



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



# Beginning Farmer & Rancher (BFR) Webinar Series

May 15, 2024

Month 4 Topic: RD Financial Programs

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION  
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- ABCs of Rural Development
- Business & Cooperative Agreements
- Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)
- Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)
- Eligible Use of Funds
- RD Application Deadlines
- Funded Projects
- Questions about RD
- All USDA Programs Deadline & Important Dates
- Future Webinar Dates
- Contacts
- Questions

# Introductions



Elizabeth  
Thomas

Farm Service  
Agency (FSA)

*Outreach and  
Communication  
Coordinator*

Colorado State Office



Cindy Einspahr

Natural Resource  
Conservation  
Service (NRCS)

*Outreach Coordinator &  
CO BFR Coordinator*

Colorado State Office



Amy Mund &  
Robert McElroy

Rural Development  
(RD)

*Public Information  
Coordinator*

Colorado State Office



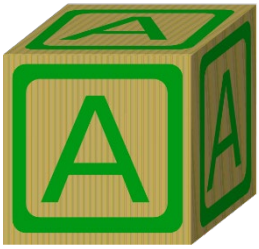
Jeff Darrow

Risk Management  
Agency (RMA)

*Deputy Director*

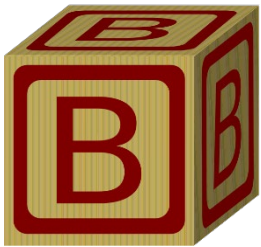
Topeka, KS Regional Office

# ABCs of Rural Development



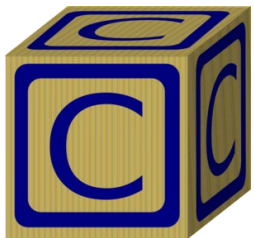
## **Affordable Housing**

Funding for homeownership loans and rental complexes.



## **Business and Economic Development**

Funding for Technical Assistance, Business Start Up, Marketing and Feasibility Studies.



## **Community Infrastructure**

Funding for the bricks and mortar of infrastructure needs in a community.

# Business & Cooperative Programs

- Business & Industry (B&I) Loan Guarantee
- Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)
- Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
- Rural Economic Development Loan/Grant (REDLG)
- Value-Added Agricultural Producer Grant (VAPG)
- Rural Energy for America Program



# Business Programs

- **Business & Industry Loan Guarantees**
  - Business development, growth, modernization, conversion, or repair
  - Purchase and develop land, Buy and develop land, buildings, and associated infrastructure for commercial or industrial use
  - Purchase equipment, machinery, supplies, or inventory



# Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

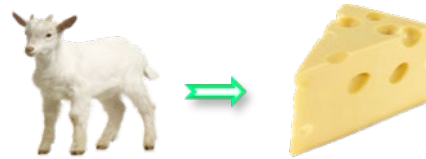
- **Funding available for either**
  - Planning Grants \$75,000 max
    - Feasibility Study & Business Plans
  - Working Capital \$250,000 max
    - Processing costs
    - Marketing and advertising expenses
    - Some inventory and salary expenses
- **Eligible Applicants**
  - Independent Producers
  - Agricultural Producer Groups
  - Farmer- or Rancher Cooperatives
  - Majority-controlled Producer
- **Matching Requirement:**
  - 1-to-1 match (50% of total project costs) cash or eligible in-kind contributions to be used only for eligible project purposes
- **Grant Period:**
  - Up to 36 months



# VAPG (Cont)

## Five Value-Added Methodologies

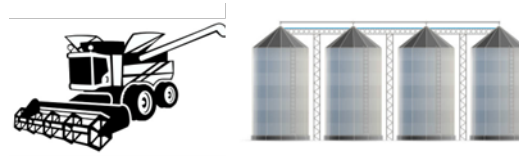
- Change in physical state



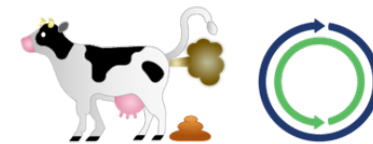
- Production that enhances value of ag commodity



- Physical segregation



- Farm or Ranch sources renewable energy



- Locally-produced agricultural food product





# VAPG Projects



## Colorado Cow

## Clark Family Orchards



# Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

- Grant Funds up to 50% of Total Eligible Project Costs
- Quarterly Competitions through 9/30/2024
- Renewable Energy Systems or Energy Efficiency Improvements
- Rural Small Businesses or Ag Producers

Renewable Energy Systems		Energy Efficiency Improvements	
Minimum Grant Request	<b>\$2,500</b> Total eligible project costs $\geq$ \$6,250	Minimum Grant Request	<b>\$1,500</b> Total eligible project costs $\geq$ \$3,750
Maximum Grant Request	<b>\$1,000,000</b> Total eligible project costs $\geq$ \$2.5 million	Maximum Grant Request	<b>\$500,000</b> Total eligible project costs $\geq$ \$1.25 million

# Eligible Use of Funds

## Energy Efficiency

Lighting

Heating & Cooling

Windows & Doors

Efficient Ag Equipment

Automated Controls

Insulation



The technology must be commercially available.  
Research and development projects do not qualify.

