

News Briefs

Guide to Grants Seminar

In Congressional District 3, Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler's 2016 "Guide to Grants" Seminar will be held on August 16 at WSU-Vancouver from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The seminar will cover how to produce more competitive proposals and federal applications for grants, including best practices and strategies from successful grantees and federal agency partners.

The Seminar will be held in Washington State University Vancouver (Dengerink Administration Building), 14204 NE Salmon Creek Avenue, Vancouver, WA 98686. The cost for parking is \$3. Please park in the Blue lot.

For more information, please contact Jordan Meade at Jordan.Meade@mail.house.gov or by calling (360) 695-6292.

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Contact Us:

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/wa>
Editor: Phil Eggman
philip.eggman@wa.usda.gov

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

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USDA To Celebrate National Farmers Market Week

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack signed a proclamation declaring National Farmers Market Week (NFMW) to be August 7 to August 13. National Farmers Market



Week is a great opportunity to visit a farmers markets to take advantage of the tremendous services they provide.

"National Farmers Market Week is a great opportunity for farmers markets across the country to host special events and emphasize the tremendous role they play in urban and rural communities," said Secretary Vilsack. "Farmers markets are important to strong local and regional food systems that support farmers and help grow rural economies, providing Americans with fresh, healthy food."

This year marks the 17th annual National Farmers Market Week recognizing the important role that farmers markets play in our communities and the agricultural economy.

Demand for local food is strong and growing with many farmers market managers reporting increases in customer traffic and

market sales. Industry estimates show U.S. local food sales totaled at least \$12 billion in 2014, up from \$5 billion in 2008, and experts anticipate that value to hit \$20 billion by 2019.

USDA agencies support farmers markets by bringing more opportunities for local food producers.

Between 2009 and 2014, the number of USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grants awarded to local food projects jumped by more than 500 percent. During the 2014–2015 funding cycle, USDA dedicated nearly \$14 million, nearly half of the awarded funds, to 116 unique local food projects through this program.

Additionally, USDA Rural Development created a multi-volume series to help food hubs improve their financial performance. The latest module, on assessing financial viability, came out in April 2016. In fact, the number of food hubs in the U.S. has more than doubled over the course of the Obama Administration, with more than 350 now operational around the country thanks in part to support from USDA.

We encourage everyone to use USDA's National Farmers Market Directory to find a farmers market near them – join the celebration, meet your farmer, and support your local economy by enjoying local food.

Check out the directory on the web at www.usdalocalfooddirectories.com



Mario Villanueva

Washington State Director

FREE WORKSHOP

Expanding Access to Financing & Telehealth for Washington Rural Health Care Providers

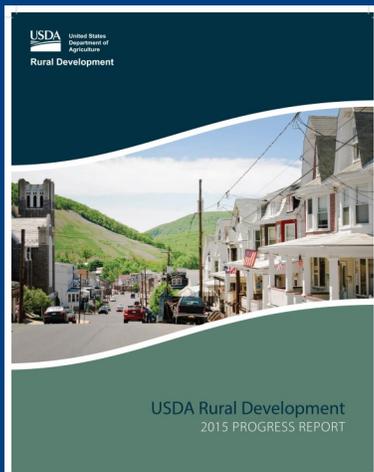
USDA Rural Development and the Washington State Department of Health and other partners will hold a Free all-day workshop connecting Washington's rural safety-net providers and hospitals with federal, state, and private resources to learn about funding programs for technology investments, upgrades or replacement facilities, and to offer telehealth services to interested communities.

Who should attend? Rural hospital leadership, staff, and board members, rural clinic managers, telehealth services leadership, rural radiology & other ancillary service managers, and any rural health care organization.

The workshops will be held on two days, one in both sides of the state:

- Tuesday, September 13, 2016 – Olympia, WA
- Thursday, September 15, 2016 – Cheney, WA

REGISTRATION DETAILS COMING SOON. For more information please contact
RuralEvents@doh.wa.gov



Advanced Biofuels and Biobased Products Program

USDA Rural Development is seeking applications for funding to help support the development of advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals and biobased products.

Funding is being provided through the Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program, formerly known as the Biorefinery Assistance Program. Congress established the program in 2008 to encourage the development of biofuels that use renewable feedstocks. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded the program to include renewable chemicals and biobased product manufacturing. The program now provides loan guarantees of up to \$250 million to develop, construct and retrofit commercial-scale biorefineries and to develop renewable chemicals and biobased product manufacturing facilities.

For this announcement, USDA will seek applications in two cycles. Applications for the first funding cycle are due October 3, 2016. Applications for the second cycle are due April 3, 2017. For more information, see page 48377 of the July 25, 2016, Federal Register. Application materials can be found on USDA's Rural Development website.

In October 2015, Rural Development implemented a redesigned two-phase application process. This new process helps the Agency identify the projects that have made the most progress in the development stage and have the greatest capacity for implementa-



tion and loan closing. The first two application cycles under the new process yielded complete applications from projects producing biogas, biodiesel, cellulosic ethanol, biobased lubricants and oils, lignin cake and syrup, and fertilizers.

Eligible borrowers include individuals, corporations, federally-recognized tribes, units of state or local government, farm cooperatives and co-op organizations, associations of agricultural producers, national laboratories, institutions of higher education, rural electric cooperatives, public power entities – or a consortium of any of these borrower types. Entities that receive program financing must provide at least 20 percent of the funding for eligible project costs.

For more information, please contact Randy Baird, Washington State Renewable Energy Coordinator by emailing him at Randy.baird@wa.usda.gov.

USDA Seeking Applications for CF Direct Relending Program

USDA Rural Development amended the Community Facility Direct Loan regulations to enable the Rural Development to make loans to qualified Re-lenders who will loan those funds to applicants primarily for projects in or serving persistent poverty counties or high poverty areas that are eligible under the Community Facility Loan Program.

This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Eligible borrowers include public bodies, community-based non-profit corporations, and Federally-recognized Tribes.

Funds can be used to purchase, construct, improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment, and pay related project expenses. To apply for funds, USDA Rural Development must receive a complete application by 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on or before Sept. 30, 2016.

For more information, refer to the July 6, 2016 issue of the Federal Register (Vol. 81, No. 129) or contact Kristen Grifka by calling (202) 720-1504 or email her at kristen.grifka@wdc.usda.gov.