation, and disinvestment in order to advance an equitable food system and expand the local meat value chain in southeast Michigan. The purpose of this project is to bolster the growth of southeast Michigan's meat sector through community collaboration and planning to better support the processing, aggregation, storage, and distribution of locally and regionally produced meat products. This public/private partnership will help realize the vision of a sustainable, vibrant, and thriving southeast Michigan meat value chain, serving as a replicable model for other sites across the country. Project leaders will drive the project, including completion of a comprehensive feasibility study, business plan and facility design for a multi-species USDA-inspected small processing business. Partners will make conference and webinar presentations to publicly disseminate final plans and lessons learned. Expected outcomes include plans that, if implemented, result in access to new market opportunities, processing services, meat storage, distribution channels, and potential herd expansion for 55 or more livestock producers. If implemented, this facility would create nine or more new jobs, ideally in a low income and low access area.

New Jersey

Recipient: Elijah's Promise, New Brunswick, NJ

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$293,750.00

Match Amount: \$90,600.00

Total Project Amount: \$384,350.00

Harnessing Local Value-Added Production Social Enterprise to Expand Sales Opportunities and Healthy Food Access in Central New Jersey

This project will establish a viable social enterprise that uses value-added production of raw produce to link New Jersey farmers with the purpose of creating new markets and living wage jobs in our local food economy. As direct-to-consumer fresh produce markets are increasingly saturated in Central New Jersey, local farms stand to benefit from being able to develop value-added products as a revenue source with the potential to diversify their product line, extend the shelf-life of their products, use produce "seconds" that may otherwise go to waste, and connect their operation to the emergency food system. Concurrently, not-for-profit Culinary Schools and existing food entrepreneurs benefit from being able to prepare their students for careers in value-added entrepreneurship and small-scale food

manufacturing. Through stimulating local food economies, this project will fill the need of good paying jobs and new revenue streams within the food system. Ultimately, the goal of this project is to connect farmers and emerging culinarians through the creation of a social enterprise at Elijah's Promise and Promise Culinary School. Drawing on research and pilots conducted during the 2018 Local Food Promotion Program Pilot Grant Connecting New Jersey Farmers with a Not-for-Profit Culinary School to Develop New Value- Added Food Products: A feasibility Study, underutilized commercial kitchen space will render the expected outcome of a viable value-added enterprise that benefits farmers, farmers markets, the communities those products are sold, and emerging culinarians.

Recipient: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Piscataway, NJ

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$371,293.00

Match Amount: \$94,216.00

Total Project Amount: \$465,509.00

Montclair Community Farms Market Expansion Project

There has recently been a push to re-establish local organic small grain farming in New Jersey and globally in light of nascent demand from changing consumer preferences and renewed focus on locally grown crops, sustainability, human and ecological health. In 2018-2019, Ruthie's Farm in Marksboro, New Jersey planted, harvested and cleaned their first winter and spring Warthog wheat crops. The wheat was trucked to the closest organic mill in Pennsylvania for processing and returned to New Jersey for distribution and sale. Despite demonstrating the feasibility of growing and selling local organic wheat, farmers remain hesitant to grow organic small grains as the market is emerging and the cost of production currently outweighs the value of sales. The goal of this project is to stimulate demand for local organic small grains through the sale of value-added products, and as a result strengthen the local food system and improve income and economic opportunities for Ruthie's Farms, other NJ farmers and youth entrepreneurs. This project will lead youth through entrepreneurship projects that support the marketing, distribution and sale of value-added products (e.g. pizza, pancake mix, and bread) for sale on Montclair Community Farms (MCF) Mobile Farm Stand, farmers markets, an online marketplace, and Agritourism events. This project builds upon prior work of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex County (Rutgers) and the MCF Coalition (MCFC) in distributing food to the Essex County Community.

