



USDA Rural Development

USDA Rural Development
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News Release

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USDA Rural Development Announces \$8 Million to Coastal Enterprises, Inc. to Strengthen the Food Supply Chain in New England, New York

Funding Part of \$89M to Help Meat and Poultry Processors Start Up and Expand Throughout U.S.

MONTPELIER, Vt., March 6, 2023 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the Biden-Harris Administration is [investing \\$89 million across the country](#) to finance the startup and expansion of independent meat processors.

In Maine, Coastal Enterprises, Inc., (CEI) is receiving a total of \$8 million in grant funds through the [Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program \(MPILP\)](#). This key investment will bolster the success of the Northeast region's network of meat and poultry processors through equitable lending opportunities and accessible technical assistance, as well as supporting state-led efforts currently underway.

“This investment in a regional lender will support all of New England,” said USDA Rural Development Vermont and New Hampshire State Director Sarah Waring. “We have meat slaughter and processing facilities in Vermont and New Hampshire that are in need of expansion or modernization. We know that our local livestock producers will benefit as these processing facilities can expand to meet the need of farmers and reach more markets across our region.”

USDA Rural Development Maine State Director Rhiannon Hampson said, “As a farmer myself, I deeply understand the need for additional processing infrastructure here in Maine, and greater New England. That’s why I am so happy to celebrate this award to CEI; as a long-time partner of farmers across the region, they have the expertise to uplift many small businesses with this investment. The Biden-Harris Administration made a promise to farmers to create transformational changes in our food system, and they are delivering on that with each one of these awards.”

CEI will leverage its decades of food-focused lending to build a just, vibrant, and resilient future for meat and poultry processors in the New England states and New York. CEI will work intentionally with processors who have been historically marginalized and under-resourced by traditional lending systems, providing both access to affordable capital and industry-specific technical expertise to support regional processing facilities in start-up or expansion.

““I would like to see our USDA certified processors, as well as custom processors, securing financing through this program,” Director Waring added. “We can meet our New England local food goals when we advance the supply chain infrastructure in these deliberate ways with the support of the Administration.”

Today’s funding will finance the startup and expansion of independent meat processors to support the [Biden-Harris Administration’s Action Plan for a Fairer, More Competitive, and More Resilient Meat and Poultry Supply Chain](#). Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the new investments under the second round of the MPILP at the National Farmers Union convention in San Francisco. Last fall, USDA awarded \$75 million in grants to eight nonprofit lenders in seven states under the first round of the program.

Nonprofit lenders in Alabama, Georgia, Maine, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota will use today’s funding to establish revolving loan funds, financing the startup, expansion and operation of meat and poultry processors.

USDA also has awarded \$146 million under the [Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program](#) and \$81.5 million under the [Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program](#). All of these programs represent the many actions USDA is taking to expand processing capacity, create more revenue streams and market opportunities for producers, and transform the nation’s food system.

Additional information on all these programs is available at www.usda.gov/meat.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans, grants and loan guarantees to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda/VT, www.rd.usda/NH and follow us on Twitter [@RD_VTandNH](https://twitter.com/RD_VTandNH).

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