

## Oregon

Rural Business and Cooperative Service • Rural Business Development Grant Program

### Entrepreneur Training Helps Herbal Hobbyist Create a Rural Business

Sarah Butte wanted to use her background in sustainable horticulture to start a business creating herbal products from garden-grown and foraged plants. She created a CSA and then sold her products through a natural medicine clinic, but she never earned enough for it to be more than a hobby.

She took a chance and moved back to Florence, her rural hometown on the Oregon coast, to operate a hundred-year-old homestead and launch a bioregional apothecary as a side job.

When the nonprofit [Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network \(Oregon RAIN\)](#) offered a 12-week training program for entrepreneurs in Florence, Sarah was excited for the opportunity to find a community of like-minded business owners and to learn how to make her apothecary a full-time job.

The RAIN Pre-Accelerator Program, supported by a USDA [Rural Business Development Grant](#), provided an intensive learning environment to empower entrepreneurs to start or grow their business, with training on topics from marketing to financial management. “It was a great experience. I’d highly recommend it,” said Sarah.

After completing the program, Sarah experienced something new: she sold out her entire inventory of elixirs, tonics, teas, hydrosols, perfumes, flower essences, and botanical skincare products. She finally took her business full-time. “As an herbal niche business, effectively telling my story has been huge in helping my business grow,” said Sarah.

When the coronavirus pandemic swept through the country the following spring, Sarah used the skills she had learned in her training to pivot [Rose and Crown Apothecary](#) to meet this new challenge, rebranding and moving her entire store online. Even in a challenging year, this small batch, earth-centered, seed-to-bottle, women-owned apothecary is continuing to generate revenue and provide unique products within the local community.



*Rose and Crown Apothecary offers a variety of herbal products created from plants native to the Pacific Northwest.*

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<b>Obligation Amount:</b>	\$80,000 in grants
<b>Date of Obligation:</b>	July 2019 and July 2017
<b>Congressional District:</b>	Representative DeFazio, District OR-04; Senators Wyden and Merkley
<b>Partners:</b>	Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (Oregon RAIN)
<b>Demographics:</b>	Lane and Lincoln Counties, Oregon; population 409,933
<b>Impact:</b>	An entrepreneur training program has assisted 70 entrepreneurs, created 33 jobs, and supported start-up businesses that have generated \$453,000 in revenue for rural communities in Lane and Lincoln counties.