

News Briefs

Computer Equipment Available for Donation To Schools

USDA's Technical Service Division (TSD) is making information technology (IT) equipment that is no longer needed available for donation. Equipment includes, but is not limited to, black and white and color printers, HP desktops and laptops that USDA offices in Washington or Alaska no longer use.

This is working equipment that is three plus years old, but is out of warranty. All computer equipment include keyboards and mice but no operating systems.

These items can legally be donated to any school. If not a school, then USDA will advertise through GSA, where non-educational organizations can bid on them. For more information, please contact Brian Bowden at (509) 323-2945 or email him at brian.bowden@wa.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development Website Gets Facelift

Our website content has been relocated. Any bookmarks you had to the previous site may not work. Please visit the Rural Development home page at <http://www.rd.usda.gov> or the Washington State site at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/wa> to find information about our many programs and resources. If you need assistance with locating other content, please email the state webmaster at philip.eggman@wa.usda.gov.

Washington State

Rural Developments is published monthly by USDA Rural Development, Washington State Office, located at 1835 Black Lake Blvd., SW, Suite B, Olympia, WA 98512

Contact Us

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/wa>
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USDA Rural Development is an equal opportunity provider & employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write

U.S. Department of Agriculture,
Director, Office of Adjudication,
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410,
by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at
program.intake@usda.gov.

Washington State



Rural Developments

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Trade Promotion Authority Important to Rural Economy

In Washington's rural communities, hard work and innovation has led to record-breaking production of a wide variety of crops. The latest statistics show the value of Washington's 2013 agricultural production reached \$10.2 billion, setting a new record high for the third consecutive year. The hard work of Washington's agricultural producers and processors is helping to feed the world at the same time it sustains local, rural economies.



State Director
Mario Villanueva

Across the nation, America's farmers and ranchers rely on exports to fill demand for their abundant products. The past six years have been the strongest in history for U.S. agricultural products due to past trade agreements that have lowered barriers, aggressive monitoring and enforcement, and targeted promotion programs. The U.S. exported a record \$152.5 billion worth of products to other countries last year.

Farmers like Don Olmstead, Jr. in Grandview, who has built a thriving rural, family business exporting cherries to Asian countries, can tell you just how important free and fair trade is to his success. "Over 30 percent of our cherries were exported last year. If 30 percent dropped to 15 percent, it would be a disaster," Olmstead said, explaining that the excess would have to be sold domestically and the resulting low prices would be a financial catastrophe for farmers.

Olmstead is one of millions around the nation who knows first-hand that Congress must act on bipartisan Trade Promotion Authority early this year. Without it, they'll lose out on the opportunity to tap into new markets and better reach the ninety-five percent of the world's consumers who live outside of our borders.

The impact of expanded exports reaches even deeper and further into our rural communities. With expanded sales, rural businesses create new American jobs up and down the supply chain. Agricultural exports alone support more

than 1 million jobs here at home, a substantial part of the 11.3 million American jobs supported by exports overall. With more money in their pockets, rural business owners not only hire new workers, they spend more at local businesses, strengthening rural economies and supporting communities where more people want to live and work.

This is why Congress must act on bipartisan Trade Promotion Authority early this year. Without it, our farmers and ranchers will lose out on the opportunity to tap into new markets and better reach the 95 percent of the world's consumers who live outside of our borders.

Trade Promotion Authority allows America to speak with one voice on trade. Congress sets the parameters for negotiations by the President and his team, and Congress can vote down the deal if members don't like it and don't think it is consistent with Congress' instructions.

With Trade Promotion Authority, new trade agreements are passed to the benefit of every American. Whether it is sending more beef or pork to Japan; poultry to Vietnam; or fruits, vegetables and grains to the growing Asian market, all rural businesses—farm and non-farm alike—stand to benefit from new and expanded trade agreements that will come as a result of Trade Promotion Authority.

This tool has been put in place for Democrat and Republican Presidents alike and it allows the Administration to show a united front when negotiating with other countries so we get the best deal for American farmers, ranchers, and workers. Until Congress passes Trade Promotion Authority, it forces us to stand still as other countries make agreements that leave out American businesses and hold back our rural communities.

Mario Villanueva

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mario Villanueva".

