

## STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

### **USDA Seeks Applications for Grants to Help Agricultural Producers and Small Rural Businesses Develop and Market New Products**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21, 2020 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today invited applications for grants to help agricultural producers and small rural businesses develop and market new products.

Approximately \$33 million in grants is available under the [Value-Added Producer Grant](#) (VAPG) program. The Agency may also utilize any funding that becomes available through enactment of fiscal year (FY) 2021 appropriations.

The grants may be used to develop new products from raw agricultural products or to promote new markets for established products. Veterans, socially-disadvantaged groups, beginning farmers and ranchers, operators of small- and medium-sized family farms and ranches, and farmer and rancher cooperatives are given special priority.

Electronic applications must be submitted by March 16, 2021 to [Grants.gov](#). Paper applications must be submitted by March 22, 2021 to a USDA Rural Development State Office. For additional information, see page 83038 of the December 21 [Federal Register](#) and [VAPG applicant resources](#).

USDA encourages applications that will support recommendations made in the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#) (PDF, 5.4 MB) to help improve life in rural America.

Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies through strategic investments. Key strategies include:

- Achieving e-Connectivity for Rural America
- Developing the Rural Economy
- Harnessing Technological Innovation
- Supporting a Rural Workforce
- Improving Quality of Life

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