New Mexico

Recipient: La Semilla Food Center, Anthony, NM

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$493,764.50

Match Amount: \$129,750.00

Total Project Amount: \$623,514.50

Strengthening the Value Chain in the Paso del Norte Foodshed

The Paso del Norte Foodshed includes Southern New Mexico and West Texas, with a population of over one million people, many of whom live in low-income and low-food access communities. In the last ten

years the region has seen an increased number of farmers growing food for local consumption as well as the establishment of local food hubs. Now, technical challenges are evident in the regional value-chain, impeding increasing sales of local products into markets with high demand. Stronger distribution networks are needed to support greater market share by food hubs and local growers in the regional wholesale and retail market. La Semilla Food Center, in collaboration with key regional partners, will address these challenges, strengthening the local value chain through purchasing, supply, and infrastructure improvements and efficiencies. This project will increase market access and supply, build food hub viability, and increase institution purchases through a coordinated strategy leveraging existing assets and infrastructure. Through improved systems for infrastructure use, logistics, transportation, and supply chain management platforms, we will increase regional food economy participation by local and regional growers and expand access to produce to people of all ages in low-income and low-access areas of the Paso del Norte region, including those served by currently untapped institutions. Our primary markers of success will be increased food chain resource access and utilization by local food producers and food hubs, as well as increased sales at the institution and food hub level.

Recipient: The National Center for Frontier Communities, Silver City, NM

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$323,828.68

Match Amount: \$83,488.00

Total Project Amount: \$407,316.68

Direct to Consumer Marketing in the Frontier: Sensible, Sustainable Local Food Solutions for Rural New Mexicans

The National Center for Frontier Communities launched an innovative and effective food hub in frontier southwest New Mexico in 2018 to connect remote food producers to intermediary markets. While the SWNM Food Hub has been successful in helping these growers increase their market reach, it needs to broaden its market outlets to provide greater reliability for growers that rely on the hub to expand their operations and to reach frontier consumers that currently have zero access to local food markets. This project will benefit frontier growers by creating a year-round, aggregated CSA which will provide a large, flexible market outlet capable of incorporating produce from new and existing food hub growers. The greater reliability of a direct to consumer CSA will allow more growers to plan for increased production and sales through the food hub. Additionally, this project will build producer capacity by working one on one with at least 25 growers to develop business and food safety plans and provide consultation related to planning for increased sales through this new market outlet. This project will help the food hub will reach new consumers in remote communities that currently have zero access to local produce and will make local food more accessible by allowing for SNAP recipients to purchase local food directly through the food hub. Finally, this project will help the food hub move closer to self-sufficiency by increasing overall sales by an upwards of \$400,000 per year and creating an expansive network of local food supporters within the region.

New York

Recipient: Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship, Stamford, NY

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,000.00

Emerging Markets Training Program

The Center for Agricultural Development & Entrepreneurship (CADE) will establish new markets and facilitate economic growth in sustainable agriculture in 12 counties of Central NY. In NY, state and local governments are increasing institutional purchasing to serve house-bound, vulnerable populations. Many consumers have transitioned to ordering food online for pick-up or home delivery to minimize social interaction and reduce the number of hands that touch their food. These crisis-driven emerging markets were increasing before the pandemic with mixed successes and barriers to entry for Central NY farmers. The Emerging Markets Training Program will leverage CADE's market research, successes, and learnings from the Value Chain Acceleration program, Farm to School program, and Farm and Food Business Incubator to build the capacity of local institutions to purchase Central NY farm products, as well as assist farmers and local distributors to increase and retain online sales and meet institutional purchasing requirements. These activities will reduce marketing costs, increase farm sales and profitability, improve farmer readiness for emerging markets and, as a result, foster greater collaboration between farmers and local food processors and distributors. The Emerging Markets Training Program will provide support for up to 1,500 agribusinesses, resulting in a dynamic and transformational impact - a potential \$28.8M-\$36M in new sales for Central NY farmers - in a region long suffering from underemployment and underutilized farm inputs.

