

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Seeks Applications for Grants to Help Rural Businesses Produce and Market Value-Added Products

WASHINGTON, June 28, 2021 – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that it is accepting applications for grants to establish and operate Agriculture Innovation Centers.

USDA is making \$7.4 million available under the [Agriculture Innovation Center Program](#). Agriculture Innovation Centers may use the grants to provide technical assistance to help agricultural producers develop and market value-added agricultural products using a variety of options, except joint marketing efforts. The centers may provide the following types of assistance:

- financial advisory services to develop, expand or operate a business owned by an agricultural producer;
- process development services, such as engineering, production system scale ups, scale production assessments and systems development;
- organizational assistance, including legal and technical advisory services;
- outreach assistance;
- technical assistance for product development, excluding research and development; and
- technical assistance for applied research to develop and operate processes and systems to produce and market value-added agricultural products.

Eligible applicants include nonprofit and for-profit corporations, public bodies and institutions of higher education. Consortia are also eligible to apply, but they must select a single organization to represent the consortium as the applicant. Only the applicant organization must meet the eligibility requirements

Recipients must provide matching funds of least one-third of the total project budget. The total project budget must include both grant award and matching funds.

Applications for grants must be submitted through [Grants.gov](#) no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Sept. 27, 2021. For more information, see page 33969 of the June 28, 2021, [Federal Register](#).

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