## Renewable

Energy

Solar

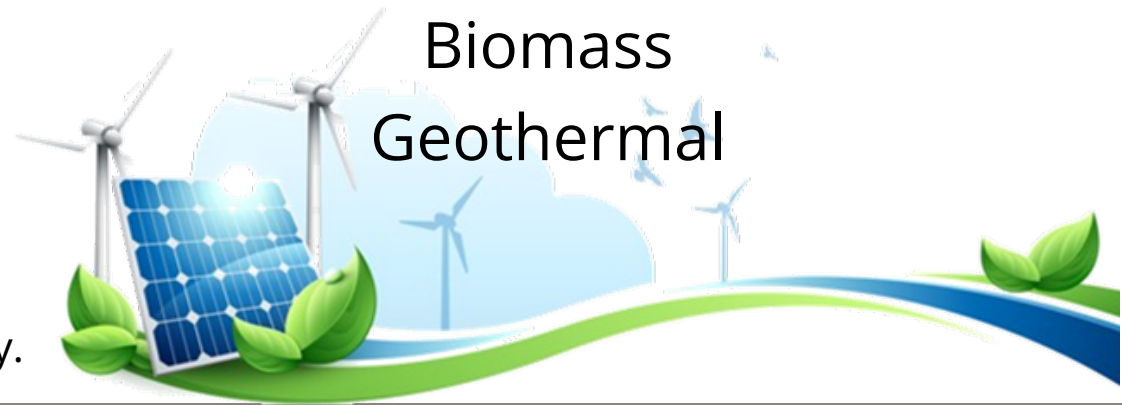
Wind

Small Hydroelectric

Anaerobic Digesters

Biomass

Geothermal



# Upcoming Application Deadlines

- 06/30/2024
- 09/30/2024



# Funded Project 1



- Commercial Building
- 26.5kW PV Solar Awnings
- 54,003kWh Annual Production
- 100% Offset of historical
- \$7,744 annual savings

# Funded Project 2

- 25kW Hydro Turbine
- Existing irrigation ditch
- 43,000kW production during irrigation season
- Savings of \$6,000/annually
- Offset 100% of historical
- Collaboration with Colorado Department of Agriculture



# Colorado Rural Development Office Contact Information

- [www.rd.usda.gov/co](http://www.rd.usda.gov/co)

- **Denver State Office**

Denver Federal Center  
 Building 56, Room 2300, P.O. Box 25426  
 Denver, CO 80225-0426  
 Phone: (720) 544-2903

