

USDA Announces Grants for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

News Release | South Dakota | March 20, 2024

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HURON, SD, March 20, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is accepting applications for grants to support urban agriculture and innovative production. Applications for USDA’s Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production grants are due April 9, 2024, via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

“This grant program has proven very popular and impactful in recent years, and we look forward to partnering with more communities nationwide to strengthen local food systems and increase access to healthy foods,” said Terry Cosby, Chief of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which leads USDA’s Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP). “These projects will add to the important work communities are doing to build food security in underserved areas.”

Since 2020, UAIP grants have invested more than \$46.8 million in 186 projects across the country, and they’re part of USDA’s broad support for urban and innovative producers. UAIP grants are available to a wide range of individuals and entities, including local and Tribal governments, nonprofits, and schools. OUAIP provides grants for two types of projects, Planning Projects and Implementation Projects.

Planning Projects

Planning Projects initiate or expand efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs. Projects may target areas of food access, education, business and start-up costs for new farmers and the development of plans related to zoning and other needs of urban production. For example, the May James Urban Agriculture Park Planning project in Charlotte, N.C. will address significant issues including food deserts, socio-economic disparities, physical inactivity and nutrition-related health problems by planning an urban agriculture park in an underserved area. In Flagstaff, Ariz. the County of Coconino and partners will develop, implement, and refine a model for community and culturally connected agriculture education to increase engagement in the local food system and increase food security for resident populations in need.

Implementation Projects

Implementation Projects accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor and other agricultural practices that serve farmers and communities. Projects may improve local food access, include collaboration with partner organizations, and support infrastructure needs, emerging technologies, and educational endeavors. For example, Flint River Fresh in Albany, Ga. will bring fresh, healthy food directly to the community and guide residents to self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship through urban agriculture including a new hydroponic greenhouse, a grocery space in a low food-access location and expanded outreach and educational opportunities. Grow It Forward in Manitowoc, Wis. will increase food production and improve access to local healthy food, establish an urban agriculture training program, and expand the capacity of the existing hydroponic farm, community garden, and greenhouse.

More Information ?????

OUAIP was established through the 2018 Farm Bill. It is led by NRCS and works in partnership with numerous USDA agencies that support urban agriculture and innovative production. ?Other efforts include:??????

- Administering the [People's Garden Initiative](#), which celebrates collaborative gardens across the country and worldwide that benefit their communities by growing fresh, healthy food and supporting resilient, local food systems using sustainable practices and providing greenspace. ????
- Creating and managing a [Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production](#) to advise the Secretary on the development of policies and outreach relating to urban agriculture. ???
- Providing [cooperative agreements](#) that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans.???
- Investing in [risk management education](#) to broaden reach of crop insurance among urban and innovative producers.???
- Organizing 27?FSA urban county committees to make important decisions about how FSA farm programs are administered locally. Urban farmers who participate in USDA programs in the areas selected are encouraged to participate by nominating and voting for county committee members.????
- Establishing 17 new [Urban Service Centers](#) staffed by FSA and NRCS employees where urban producers can access farm loan, conservation, disaster assistance and risk management

programs.

- Partnering with the [Vermont Law and Graduate School Center for Agriculture and Food Systems](#) to develop resources that help growers understand and work through local policies.

Learn more at usda.gov/urban. For additional resources available to producers, download the [Urban Agriculture at a Glance brochure](#) or visit farmers.gov/urban???

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities throughout America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit usda.gov?????

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