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**NMDA seeks input on funding priorities for \$4.6 million USDA
infrastructure grant**

*New Mexico agriculture industry encouraged to complete survey, attend Aug. 29 Zoom
informational session*

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LAS CRUCES, N.M. – If you work in the New Mexico agriculture sector, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) – in collaboration with the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s Office (Governor’s Office) – encourages you to complete a survey to help identify infrastructure priorities that may be addressed with funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In this case, infrastructure includes – but is not limited to – facilities, structures, equipment and storage needed to address the middle of the food supply chain for food crops.

New Mexico anticipates receiving \$4.6 million in funding to assist the state’s agriculture industry with infrastructure needs through the USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure grant program.

The purpose of the program is to:

- build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain;
- provide more and better markets to small farms and food businesses, and;
- support the development of value-added products for consumers, fair prices, fair wages and new and safe job opportunities.

This funding opportunity aligns directly or indirectly with the Governor’s Food Initiative by:

- investing in local producers’ ability to support New Mexico’s Food System;
- building capacity of New Mexico’s supply chain;
- increasing opportunities for more value-added products to diversify offerings and extend availability;

- implementing sustainable agricultural practices and climate smart technologies to keep agriculture in business in New Mexico and bring food closer to where it is ultimately consumed, and;
- providing hunger-relief efforts for New Mexicans experiencing food insecurity.

In an effort to determine the New Mexico agriculture industry's infrastructure priorities, please complete this survey by Thursday, Aug. 24: <https://bit.ly/3OEBmmL>. You are also encouraged to attend an informational session via Zoom at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 29 to provide input. Please register for the Zoom session here: <https://bit.ly/3OFzsCu>.

The goal of the grant program is to keep profits circulating in rural communities and increase diversity in processing options in terms of business model approaches, geography and availability to underserved communities.

States and territories will work in partnership with USDA to make competitive subawards to support infrastructure in the middle of the supply chain for domestic food and farm businesses and other eligible entities. States – including New Mexico – and territories may use a limited portion of funds to develop and/or strengthen supply chain coordination and targeted market development services for local and regional products.

“We think this new funding opportunity could be a game changer for our food system in New Mexico, so we are seeking industry input from those that are ‘the boots on the ground,’” said New Mexico Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte. “We will be working with our sister agency, New Mexico Economic Development Department, to provide the necessary supply chain coordination and technical assistance.”

Once funding priorities have been established, those involved in the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy and dairy products, grains for consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry, will be eligible to apply for funding. Grant applications are anticipated to be available in September.

To learn more about the program, please visit the [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service website](#). For New Mexico-specific questions, please email RFSI@nmda.nmsu.edu or call 575-646-4929.

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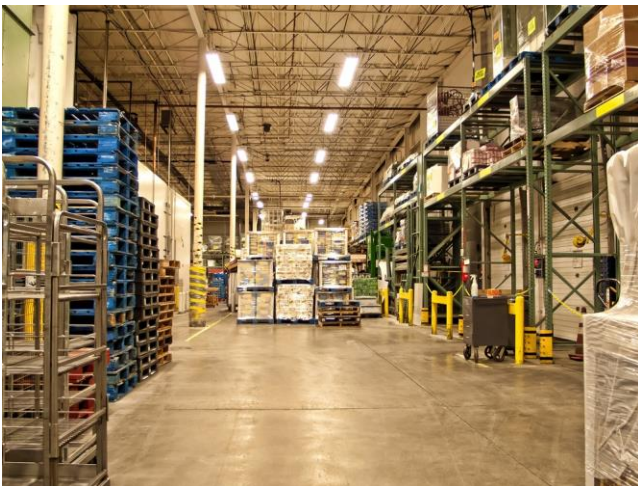
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