Recipient: Cornell Cooperative Extension Essex, Lewis, NY

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$385,921.37

Match Amount: \$179,765.97

Total Project Amount: \$565,687.34

Expansion of Local Wholesale Revenues in the North Country through Farm to Institution Coordination, Food Business Trainings, Increasing Hub Capacity, and Marketing

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County, in collaboration with regional partners, will increase wholesale production and purchasing in the North Country by: helping institutional buyers navigate purchasing; supporting farms to reach wholesale production levels and obtain certifications; increasing hub capacity; and by developing solid marketing avenues. We will hire a Farm to Institution Educator and a Marketing Specialist to implement the above projects, which will lead to 1) increased institutional purchasing and a stronger regional economy 2) increased overall production by and revenues for North Country farms 3) increased sustainability and output of hub services 4) and increased food access for thousands of consumers. This project set addresses several identified needs. While agriculture is the only growing economic sector in the North Country region, many farms need support in reaching

wholesale production levels. Institutional buyers have the potential to source large quantities of local food, but we currently lack a Farm to Institution Educator or a solid marketing avenue to facilitate connections. While the Hub on the Hill has established delivery routes linking products from various farms to buyers across the region, the volume of the deliveries is consistently insufficient to allow for sustainable operation. Increased production and purchasing will allow for more profitable delivery routes and greater affordability for both buyers and sellers. Finally, supporting school purchasing, specifically, is a key goal with the recent 30% initiative offered by NYS, which would provide a substantial boost to school district food budgets in order to facilitate more local purchasing.

Recipient: Seven Valleys Health Coalition, Inc., Cortland, NY

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$491,931.19

Match Amount: \$122,982.81

Total Project Amount: \$614,914.00

Cortland Food Project: Growing Local Food Demand, Capacity and Food Security

Agriculture is the largest economic force in Cortland County, NY. As demand for local products has grown, technical challenges in the value chain have also increased. To meet these changing demands and strengthen the local food system, the Cortland Food Project committee (CFP) led by Seven Valleys Health Coalition (SVHC) will increase agritourism and marketing efforts through branding of Cortland County agricultural products and developing a multimedia toolkit for local producers, increase community awareness of how to access locally grown and produced products, and how to utilize them. This will be achieved by leveraging and expanding the Cortland County Local Foods Map and Puzzling Produce videos through promotional events such as interactive cooking classes (which can pivot from in-person to virtual as needed), transform the map into an interactive online experience, and incorporating other digital media to increase awareness and sales of local foods. The project will also capitalize on the broad coalition of food systems advocates, local producers, and consumers built through the CFP to improve access to local agricultural products by both individual consumers and institutions, such as community food pantries, to increase revenue for local farmers and improve community health. This will be achieved by increasing farmer capacity through technical assistance to develop better farm to institution market with a focus on food pantries, and addressing on-farm food waste while improving food security by enhancing value chain links such as needed farm to food pantry cold storage infrastructure.

North Carolina

Recipient: Eastern Carolina Organics, LLC, Durham, NC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$472,000.00

Match Amount: \$118,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$590,000.00

Building Resiliency and Scale in Local Food Systems through Value Chain Development

Eastern Carolina Organics, LLC, d/b/a Happy Dirt, is a local food marketing and distribution organization. We are a farmer- employee- and woman- owned company that supports family farms while providing produce to wholesale accounts. Founded in 2004, Happy Dirt has earned a stellar reputation for its work supporting the growth and stability of North Carolina's produce farmers. By strategically assessing the need, and then building and maintaining the critical infrastructure for small and large farms to thrive, we have proven that the demand and supply for local, wholesale produce is not just a trend, but an industry, and that when the infrastructure is reliable for farmers and buyers, it can be a market force with long term economic, environmental, and social impact for rural and urban communities. We now need to position the company for greater resiliency and future growth to better serve our existing farmers and scale up to support additional farmers in more regions. The goals of our project are to, provide opportunities for more local farm products to compete within the national market; catalyze more consumer demand for farm-fresh product from family farms; support and train farmers to transition from commodity production for global markets into diversified sustainable production for regional markets; and build resiliency on the farm and within the regional food system. The proposed project activities will increase sales for farmers across the region, expand consumer access to local foods, and create an overall more resilient environment across the local foods supply chain.

