



Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Six Recipients Selected to Each Receive \$145,000 in USDA Funding; Groundbreaking Ceremonies to be Held at Change Church & Rockdale County

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Recipients will use the funding to advance agricultural education and initiatives in Georgia

ATHENS, Ga., July 10, 2024 – Throughout the past year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the University of Georgia (UGA) have engaged with hundreds of community members at listening sessions across the state of Georgia to determine how funding from a [\\$1.5 million USDA grant](#) can be used to advance agricultural initiatives and support community garden production in Georgia.

During the listening sessions, UGA Archway Partnership was able to take its time-tested and nationally awarded model of building community engagement to conduct needs assessments of agriculture and community gardens across the state. Archway and other UGA faculty, alongside personnel from the USDA, met with farmers and agricultural producers to understand their underlying needs and determined that they would select six entities in Georgia to receive sub-award funding to create, expand, or enhance large-scale gardens and agricultural opportunities in their communities.

On May 17, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom [Vilsack visited Columbus, Georgia](#), to recognize the work being done by the USDA and UGA and celebrate the innovative work in agriculture across the state. Secretary Vilsack joined U.S. Representative Sanford D. Bishop (GA-02) for a tour of Turn Around Columbus and announced that this entity, along with 6 other entities, will each receive \$145,000 in funding as part of the partnership between the USDA and UGA Archway Partnership.

The USDA and UGA are pleased to announce the following entities are recipients of a one-time sub-award funding opportunity of \$145,000 per entity: [Change Church](#), [Lowndes Associated Ministries to People Inc.](#), [Peachtree Farm](#), [Rockdale County Administration](#), [Southern Sky Center for Diverse Arts](#)

[and Culture Inc.](#), and [Turn Around Columbus](#).

“This historic investment will create and enhance community gardens and improve food system needs across the state of Georgia,” said Arthur Tripp, USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director in Georgia. “We are extremely excited to announce the six recipients of funding who will bring instrumental change to their communities by increasing access to healthy foods and providing education on the importance of agriculture.”

The USDA and UGA will be hosting the following groundbreaking ceremonies to commemorate this historic investment:

Change Church:

When: Wednesday, July 17, 2024, at 9:00am

Location: 3080 Premier Pkwy, Duluth, GA 300097

Rockdale County:

When: Thursday, July 18, 2024, at 10:30am

Location: Wheeler Park, 1400 Parker Rd SE, Conyers, GA 30094

These events will bring together community leaders, USDA officials, and UGA representatives to share information on the project plans, including the design, timeline, and ways local community members can get involved in and benefit from the project. Additional groundbreakings for the remaining recipients will be scheduled at a later date. The groundbreaking ceremony events are free and open to the public. Those interested in attending should email GAOutreach@usda.gov for more information or to RSVP.

This funding comes as part of the USDA FSA's investment of [\\$43.1 million through the American Rescue Plan Act](#) for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. These actions support USDA's efforts to strengthen the food supply chain and transform the food system to be fairer, more competitive, and more resilient. These investments will also help assist food-insecure communities and serve producers in areas where FSA historically has not had a presence.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in the groundbreaking ceremonies on July 17 and July 18 should contact Haylie Haynes at (706) 552-2506.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and

producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit? usda.gov.

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