

# LOCAL FOODS RESOURCES

March 2024

*This document includes a list of current financial opportunities, trainings, and providers for food producers and food related businesses, and institutions that purchase locally-produced food.*

## FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOOD PRODUCERS

[Good Food Funding Guide](#) - A guide that includes listing of sorts of grants, loans, and equity for businesses and programs promoting sustainable food and agriculture and local economies. It is arranged alphabetically in four sections: Government Grants, Private Grants, Loans, and Equity.

[USDA Agricultural Marketing Service](#) - The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service is helping communities scale up local and regional food systems and strengthen their economies.

[Protecting Livestock \(Protect\) Grant](#) - Farmers can request between \$500 and \$10,000 per farming operation a 1:1 cash match is required. Applications are due March 7th, 2024 by 4:00 pm central time.

[AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant](#) - encourages youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development within the city limits of urban or peri-urban areas. Applications are due by 4pm CT on Thursday, March 21, 2024.

[The Good Access Food Program \(GFAP\)](#) - increases the availability and accessibility of affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, including fresh fruits and vegetables, for underserving communities in low- and moderate-income areas. Applications must be submitted by 4pm CT on March 28, 2024

[The Resilient Food System and Infrastructure \(RSFI\) Grant Program](#) - offers designated grants for businesses and organizations operating in the middle of the food supply chain in Minnesota. Awards will be between \$100,000 and \$3 million. You must supply matching funds to receive the RSFI Grant. Applications are due April 1st, 2024.



[The Organic Transition Program](#) - a competitive grant program that supports the integration of research, higher education, and extension programs to address the challenges of transitioning to organic agriculture. Projects funded by ORG help farmers transitioning to organic agriculture by providing research and education resources that improve the competitiveness of organic operations, offer guidance on understanding the economic and environmental benefits of organic agriculture, and share culturally-relevant alternatives to substances addressed by the National Organic Program. This year, NIFA announced the availability of \$7.5 million for ORG grants.

[Beginning Farmer Rancher and Development Program](#) - Created in the 2018 Farm Bill as part of the [Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach \(FOTO\) Program](#), the [Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program](#) (BFRDP) is the only USDA program focused on funding projects that provide technical assistance, education, and training for the next generation of farmers in the United States. The program supports local, state, and regional partnerships that create opportunities for beginning farmers to learn and develop business and farm production skills. The estimated total amount of grant funding available for BFRDP this year is \$24 million.

[Urban Agriculture and Innovation Program \(UAIP\) Competitive Grants Program](#) - The [Urban Agricultural and Innovation Production \(UAIP\) Competitive Grants Program](#) made competitive grant funding available for projects that support the development of, and innovation in, urban agriculture projects. Operated by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the program offers two types of grants: planning project grants and implementation project grants. Planning projects initiate or expand the efforts of farmers, citizens, governments, or schools in urban and suburban areas working to develop urban agriculture to address food access issues, business start-up costs, or development of zoning policies. Implementation projects provide funding to accelerate existing urban or community agriculture spaces and practices that improve local food access. Competitive projects include the collaboration of multiple partners to support infrastructure, education, and policy implementation that reaches networks of growers. NRCS announced approximately \$6 million available for UAIP projects this year.

[The Value Added Producer Grant](#) - provides competitive grants to individual agricultural producers, groups of independent producers, producer-controlled entities, and farmer or rancher cooperatives to create or develop value-added, producer-owned businesses. Proposed projects must demonstrate creating or expanding into a market and an increase in farm revenue. These grants may be used to fund business and marketing plans and feasibility studies, or to acquire working capital to operate a value-added business venture or alliance. This year, there is approximately \$30 million available for VAPG grants. In addition to priority given to beginning, socially-disadvantaged, small or medium-sized and family farms, farmer and rancher cooperatives, and mid-tier value chain projects, USDA Rural Development is newly prioritizing projects create more and better markets, advance racial justice and place-based equity and opportunity, and address climate change and environmental justice.



[Farmers Market Promotion Program](#) - The Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) funds projects that develop, coordinate and expand direct producer-to-consumer markets to help increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products by developing, coordinating, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, online sales or other direct producer-to-consumer (including direct producer-to-retail, direct producer-to-restaurant and direct producer-to-institutional marketing) market opportunities.

[The Regional Food Systems Partnership Program](#) - The Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP) program supports partnerships that connect public and private resources to plan and develop local or regional food systems. The program focuses on building and strengthening the viability and resilience of local or regional food economies through collaboration and coordination. RFSP supports public-private partnerships that plan and develop relationships between local and regional producers, processors, intermediaries, and institutional markets or institutional food service operations through local and regional producers and local and regional food systems.

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOOD PRODUCERS

[FSMA Produce Safety Rule Grower Training Course](#) - A training course for produce growers and those interested in learning about produce safety, Good Agricultural Practice (GAPs), and the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

[On Farm Readiness Review](#) - a free, voluntary, in-person assessment of a farm personnel's understanding of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

[Food Manufacturing Course](#) - a six week course for the food manufacturing and production industry

[Cottage Food Producers Food Safety Training](#) - An advanced course that focuses on food safety practices for all processes covered under the cottage food law including drying, baking, confections, janes and jellies, acid and acidified fruits, and fermentation

[Minnesota Certified Food Protection's Manager](#) - A training course to become a Minnesota Certified Food Protection's Manager

[Emerging Farmers Institute](#) - a free, virtual, ten week program designed for farmers of all backgrounds and experience, with an emphasis on the challenges facing black, brown, and indigenous farmers



## INSTITUTIONS THAT PURCHASE LOCALLY-PRODUCED FOOD

[Minnesota Grown Wholesale Directory](#) - A directory for restaurants, schools, co ops, or other wholesale accounts to find local farmers and producers

[Twin Cities Good Food Purchasing Program](#) - An organization that provides a metric based, flexible framework that encourages large institutions to direct their buying power toward five core values: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare, and nutrition

[The Local Food Promotion Program](#) - The Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) funds projects that develop, coordinate, and expand local and regional food business enterprises that engage as intermediaries in indirect producer to consumer marketing to help increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.