Recipient: North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$496,642.20

Match Amount: \$126,920.00

Total Project Amount: \$623,562.20

Expanding Markets for Local Food Intermediary Businesses and Farmers

Unlocking institutional markets for local farmers creates profitable market potential, greater resiliency for communities, and opportunities to improve healthy food options. However, institutional local food procurement is often limited by contracts, seasonality, and supply chain logistics. Smaller county-based institutions, like senior food services, can be more accessible markets and require year-round volumes that match well with small and mid-scale farms. In addition, senior food services are often connected to local government offices motivated to support the viability of local farmers and food businesses. Food councils can inform institutional procurement requirements to catalyze and incentivize efforts to support regional economic development and improved healthy food access. This project will address the procurement challenges of county-based institutions and implement strategies to encourage sustained local food procurement. Our proposed project will (1) create, support, and network county-based teams

that include Extension agents, food councils, farmers, intermediary food businesses, and institutional buyers to explore institutional procurement policy; (2) assess farmer readiness and provide needed resources and technical assistance; and (3) provide baseline procurement assessments, supply chain apprentices, and regional marketing strategies to create and expand farm-to-institution pathways through local food intermediaries. A place-based, multi-stakeholder approach will identify and address systemic local food procurement challenges unique to communities, increase availability of local foods for senior populations, expand markets for local food intermediaries and farmers, and build working relationships across sectors for ongoing collaboration. Three county models will be implemented and shared with communities across North Carolina and nationally.

Ohio

Recipient: Appalachian Center for Economic Networks, Athens, OH

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$88,641.75

Match Amount: \$22,472.50

Total Project Amount: \$111,114.25

Planning to Advance Mobile Meat Slaughter and Processing in Ohio and Central Appalachia

The Planning to Advance Mobile Meat Slaughter and Processing in Ohio and Central Appalachia Project is designed to test the need for an additional local meat value chain intervention that serves livestock operators and small processors to access new market opportunities in direct and mid-tier wholesale markets. The pandemic has disrupted national and regional meat supply chains. There is a need for investment in new systems and processing capabilities that support humane meat production and changing consumer tastes. Demand channels for local meat continue to grow, but bottlenecks in the local meat value chain, especially demonstrated by the limited processing capacity and on-trend marketing of legacy processors, continue to inhibit the market opportunities for livestock farmers in Ohio and Central Appalachia. The project work plan is grounded in recent studies: the Ohio Smart Agriculture Plan, the Central Ohio Local Food Action Plan, and The Beefing up Appalachia 2018 Study. Members of the Ohio Farmers' Market Network have also verified the need for greater customer access to sustainably raised local proteins. Since March, farmers markets have seen exponential demand and sales growth for locally produced meat products. The primary activities of the project will be to assess the feasibility of mobile meat processing for small-scale family farmers in Ohio and Central Appalachia; develop a network of interested producers, processors, and consumers; and create the necessary organizational and financial plans for a cooperative mobile meat processing enterprise.

Pennsylvania

Recipient: Philabundance, Philadelphia, PA

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$100,000.00

Match Amount: \$48,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$148,000.00

Social Impact Market Hall: A Food Business Incubator in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia

