



Farm Service Agency  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## **Recipients of U.S. Department of Agriculture Funding Set to Begin Large Scale Community Garden Projects Following Groundbreaking Ceremonies**

**News Release | Georgia | July 22, 2024**

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355 E Hancock Avenue  
STOP 100  
Athens, GA 30601

Contact: Jay Ivey  
[Jay.Ivey@usda.gov](mailto:Jay.Ivey@usda.gov)  
706-510-5318

ATHENS, GA., July 19, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Georgia recently hosted two groundbreaking ceremonies to celebrate funding for community garden projects awarded to Change Church and Rockdale County Administration. These projects each received a \$145,000 sub-award as part of a [\\$1.5 million USDA grant](#) awarded to the University of Georgia (UGA) Archway Partnership to advance agricultural initiatives and community gardens in Georgia.

“This week’s groundbreaking ceremonies mark a significant milestone for these communities and our investments in Georgia’s agriculture industry,” said Arthur Tripp, Jr., State Executive Director for the USDA FSA in Georgia. “These projects will bring instrumental change to their communities by inspiring young people to get involved in agriculture and by providing fresh, healthy food to local residents.”

The first groundbreaking ceremony, held at Change Church in Duluth, Georgia on July 17, 2024, saw a large turnout of community members and stakeholders. U.S. Congresswoman Lucy McBath provided remarks during the ceremony and praised the initiative, highlighting its potential to foster community engagement and support the local food system. Attendees also heard from Change Church Pastor Dharius Daniels and USDA FSA Georgia State Executive Director Tripp, who provided details on how community members can get involved and benefit from the project.

The second groundbreaking ceremony was held at Wheeler Park in Conyers, Georgia on July 18, 2024. A wide variety of Rockdale County community members and local elected officials were in attendance to celebrate the launch of this project. The ceremony featured remarks from Tripp along with local leaders and elected officials who emphasized the importance of community involvement and the positive impact the garden will have on local food security.

In addition to [Change Church](#) and [Rockdale County Administration](#), the following four entities also received \$145,000 each in funding: [Lowndes Associated Ministries to People Inc.](#), [Peachtree Farm](#), [Southern Sky Center for Diverse Arts and Culture Inc.](#), and [Turn Around Columbus](#). Additional groundbreaking ceremonies for the remaining recipients will be scheduled at a later date.

More information on these community garden projects can be found at [this link](#).

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.

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 [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

## **Farm Service Agency:**

1400 Independence Ave.  
SW Washington, DC 20250

## **Contact:**

FPAC Press Desk

[FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov](mailto:FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov)