



EDD

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

Contact: Erin Ortigoza
505-819-8914
Erin.Ortigoza@edd.nm.gov

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham
Acting Cabinet Secretary Mark Roper

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 12, 2024

State Awards Funds to Increase Food Security in New Mexico *Healthy Food Financing Fund FY2024 Awardees Announced*

SANTA FE, N.M. – The New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) announced that 21 projects in 19 communities across New Mexico are recipients of the FY24 round of Healthy Food Financing Awards.

The grants flow from the Healthy Food Financing Fund (HFFF), as part of the Governor’s Food Initiative, and are administered by EDD’s Food, Hunger and Agricultural program and [Vida Mejor Capital](#), the HFFF State Administrator.



The newly announced grants exemplify the intersection of economic development in New Mexico’s food and agricultural sector with increased food security for New Mexicans. The HFFF program prioritizes increasing food retail in rural and underserved communities and providing alternate market channels and enhanced processing capabilities for value-added and sustainable agriculture. Investment in these diverse small- and mid-scale enterprises gives vital support to achieve important statewide work in New Mexico’s food and agricultural economy through projects addressing sustainable food production, processing, aggregation/storage/distribution, and food retail in underserved communities.

“Building a more robust and sustainable food chain is a priority for Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham,” said Acting EDD Cabinet Secretary Mark Roper. “Seeing homegrown New Mexico Agriculture products becoming part of the supply chain is exciting. The Healthy Food Financing grants were awarded through a competitive process and encompass a range of investments needed to sustain a healthy, local, fresh food supply chain.”

“These innovative and impactful projects demonstrate the potential to amplify New Mexico’s overall food system resiliency,” added Food, Hunger, and Agriculture Program Manager Erin Ortigoza. “These initiatives are part of an ever-growing food value chain network committed to strengthening New Mexico’s food ecosystem and implementation will result in increased access to healthy food for vulnerable populations.”

The FY2024 grants awarded a total of \$950,000 to 21 New Mexico projects. The recipients fall into the following 4 categories: Food Retail, Processing, Aggregation/Distribution, and Food Production.

Food Retail:

- **Brazos View Farms LLC | Los Ojos** - This project will construct a permanent farm stand and a processing/storage facility, enabling the business to expand operations.
- **Sangre de Cristo Valley Market | Questa** - This project will support new refrigeration to better address food security in this rural area.
- **Sweet Mercy Farms | Albuquerque** - This project will support the construction of a versatile new farm building, designated for a retail farm store, a commercial kitchen for meat

processing, a distribution center for New Mexico grown products, and enhanced cold storage facilities.

- **Dixon Cooperative Market | Dixon** - This project will enhance bulk retail storage capacity. This includes improved cold storage for perishables, enabling larger purchases from local farmers.
- **Major Market Inc. | Zuni** - This project aims to strengthen Major Market Inc.'s (MMI) food storage capacity, enabling the Zuni family-owned and operated grocer to increase access to healthy foods for the Pueblo of Zuni and surrounding areas.
- **B Street Market LLC | Mountainair** - This project focuses on expanding cold storage and processing capabilities at the 115-year-old B Street Market, addressing supply chain vulnerabilities highlighted by the pandemic and improving community health by making fresh food accessible.
- **Estacion de Inspriacion | Hillsboro** - This project supports the establishment of a retail market and commercial kitchen to enhance access to healthy products and extend distribution.
- **Work in Beauty Inc. | Ramah** - This project will support upgrades at El Morro Feed and Seed, targeting food preservation, storage, and equipment modernization, which will improve operational efficiency for retail and educational outreach.
- **Los de Mora Local Growers Cooperative | Mora** - This project involves expanding retail space, modernizing the commercial kitchen, broadening product lines, and upgrading kitchen and refrigeration equipment for a more efficient operation.
- **Magdalena Food Cooperative | Magdalena** - This initiative will enable the Magdalena Food Cooperative (MFC) to launch a community-owned grocery, offering a range of products including a butcher, deli, and fresh produce. This foundational phase aims to ensure the cooperative's sustainability by selling local produce, reinvesting in the community, and promoting healthy living through education and outreach.

Aggregation / Distribution / Transportation:

- **Table Top Co-op | Tucumcari** - This project focuses on expanding agricultural aggregation through the development of a centralized hub and will enhance processing and storage capabilities, facilitating improved community food access and fostering agricultural growth in the region.
- **Indian Pueblo Cultural Center | Albuquerque** - HFF funding will contribute significantly to the development of the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center's Entrepreneur Complex, offering critical support for food and agricultural entrepreneurs.

Processing:

- **BeeSezi LLC | Fruitland** - This initiative will modernize an outdated corn mill, crucial for Navajo cornmeal production, and involves relocating the mill to a new portable building and upgrading its power supply. This upgrade will significantly bolster the business's capacity to supply traditional Navajo food products to the community.
- **Three Sisters Kitchen (TSK) | Albuquerque** - This project aims to provide a commercial kitchen for the Food Business Training Program (FBTP) graduates. This program trains 10-15 low-income entrepreneurs annually, offering them the necessary resources and support to start their own businesses.
- **The Indigenous Farm Hub (IFH) | Corrales** - This project will enable IFH to enhance resources for Native and underserved farmers aiming for New Mexico grown certification and to develop their agricultural or value-added operations.
- **High Country Meats | Raton** - This project will enhance High Country Meats' capacity to expand ground meat production.

Production:

- **Ledoux Grange, LLC | Mora** - The project focuses on expanding sustainable agriculture practices through regenerative soil management and introducing light machinery to replace labor-intensive manual farming, addressing the aftermath of regional fires and erosion.
- **Nelson Farm | Texico** - This project will enable Nelson Farm to build a facility for washing, packing, and storing produce, addressing current limitations. This enhancement will significantly boost the capacity to meet local demand for fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Bamboo Farms LLC | Ribera** - This project will support the farm's expansion to include increasing microgreen production, as well as improving refrigeration and delivery systems to meet the needs of their communities more effectively.
- **Firm Foundation Farms, LLC | Carlsbad** - This project is dedicated to increasing the capacity of sustainable hog farming through Indigenous MicroOrganism (IMO) technology, which converts waste into valuable compost using environmentally friendly practices.

- **Ramel Family Farms LLC | Raton** - This project will bolster a partnership between RFF and Ogallala Commons (OC) to enhance community food security by increasing production for distribution through regional wholesale and institutional outlets.

[Please visit us online for a full description of each of the awardee projects.](#)

###



Bidii Baby Foods LLC, Cuedii NM, HFFF FY23 Awardee



Desert Verde Farm, Santa Fe, NM, HFFF FY23 Awardee

EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by training our workforce, providing infrastructure that supports business growth, and helping every community create a thriving economy.