- **Alamosa Area Office**

101 S. Craft Drive  
 Alamosa, CO 81101  
 Office (719) 589-5661 x4

- **Cortez Local Office**

628 W. 5th Street  
 Cortez, CO 81321  
 Office (970) 565-9045, x4

- **Craig Local Office**

145 Commerce Street  
 Craig, CO 81625  
 Office (970) 824-3476 x4

- **Delta Area Office**

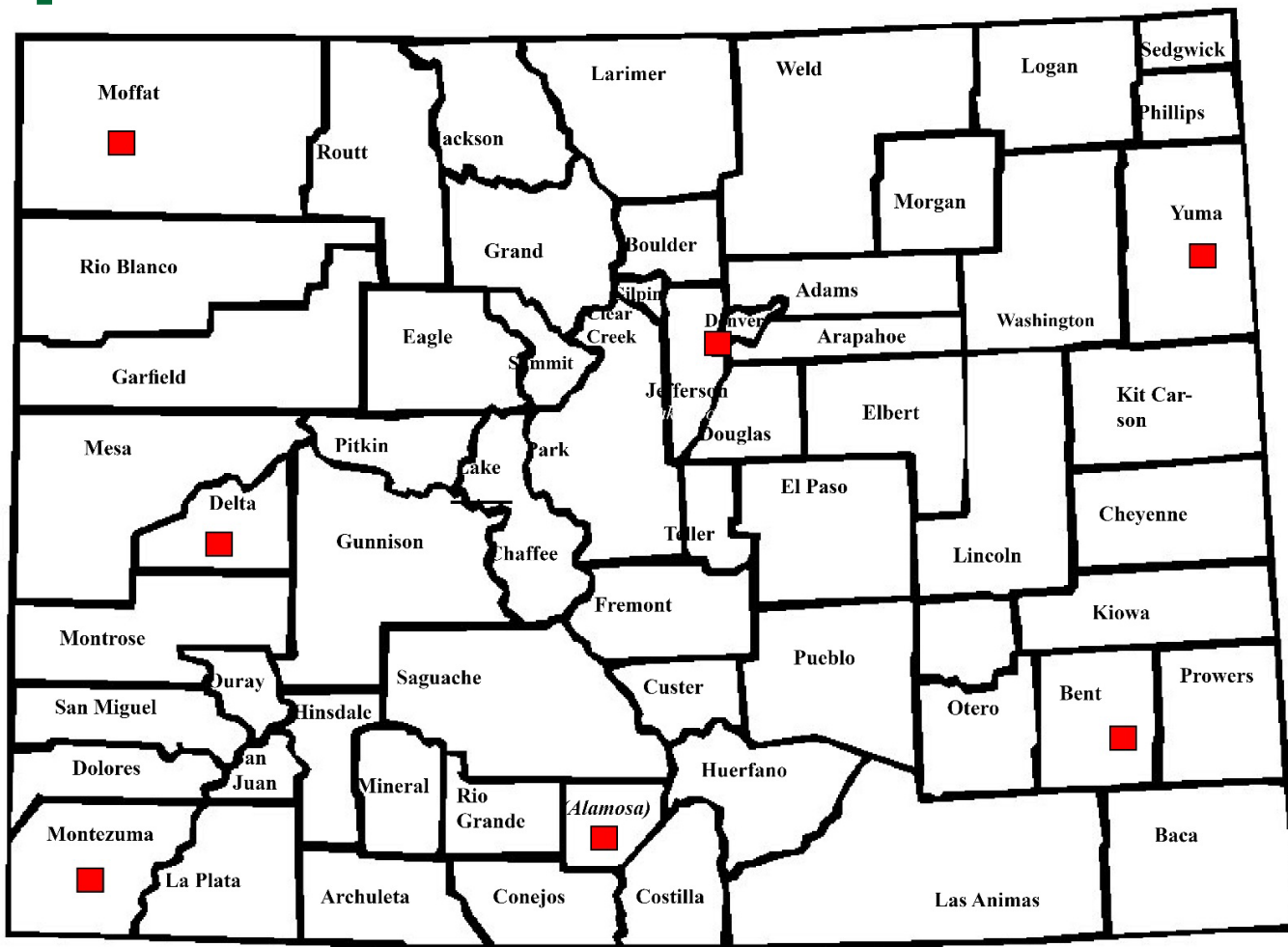
690 Industrial Blvd.  
 Delta, CO 81416  
 Office (970) 874-5735 x4

- **Las Animas Area Office**

760 Bent Ave  
 Las Animas, CO 81054  
 Office (719) 456-0120 x4

- **Wray Area Office**

247 N Clay, Suite 2  
 Wray, CO 80758  
 Office (970) 332-3107 x4





# Questions for Rural Development



# USDA Upcoming Program Deadlines & Important Dates

## FSA

- Tentative May-June 2024: Grassland CRP Signup Deadline (Not announced yet)
- July 15: Spring Crop Reporting Deadline

## NRCS

- July 2: Potential partners are invited to propose RCPP projects where NRCS and partners co-invest in impactful and innovative solutions to on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns.

## RD

- REAP Office Hours:
  - May 29<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM MST – register [here](#)
- June 30: Rural Energy America Program (REAP) Grant Deadline 2
- Sept. 30: Rural Energy America Program (REAP) Grant Deadline 3

## RMA

- July 15: Spring Crop Reporting Deadline

# Future Webinar Dates & Topics

- June 19, Working with the Risk Management Agency (RMA) Crop & Livestock Insurance
- July 17, Technical and financial assistance to producers and forest landowners to address natural resource concerns (NRCS)
- August 21, Soil Health and how use Web Soil Survey
- September 18, Urban Ag
- October 16, What CSU has to offer
- November 18, Colorado Department of Agriculture New Farmer & Rancher Resources

\*\*All Previous Presentations and Materials, along with future registration links can be found on Colorado FSA's website: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Colorado/resources/index>

\*\*Previous Recordings can be found on NRCS YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@coloradonrcs4011>

# Contacts



Elizabeth  
Thomas

Farm Service  
Agency (FSA)

[Elizabeth.Thomas1@usda.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Thomas1@usda.gov)  
720.544.2879



Cindy Einspahr

Natural Resource  
Conservation  
Service (NRCS)

[Cindy.Einspahr@usda.gov](mailto:Cindy.Einspahr@usda.gov)  
720-930-9884



Amy Mund

Rural Development  
(RD)

[amy.mund@usda.gov](mailto:amy.mund@usda.gov)  
720-544-2906



Jeff Darrow

Risk Management  
Agency (RMA)

[rsoks@rma.usda.gov](mailto:rsoks@rma.usda.gov)  
785-228-5512



Questions?