Famed for its textile production, Kensington was once known as the “Workshop of the World.” The downturn of manufacturing, however, ushered in a long era of disinvestment and decline, symbolized by its current status as a food desert. Lack of access to fresh food is a leading contributor to diabetes in Kensington, which ranks last of 46 Philadelphia neighborhoods in terms of poor health outcomes and behaviors. In 2016, a new vision emerged to rebuild the social and economic fabric of the community. This vision is embodied by a concept for a social impact market hall that will: (1) provide Kensington residents with access to fresh food; (2) provide entrepreneurs with opportunities to develop value-added food enterprises; (3) utilize food to create a destination experience; and (4) scale food companies to promote economic development. Led by Philabundance, Philadelphia’s largest hunger relief organization, the project team will engage the community in designing a dynamic destination experience and production hub that improves access to local food; design a business model that supports the startup and scale-up of 10-15 food producers; and develop a blueprint for grand opening of the market hall in 18-24 months. Once fully operational, the market hall will support 30 direct jobs and \$992,000 in wages. Through multiplier effects, the market hall will generate an estimated economic impact of 91 jobs and \$3,217,254 in earnings.

Rhode Island

Recipient: Third Sector New England, Inc., Boston, MA

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$99,955.00

Match Amount: \$25,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$124,955.00

Planning to Serve the Food Insecure Market: Connecting Rhode Island Farmers and Fishermen with Our Emergency Feeding Network

Unemployment is skyrocketing in Rhode Island, leading to sharp increases in food insecurity and extreme strain on our emergency feeding system. Economic projections suggest that this situation is likely to continue from one to two years. Unprecedented instability in global and national food markets is leading farmers and fishermen to be very cautious in their production and harvesting planning. At the same time, local food producers and harvesters are increasingly realizing that serving the emergency food system may be a viable market. The need for effective and reliable market links between local food producers and harvesters and people in need of emergency and supplemental food has never been greater. In the past five years, several pilots connecting Rhode Island local farmers and fishermen with

our emergency food network have been implemented. As is true in the development of any new market channel, these experiments and learnings must be followed by continued coordination and investment in cultivating market relationships until they reach a scale and effectiveness that is self-sustaining. This project is intended to provide resources and leadership to ensure the continued success of that process. Interest in and support for developing these market links is growing, but without the leadership of a skilled and committed intermediary, further development will be very slow and erratic. This project will result in an implementation plan that benefits small and mid-sized Rhode Island farmers and fishermen and serves Rhode Island residents who are in need.

South Carolina

Recipient: South Carolina Seafood Alliance, Mt. Pleasant, SC

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$25,500.00

Match Amount: \$9,048.00

Total Project Amount: \$34,548.00

Strategic Plan for Improving South Carolina Seafood Infrastructure and Operations

The South Carolina Seafood Alliance (SCSA), a professional association representing seafood industry stakeholders across multiple sectors, has a mission of “supporting the state’s seafood industry by growing the production of and enhancing demand for South Carolina seafood products.” However, a convergence of obstacles over recent years, including regulatory changes, import substitutes, and declines in working waterfront sites, have transformed this former stronghold of food security into a more stressed and vulnerable industry. For South Carolina seafood producers to become more significant providers of regional nutrition and protein, the industry must strategically plan to achieve a series of milestones including: upgrades to existing infrastructure; workforce enhancement; the identification of new markets and distribution channels; and investments in new operational strategies. With these obstacles and opportunities, the industry needs a systematic approach in making progress towards these milestones. SCSA intends to (1) identify and prioritize the infrastructure and operational needs of the commercial fisheries sector; (2) estimate the costs and benefits of the identified priorities; and (3) develop regional-specific strategic plans for achieving the prioritized milestones. The strategic plans will serve as a foundation for profitable and sustainable fisheries in South Carolina and will allow the industry to pursue financing opportunities. These achievements would ultimately result in improved infrastructure, markets, market channels, and operations for a diverse supply of healthy seafood for South Carolina residents. A secondary benefactor of this project would be the SCSA, who aims to increase their organizational capacity, to better meet the needs of the industry.