Washington State Director

REAP Deadlines

The notice published in the Federal Register on Dec. 29, 2014, specifies the final rule incorporates grant and guaranteed loan application deadline dates that allow the USDA to meet statutory deadlines for funding the EA and REDA grants and RES and EEL grants of \$20,000 or less.

REAP Grants (over \$20,000 and Combinations) are due by April 30, 2015.

REAP Grants (\$20,000 or less not competing for set aside funds, over \$20,000 and Combinations) may be accepted between May 1, 2015 and June 30, 2015.

REAP Grants (\$20,000 or less competing for set aside funds) are due by April 30, 2015.

REAP Guaranteed Loans are on a continuous application cycle.

For more information, please refer to the Federal Register.

Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program

Loan guarantees are available to construct, acquire and rehabilitate affordable rural rental housing. USDA will review responses submitted by eligible lenders, on the lender's letterhead, and signed by both the prospective borrower and lender.

Although a complete application is not required in response to this notice, eligible lenders may submit a complete application with a response.

The response deadline is December 31, 2015. **Details are on page 29159 of the May 21, 2014 Federal Register.**

Selected responses that develop into complete applications will normally be funded with the fiscal year funds available on the date the application is completed.

For more information, please contact Mary Traxler at mary.traxler@wa.usda.gov.

USDA Website Shows Opportunities for Property Purchases

Did you know that USDA has a website which identifies Rural Development Single and Multi-Family properties (as well as Farm Service farms and ranches) which are for sale by the U.S. Federal Government?

These properties may be currently offered at foreclosure sale, or are previously owned properties for sale by public notice, auction or other method depending on the property.

Properties which are currently owned by Rural Development are classified as program or non-program eligible and the Agency may be able to offer financing to purchase these properties.

Anyone may buy a home for sale by the U.S. Government, but you must work with a real estate agent, broker, or servicing office representative to submit an offer or bid to purchase.

Depending on your circumstances and the status of the property listed, your method of bidding and ultimately purchasing the property will vary.

The website is located at: <http://www.resales.usda.gov/resales/index.jsp>

Using the "Search for Property" function on the right, Select Single

USDA Inviting Applications for Rural Economic Development Funding

USDA Rural Development is inviting applications for loans and grants under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) for Fiscal Year 2015. Funding to support \$38.6 million in loans and \$9.2 million in grants is currently available.

Applications will be received the last business day of the month following the month in which application was received through September 2015.

The REDLG Program provides financing to eligible Rural Utilities Service (RUS) electric or telecommunications intermediaries that re-lend funds for rural economic development and job creation projects as a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). A revolving loan fund is a pool of



Family Housing; a drop down menu of States will appear on the top right, select the State of WA; a drop down menu will appear on the top right with a list of counties where properties are available.

Select the county in which you are interested; a map and listing of the properties in that area will be reflected and you can find out additional information about the property being offered.

Additionally, you can subscribe to receive email notification when new properties are posted on the site in areas you may be interested. Non-profit agencies may be offered a 10 percent discount within the first

30 days of a listing, if they intend to purchase the property to rehabilitate it and use/sell it for affordable housing.

For additional information about bidding at a foreclosure sale, it is best to contact the Foreclosure Trustee who can verify minimum bid amounts, the form of payment needed at the sale, details of the sale, etc.

For information about properties currently owned by the government and listed for sale, please contact the USDA Rural Servicing Office who will provide you with the most current and accurate information regarding the status of a property, as well as your eligibility for potential program financing.

public- and private-sector funds that recycles money as loans are repaid (revolved funds). Funding by either a grant or long-term/low-cost loan is used to start, replenish, and expand RLFs.

Funding recipients are state or local government agencies and nonprofit entities structured to make loans. They must demonstrate economic need and have a plan that both meets program requirements and spurs growth.

Intermediaries may use REDLG funds to lend for projects in rural areas or towns with a population of 50,000 or less. Up to \$300,000 in grants may be requested for establishment of the RLF (up to 10 percent of grant funds may be

applied toward operating expenses over the life of the RLF) and up to \$1 million in loans may be used to capitalize the RLF.

For more information about this program, please contact Ted Anderson at (509) 924-7350, extension 115 or email him at ted.anderson@wa.usda.gov.



Visit us on the web at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/wa>