



USDA Rural Development

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News Release

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USDA Invests \$1.4 Billion to Support Local Businesses, Create Good-Paying Jobs and Strengthen the Economy in Rural America

\$9.4 million in funding creates economic opportunity with diverse projects throughout Vermont & New Hampshire

WASHINGTON, Feb. 2, 2022 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the Department is investing [\\$1.4 billion to help a diverse rural America keep resources and wealth right at home](#) through job training, business expansion and technical assistance.

“For some time, rural America has been at the mercy of an extraction economy, where resources are taken from rural lands only to create jobs and economic opportunity in urban and suburban areas,” Vilsack said. “That’s why USDA is committed to doing what we can to change that extraction economy into a circular economy, where value is added closer to home, so the wealth created in rural areas stays in rural areas. Today’s announcement underlines the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to helping transform the economy and bring high-paying jobs and economic opportunities to the people who need it most.”

“We are so proud to support the residents, business owners and municipal leaders of Vermont and New Hampshire who are committed to building better, stronger local economies,” said Sarah Waring, State Director for USDA Rural Development in Vermont and New Hampshire. “Whether it’s to create more jobs, expand services or open up new markets, this crucial funding rewards that dedication and community vision with diverse economic benefits.”

The funding will help people and businesses in diverse communities and industries throughout 49 states, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico hire more workers and reach new customers, open doors to new economic opportunities for communities and people who historically have lacked access to critical resources and financing, and create jobs, grow businesses and find new and better markets. Projects in New Hampshire were awarded or leveraged with \$5,564,230 while those in Vermont received \$3,930,807.

For example:

- The Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation based out of Montpelier will use a \$68,695 grant through the [Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program](#) to

replenish funds and provide business technical assistance to microentrepreneurs seeking capital and consulting help.

- In New Hampshire, the Waterville Valley Resort will purchase an upgraded, 6-person ski lift and new snow-making equipment with the help of \$5 million from USDA's [Business and Industry \(B&I\)](#) loan guarantee program. The equipment will increase revenue and save 171 jobs at the resort while creating an additional 20 jobs in the community.
- A \$500,000 loan to the Addison County Economic Development Corporation will increase economic activity, prosperity and employment throughout Vermont's Addison County. It's estimated that 5 rural businesses and approximately 35 full-time jobs will result from this funding through the [Intermediary Relending Program \(IRP\)](#).
- West Wick Farming in Lee, NH, will use a \$22,755 [Value-Added Producer Grant](#) to execute a planning study to analyze the potential of a mid-tier value chain for cereal grains in the Granite State. With the funds, an expert consultant will design and conduct the feasibility study and help the operation implement a business plan.
- With a \$250,000 Value-Added Producer Grant, Bruce Hennessey and Beth Whiting will expand Maple Wind Farm's customer base in Richmond, Vt., into the wider New England & metro New York region. Help with marketing, processing and other activities will meet the anticipated increase in demand for their chicken, turkey and pork products.

Background:

Vilsack highlighted 751 investments that USDA is making in eight programs specifically designed to create economic opportunities for people and businesses in rural areas. These programs include [Business and Industry \(B&I\) Loan Guarantees](#), which provided [record-breaking investments](#) in fiscal year 2021, and the [B&I CARES Act Program](#), which has helped create thousands of jobs with funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Programs also include [Rural Innovation Stronger Economy \(RISE\) Grants](#), [Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program](#), [Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program](#), [Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program](#), [Intermediary Relending Program](#) and [Value-Added Producer Grants](#).

These programs are part of a suite of business and cooperative services that are projected to help create or save more than 50,000 jobs in rural America through investments made in fiscal year 2021. The awards Vilsack announced today are being made in Alaska, Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode

Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants 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.gov. USDA Rural Development is prioritizing projects that will support key priorities under the Biden-Harris Administration to help rural America build back better and stronger. Key priorities include combatting the COVID-19 pandemic; addressing the impacts of climate change; and advancing equity in rural America. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our GovDelivery subscriber page.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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