

USDA: Makes available \$200 million to strengthen U.S. food supply chain

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STEVENS POINT, Wisc., June 14, 2022 — U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development State Director for Wisconsin Julie Lassa today announced that the Department has made \$200 million available to strengthen the food supply chain and create opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs in rural communities. Today's funding opportunity is [one of many ways](#) USDA is transforming the nation's food system through a more equitable, diverse, and resilient meat and poultry supply chain.

"Having grown up on a farm, I know that farmers and producers face challenges even during the good times, let alone when the economy is recovering from a global pandemic," Lassa said. "Meat and poultry processing is a capital-intensive industry. Affordable financing is essential to immediately alleviate the processing bottleneck that currently exist in these supply chains. By partnering with local organizations on the ground, we will ensure this funding reaches the people and businesses who embody the President's plan to build our economy from the bottom up and middle out." [[AUDIO RECORDING | 5,596 KB | 00:00:29](#)]

Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program

USDA Rural Development is making \$200 million available through the [Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program](#) (MPILP). USDA will provide grants of up to \$15 million to nonprofit lenders, including private nonprofits, cooperatives, public agencies and tribal entities. These intermediaries will use this funding to establish a revolving loan fund (RLF) to finance a variety of activities related to meat and poultry processing. For example, businesses may use the loans to acquire land, build or expand facilities and modernize equipment.

When loans are repaid, intermediaries can make additional loans to support activities throughout the middle of the food supply chain. This funding can help businesses aggregate, process, manufacture, store, transport, wholesale and distribute food.

The design of MPILP was informed by the other active programs that are part of the Biden Administration's [Action Plan](#) to Build a Fairer, More Competitive, and More Resilient Meat and Poultry Supply Chain.

Grants are available through two application cycles. Today, USDA is making available \$75 million through the first application period. All application materials can be found at www.rd.usda.gov/mpilp or at www.Grants.gov.

Applications for the first round of funding must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on July 25, 2022, through www.Grants.gov.

USDA will announce the application period for the remaining \$125 million in the coming months.

USDA offers [priority](#) points to projects that advance key priorities under the Biden-Harris Administration to help communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, advance equity and combat climate change. These extra points will increase the likelihood of funding for projects seeking to address these critical challenges in rural America.

For additional information, visit: www.rd.usda.gov/mpilp. Questions may be submitted through the website or sent to MPILP@usda.gov.

Credit Ready Meat and Poultry Lending Initiative

USDA Rural Development, in cooperation with the University of New Hampshire's Center for Impact Finance at the Carsey School of Public Policy, also is announcing the Credit Ready Meat and Poultry Lending Initiative. This initiative will provide training and peer support to lenders interested in developing or expanding their capacity to finance projects in the meat and poultry processing sector.

This opportunity will be available to all interested lenders, though recipients of MPILP grants will be given priority so they can more effectively deploy capital and support businesses engaged in processing. Approximately 30 lenders will be selected for the intensive training module.

Lenders with experience financing the meat and poultry processing sector can help develop the curriculum for the initiative. Such lenders may submit requested information through a public Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process that will be announced in the coming weeks. Interested parties can [sign up for updates](#) on the RFQ release date and instructions for submissions.

Biden-Harris Administration's Commitment to Supporting American Farmers and Ranchers

This funding announcement follows the Biden-Harris Administration's [September 2021 announcement](#) about the steps it is taking to address concentration in the meat-processing industry and the [January 2022 announcement](#) about an Action Plan for a Fairer, More Competitive, and More Resilient Meat and Poultry Supply Chain. It builds on several other USDA [recent investments](#) to strengthen capacity in the meat and poultry processing sector. Visit www.usda.gov/meat for more information today.

As Co-Chair of the Biden-Harris Administration's Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force, Secretary Vilsack and USDA have brought together industry, labor and federal partners to address the short-term supply chain disruptions arising from the Administration's strong economic recovery. This task force is one of several key steps that USDA is taking to build a more resilient supply chain and better food system and to increase competition in agricultural markets. These steps are pursuant to President Biden's Executive Order on Promoting Competition in the American Economy and his [Executive Order on America's Supply Chains](#). This initiative will support key supply chain infrastructure investments to expand and scale existing capacity, as well as support long-term investments in new operations.

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, promoting competition and 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.