

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program grant applications open through March 6

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is accepting applications for the Wisconsin Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program. The purpose of the RFSI Program is to expand capacity and infrastructure for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally- and regionally-produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other value-added food products. Funding for the program is provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

A total of \$27 million will be awarded through a competitive grant process. Grant applications are due by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024.

The RFSI Program has two grant tracks, the Infrastructure Grant and the Equipment-Only Grant. Applicants may only apply for one track.

Infrastructure Grants will range from \$100,000 up to \$3 million. This grant can fund capital investments such as construction, equipment (e.g. delivery vehicles, frozen or refrigerated storage, value-added food processing equipment, or other equipment for middle-of-the food supply chain activities), and building renovations. Infrastructure Grants can also fund facility design or engineering, staff time, modernizing systems (e.g. tracking, storage, information technology, etc.), plan

development (e.g. Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point plan), and market development. A match is required for Infrastructure Grants and starts at 50% of the total project cost. However, if the main applicant qualifies as underserved, the match requirement will be reduced to 25% of the total project cost.

Equipment-Only Grants can range from \$10,000 up to \$99,999. This grant can only fund equipment (examples provided above). Equipment may be new, used, or refurbished. No match is required for Equipment-Only Grants.

RFSI grant project proposals must expand middle-of-the food supply chain capacity for locally- and regionally-produced foods and offer more and better market opportunities to small and mid-sized agricultural producers. This includes those who may not have access to value-added opportunities or processing to meet market demand for premium or value-added products, such as underserved producers.

An informational webinar about the RFSI grants will be held at 11 a.m. on January 9, 2024 via Zoom. Registration is required. To access the webinar registration, learn more about the program, or sign up for automatic email updates about the RFSI Program, visit <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/RFSI.aspx>. If you have questions about the program, email RFSI@wisconsin.gov.