

USDA Rural Development Maine 2023 Value-Added Producer Grant Recipients

Balfour Farm (\$249,917) will use its grant to expand the processing, marketing, and sales of its frozen fresh sausages and cured meats, creating one new job. The organic dairy farm and creamery is in Pittsfield, and their products are available at farmers' markets and retail stores.

"A Value-Added Producer Grant gives a business support for entering new markets with novel products and provides a buffer during the learning curve. The proposal required an immense amount of planning, but the VAPG program is flexible enough that we can adapt as we learn and implement the grant. And although the required record-keeping and reporting are demanding, that work is helpful too. Being forced to write, reflect, and to continually assess our progress makes it even more likely we will attain the goals we have set for the next stage for our farm."

-Heather Donahue, Balfour Farm



Heather and Doug Donahue with some of their cheeses at their creamery.

Fields Fields Blueberries (\$10,000) will use planning grant funds to assess the feasibility of expanding the market for its blueberry crisp. The business will explore the options of using a co-manufacturer, finding distribution channels, and will assess necessary scale increase. The farm is in Dresden.

“Receiving the Value-Added Producer Grant is a giant step forward in the success and sustainability of our small farm. Farming a specialty crop like wild blueberries presents many challenges. One we see time and time again is “how do I get this delicious fruit, that only grows in a very small area of the US, out into larger markets?” We are very excited to use the VAPG to work with a consultant who will help us develop a plan to bring our wild blueberry crisp into grocery stores and restaurants in the near future. Developing value-added products can really enhance the profitability and sustainability of farms and we are anticipating long-term success through our value-added products.”

Ashley Field, Fields Fields Blueberries



Ashley Field and her family.

Herbal Revolution Farm & Apothecary (\$250,000) will use the working capital grant funds to expand the production, marketing, and sales of herbal tinctures, tonics, teas, scrubs, and elixirs. The project will increase wholesale and retail sales and allow the business, located in Union, to hire up to four additional staff.

"We're so proud and grateful that Herbal Revolution is a VAPG 2023 recipient. Recently, our Fire Cider, Energy and Digestive Tonic launched nationally into 400 Sprouts Farmers Markets. While this national launch is exciting and marks a significant milestone for our brand it also presents new challenges and obstacles. Thanks to the VAPG we can overcome some of these new challenges that will help ensure Herbal Revolution continues to have long-term, sustainable growth. We appreciate the support and are excited to move forward."

-Kathi Langelier, Herbal Revolution Farm and Apothecary



Kathi Langelier and some of her products.

Ledgeway Farm (\$249,975) will use the working capital grant funds to expand processing, marketing, and sales of Ledgeway's diverse array of goat milk soap products (currently available in retail stores and other locations). This project will allow the Pittston farm to grow its customer base and create two new jobs.

"We are humbled to be chosen for this award that we believe will serve the State of Maine well, as it broadens the reach of quality Maine products. For Ledgeway Farm specifically, the funding will catapult our marketing efforts while promoting our goat milk soaps with clean, fresh, and professional branding, adding team members to make our production more streamlined and efficient, and substantially boost sales and customer growth. We are excited for the opportunities that this grant will provide our small Maine agricultural business."

-Sarah Perkins, Ledgeway Farm



Sarah and Matt Perkins with a few of their goats at Ledgeway Farm.

William H. Jordan Farm (\$250,000) will use the working capital grant funds to expand processing, marketing, and sales of its locally produced, frozen, and shelf-stable produce. This project will increase the number of customers shopping at the on-farm store and expand its line of frozen and shelf-stable products offered through retail and wholesale channels. The business is in Cape Elizabeth.

“William H Jordan Farm in Cape Elizabeth is working to position the farm business/operation for transition to generation five. Receiving funding through the Value-added Producer grant moves us one step closer to that goal. The VAPG funding will enable Jordan’s Farm to focus resources on two key projects – 1) gaining more customers at our retail business through increased investment in branding, marketing, and outreach, and 2) maximizing what we grow by working with a mid-scale processor to produce a line of value-added products that will be sold through our farm stand and other local outlets.”

-Penny Jordan, William H. Jordan Farm



Team Jordan: On tractor: Phil Jordan, Nora Jordan and Henry Jordan. Front, L to R: Penny Jordan, Jess Newton, Liz Bullis, Meagan Winker, and Tim Brubaker.