South Dakota

Recipient: Rosebud Economic Development Corporation, Mission, SD

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$87,290.82

Match Amount: \$21,822.71

Total Project Amount: \$109,113.53

Sicangu Local Foods Initiative

The Sicangu Community Development Corporation (SCDC) will launch the Sicangu Local Foods Initiative (SLFI), which seeks to increase access to healthy, local foods through comprehensive strategies that will meet the needs of high-poverty residents and tribal farmers and ranchers living on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The Rosebud Indian Reservation is home to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe (also known as the Sicangu Lakota Oyate) and is a designated food desert with an overall poverty rate of 54 percent. Through SLFI, we intend to complete a detailed Local Foods Market Opportunity Study that explores the viability of aggregating local and regional growers to supply Rosebud institutions with local foods. The study will: (1) help to better understand demand and how to shift consumer preferences to local foods; (2) create market pathways for tribal producers; and (3) create business plan models for different enterprises. The goal of the study will be to identify actionable strategies that the Tribe can implement over 1-3 years to increase access to healthy, local foods on the Rosebud Reservation. The expected outcome of the SLFI is to increase access to locally produced food among our residents and establish new market opportunities for tribal farming operations serving local and regional markets.

Recipient: Tanka Fund, Kyle, SD

Project Type: Planning

Award Amount: \$100,000.00

Match Amount: \$25,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$125,000.00

Pine Ridge Reservation Local Food System: Integration of Buffalo

Tanka Fund was created to support Native American buffalo ranchers in overcoming the barriers they face so that the buffalo can be a vehicle for sustainable community wealth and abundance once again. We are also located on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, a food desert where people struggle to access healthy foods. The buffalo ranchers we work with have limited access to training in creating sustainable ranch plans, marketing to increase sales, and accessing certified meat processing units. This has left Tribal and extended family buffalo herd projects operating at a financial loss. This, in turn, leads to unsound management decisions that negatively impact both the buffalo and the ranchers. Ranchers often sell young females and even calves to pay debt because they can get a higher price for these animals, thereby undermining the growth of their herd. Ranchers do not want to operate in a cycle of financial crisis, but don't have viable opportunities. Tanka Fund created a solution through a program that is designed to break through the challenge of accessing a local food market and providing value-added products locally that in turn sustain the buffalo rancher businesses. Our goal is to understand and add to the local food system and create a strong marketing plan that breaks down these barriers. We

want to implement a system that provides buffalo ranchers with the ability to sustain their businesses through an understanding of the regional market combined with access to a certified processing unit and regional marketing opportunities.

Virginia

Recipient: Health Care Without Harm, Reston, VA

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$498,653.00

Match Amount: \$151,001.00

Total Project Amount: \$649,654.00

The New England Food Processors Collective

Using a variety of methods, value-added production allows regionally grown foods to be preserved and made available year-round, addressing an oft-cited barrier to local procurement. New England is home to three nonprofit processing operations that share resources and best practices across a range of services and are primed for growth. The New England Food Processors Collective will support more formal collaboration across these processors to create efficiencies in sourcing, processing, and marketing in order to increase their capacity and help them secure ongoing sales to institutional, retail, and wholesale markets. This will yield greater financial stability for the processors, provide reliable sales channels for a mix of minimally processed and fully prepared produce throughout the year, and increase consumer access to regionally produced foods. The members of the Collective share commitments to regional sourcing and to creating jobs with livable wages. The Collective will partner with regional food distributors to gain efficiencies in transportation, from farm to processor and processor to buyer. This intentional collaboration will increase connections across supply chain entities, strengthening regional food system infrastructure— a goal that has become even more paramount in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the commitment to local sourcing and paying fair prices to farms and livable wages to employees, the Collective supports farm viability and sustainable employment opportunities across New England's farm and food economy. The Collective's marketing will highlight these supply chain players and connections, elevating the visibility of the people, places, and producers behind our food system.

