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Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

USDA Invests in Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Effort in Oklahoma

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OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla., Sept. 9, 2023 –The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing approximately \$200,000 in a grant to the Choctaw Nation for its aquaponics implementation program. The project is funded through USDA’s Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (UAIP) grant program, which last month announced \$7.4 million in funding nationwide. The project will create an aquaponics system to grow vegetables and healthy food for children, seniors, and tribal families and educate community members about the importance of agriculture. This project is the fourth UAIP grant in Oklahoma.

“This funding will support community efforts to expand access to fresh, healthy food in the Choctaw Nation,” said Jeanne Hamilton, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist in Oklahoma. “The growing popularity of this grant program shows the importance of our broad support for urban agriculture, local and regional food systems and underserved communities here in Oklahoma and nationwide.”

Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants

The [Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production \(UAIP\) competitive grants program](#) supports a wide range of activities through two types of grants, planning projects and implementation projects, which allow recipients to increase food production and access in economically distressed communities, provide job training and education, and allow partners to develop business plans and zoning proposals. These grants build on \$40 million in projects funded since 2020 and are part of USDA’s broad support for urban agriculture through its Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

(OUAIP). The applicants selected were the top-scoring among a large and very competitive pool of applicants; this year, USDA received more than 300 applications –twice last year’s applications.

More Information

OUAIP, established through the 2018 Farm Bill, works in partnership with numerous [USDA agencies that support urban agriculture and innovative production](#). OUAIP coordinates across USDA to help agencies identify, priorities and resolve internal barriers to service with urban, small-scale and innovative customers. UAIP grants are part of a broad USDA investment in urban agriculture.

Other efforts include: ??

- Investing up to \$9.5 million for [Composting and Food Waste Reduction \(CFWR\) cooperative agreements](#) for fiscal year 2023.?
- 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.
- Renewing the [People’s Garden](#) movement, which invites gardens across the country to join the People’s Garden community; grow using sustainable practices that benefit people and wildlife; and teach about gardening and resilient, local food systems.
- Investing in urban agriculture and urban food systems projects through the [Agricultural Marketing Service’s Local Agriculture Market Program \(LAMP\)](#) that develop, coordinate, and expand producer-to-consumer marketing, local and regional food markets and local food enterprises, including those located in urban communities.??
- Helping child nutrition program operators incorporate local foods through the [Food and Nutrition Services Farm to School Program](#).?

Additionally, OUAIP helps employees at all levels of the USDA to understand that USDA supports agriculture regardless of the size of the operations, where it is located, or how the products are produced.

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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