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## USDA Announces Cooperative Agreements for Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction

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LINCOLN, Nebraska, May 17, 2021 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of up to \$2 million for local governments to host Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction (CCFWR) pilot projects for fiscal year 2021. The cooperative agreements support projects that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans, and they are part of USDA’s broader efforts to support urban agriculture.

USDA’s Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (Office) will accept applications on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 16, 2021. Projects should span two years with a start date of September 25, 2021, and completion date of September 25, 2023.

“Finding ways to turn food waste into nutrient rich compost is a win-win for farmers, communities and the environment,” said Tim Divis, Acting Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director in Nebraska.

### **Details**

Cooperative agreements support projects led by local governments that:

- Generate compost.
- Increase access to compost for agricultural producers.
- Reduce reliance on and limit the use of fertilizer.
- Improve soil quality.
- Encourage waste management and permaculture business development.
- Increase rainwater absorption.
- Reduce municipal food waste.

- Divert food waste from landfills.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will provide assistance for conservation related activities.

Priority will be given to projects that anticipate or demonstrate economic benefits, incorporate plans to make compost easily accessible to farmers, including community gardeners, integrate other food waste strategies, including food recovery efforts and collaborate with multiple partners.

This is the second year the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production offered this grant opportunity. Examples of previous projects include:

- Partnerships for Food Resource Recovery in Douglas County, Kansas, is a project by the City of Lawrence Municipal Services and Operations and Just Food on a food waste collection pilot to incorporate into its yard waste compost facility; establish a farm gleaning program to provide produce to clients of Just Food, Lawrence Community Shelter, and Sunrise Project; and encourage farmer and gardener access to the composting facility.
- Lake County Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction Project in Lake County, Illinois, is a project to develop a stronger and more vibrant circular economy for managing food scraps and other organic material. It includes a compost to farmland/community garden demonstration study, strengthening the community gardening network, market development for compost, and education efforts to increase participation rates in the commercial and residential sectors.

### **Webinar**

A pre-recorded webinar will provide an overview of the cooperative agreements' purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting an application. The webinar will be posted at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

### **More Information**

Questions about this cooperative agreement opportunity can be sent to [UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov](mailto:UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov).

The Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production was established through the 2018 Farm Bill, and in addition to these grant opportunities, it offers grant and engagement opportunities. It includes representatives from many USDA agencies, including the Farm Service Agency and the Agricultural Marketing Service, and is led by NRCS. More information is available at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

Additional resources that may be of interest to urban agriculture entities include [NIFA grants](#), [FSA loans](#) and [AMS grants](#) to improve domestic and international opportunities for U.S. growers and

producers.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In 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 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).

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