Washington

Recipient: Grow Food, Burlington, WA

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$500,000.00

Match Amount: \$125,257.00

Total Project Amount: \$625,257.00

Creating a Regional Food System for All: Forging Innovative Community Partnerships to Strengthen Small-scale Farms and Increase Food Access in the Puget Sound Region

Food systems across the United States are at a critical juncture. Family farms struggle to achieve profitability, and one in every nine Americans grapples with food insecurity, even though about 20 billion pounds of food produced annually never make it off the farm. If we do not innovate to ensure

financial viability for small- and mid-scale family farms and support our vulnerable communities, our local and national food economies may not survive the radical shifts that are on the horizon for the agricultural sector. Viva Farms is setting a new standard for innovation in the Puget Sound region. Based in Western Washington, the organization is committed to creating a resilient regional food system by forging innovative community partnerships that meet the needs of historically underserved producers and consumers. Rooted in the understanding that resiliency is strengthened by strong partnerships, Viva Farms will work with farmers, food banks, food hubs, public schools, and a land grant university to establish new local supply chains that maximize profitability for small- and mid-scale family farms, while simultaneously presenting data-driven solutions to food insecurity in the Puget Sound region. This project will develop new value-added products and markets, establish a formal market channel for agricultural seconds, and adopt impactful new approaches to responding to the needs of food insecure consumers. The result will be an interconnected local food economy that models farm viability and community food security, setting a new trend for food system collaboration.

Recipient: San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild, Friday Harbor, WA

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$224,569.00

Match Amount: \$56,889.00

Total Project Amount: \$281,458.00

San Juan Islands Food Hub: Coordinating Sales and Distribution of Farm Products in the San Juan Islands

The mission of the San Juan Islands Food Hub (SJIFH) is to increase the production and sales of local food in remote San Juan County (SJC), WA, in support of a viable agricultural economy, food security, and community access to healthy, sustainably grown food. SJIFH partners have known that wholesaling of local farm products in SJC is hindered by gaps in farmer-customer communications, lack of infrastructure, and distribution challenges due to the county's island geography. To address these challenges, SJIFH is providing an online marketplace, linked to aggregation sites, and transportation among three major islands and to the mainland. SJIFH's original focus was on wholesaling. With COVID-19, however, SJIFH turned to retail sales to provide an outlet for farmers and value-added producers who have lost their wholesale accounts. Retail sales to date have exceeded projections by 20 percent, and SJIFH is now circling back to the wholesale operation, in anticipation of the restoration of wholesale markets post pandemic. This project will cement the long-term sustainability of SJIFH by hiring part-time staff to undertake the core food hub business processes, now done by volunteers, and by adding a wholesale marketing coordinator to grow sales. The growth in SJIFH income over the next four years is projected to cover the cost of these additional resources after grant funding ends. This project will also provide necessary food hub infrastructure and food safety training to producers and staff.

West Virginia

Recipient: Natural Capital Investment Fund, Charles Town, WV

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$456,000.00

Match Amount: \$114,000.00

Total Project Amount: \$570,000.00

Adapting Value Chain Coordination to Enhance Market Opportunities

This project applies proven capacity and value chain building strategies that will aid in the economic recovery, future growth, and resilience of West Virginia’s local food sector. Natural Capital Investment Fund (NCIFund) will spearhead a robust technical assistance and training program focused on helping food and farm businesses scale up and make market connections that will lead to financial viability. NCIFund is a non-profit business lender and advisor with a commitment to sustainable economic development and deep expertise in local foods. West Virginia businesses all along the local food value chain face significant barriers to building and growing their enterprises in rural, underserved markets and COVID-19 has presented new challenges, but opportunities as well. This 2020 LFPP project provides the resources businesses need to overcome obstacles and capitalize on unprecedented consumer demand for local foods, such as business planning and financial management assistance. This project will also strengthen the local food development ecosystem—needed to catalyze and sustain sector growth—through strategy development and coordination among supporting organizations. Outcomes will include increased sales, profitability and new investments in businesses, and increased employment in the local food sector, helping to advance the transition to a more diversified and stronger economy in West Virginia.

Recipient: Sprouting Farms Corp., Talcott, WV

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$498,190.70

Match Amount: \$124,904.00

Total Project Amount: \$623,094.70

Turnrow Appalachian Farm Collective: Scaling and Integrating a Statewide Hub-to-Hub Network

Central Appalachia is redefining our food system and creating real economic opportunities for farm businesses by working collaboratively across the value chain and building an agricultural ecosystem. Turnrow Appalachian Farm Collective was created in 2017, a budding network of nonprofits creating a multi-stakeholder food hub in Southern, WV. The project's success has led to a movement across West Virginia; new farmers, organizations, and customers want to become part of the network and we must expand operations to accommodate growth and scale operations. The current project partners will link and expand existing aggregation, sales, and distribution assets to create a statewide “hub-to-hub” network. The “hub-to-hub” network will expand the clusters of food hub services, technical training, processing, producer outreach and inclusion, and ultimately increase sales. Organizations in West Virginia and Maryland will join efforts to coordinate resources, expand markets, integrate producers, create efficiency for logistics, and grow market share. To achieve this, the “hub-to-hub” network will: (1)

establish a statewide sales, aggregation, and distribution operational network through our updated twice a week structure; (2) expand production planning; (3) integrate new partners to leverage Turnrow brand and assets; and (4) create a revenue sharing model for the partners.

Wisconsin

Recipient: Brix Cider, LLC, Barneveld, WI

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$443,088.00

Match Amount: \$163,160.00

Total Project Amount: \$606,248.00

The Local Food Community Hub: Advancing a New Model for Resilience

This project advances Brix Cider as a “local food community hub.” Targeted apple value chain investments include sourcing underutilized apples from 15 new farms, expanding cider wholesale distribution, and custom cider sales that orchards retail. Targeted food value chain investments include featured farmer events that highlight local producers and improving a Community Food Delivery program wherein Brix Cider aggregates over 100 products from local producers and delivers the products to customers who order online. Collaboration with the University of Wisconsin and Black Krim Media leverage research, outreach, educational, and marketing expertise. University-led events will engage customers in the local food system, connect them to local farmers, and educate them about local food. Black Krim Media will develop story packages through video and social media platforms that highlight local farmers and further engage customers in local food systems. The underlying theory of change is that a community approach that emphasizes outreach, education, and collaborative marketing will drive customer conversion, so they purchase more local food, more often, from more local food producers. The project’s value chain investments will generate \$2.7 million in measurable sales, while the broader education and marketing efforts will drive more robust growth in the local food economy. An agile project management plan will ensure that results are achieved, and an evaluation and dissemination strategy will provide insights about the broader potential of the local food community hub as a model for resilient growth.

Recipient: The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, Madison, WI

Project Type: Implementation

Award Amount: \$369,809.00

Match Amount: \$92,498.00

Total Project Amount: \$462,307.00

Building Financial Resilience in Pivoting Food Hubs Through Digital and In-person Financial Management Training and National Consultant Interventions

The business landscape for food hubs is shifting dramatically. While early business models emphasized aggregation for farm- to-school and other institutions, many hubs have evolved to focus on higher margin lines of business. Others emphasize community food system needs that are best addressed by non-profits. COVID-19 has accelerated these transformations as food sales and distribution have

become inconsistent. Food hubs need to change quickly to reach financial sustainability and they need new benchmarks and high-quality, financially oriented, technical assistance to do this. Our previous work makes us uniquely positioned to lead this effort. The goal of this project is to mobilize a national effort to bring the financial knowledge, skills, and tools that food hub managers and consultants need to quickly pivot and build financially resilient hubs. Our objectives are: (1) enhance the national capacity of technical assistance providers to help hubs pivot successfully through consultant training 2.0 and launching a consultant coaching “mastermind” group; (2) accelerate hub pivots through immersive financial resiliency boot camps for 70 hub managers across the country; and (3) enhance the effectiveness of the feasibility studies and business plans new and pivoting hubs need by creating a digital library of benchmarking reports and training modules. This project will train 170 consultants and hub managers, provide consulting to 238 food hubs (20 of which will end with resilient business model and financial plans), and reach at least 1100 producers, 150 consultants and 120 food hub managers.