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Date: Thursday, December 15, 2022 11:11:03 AM

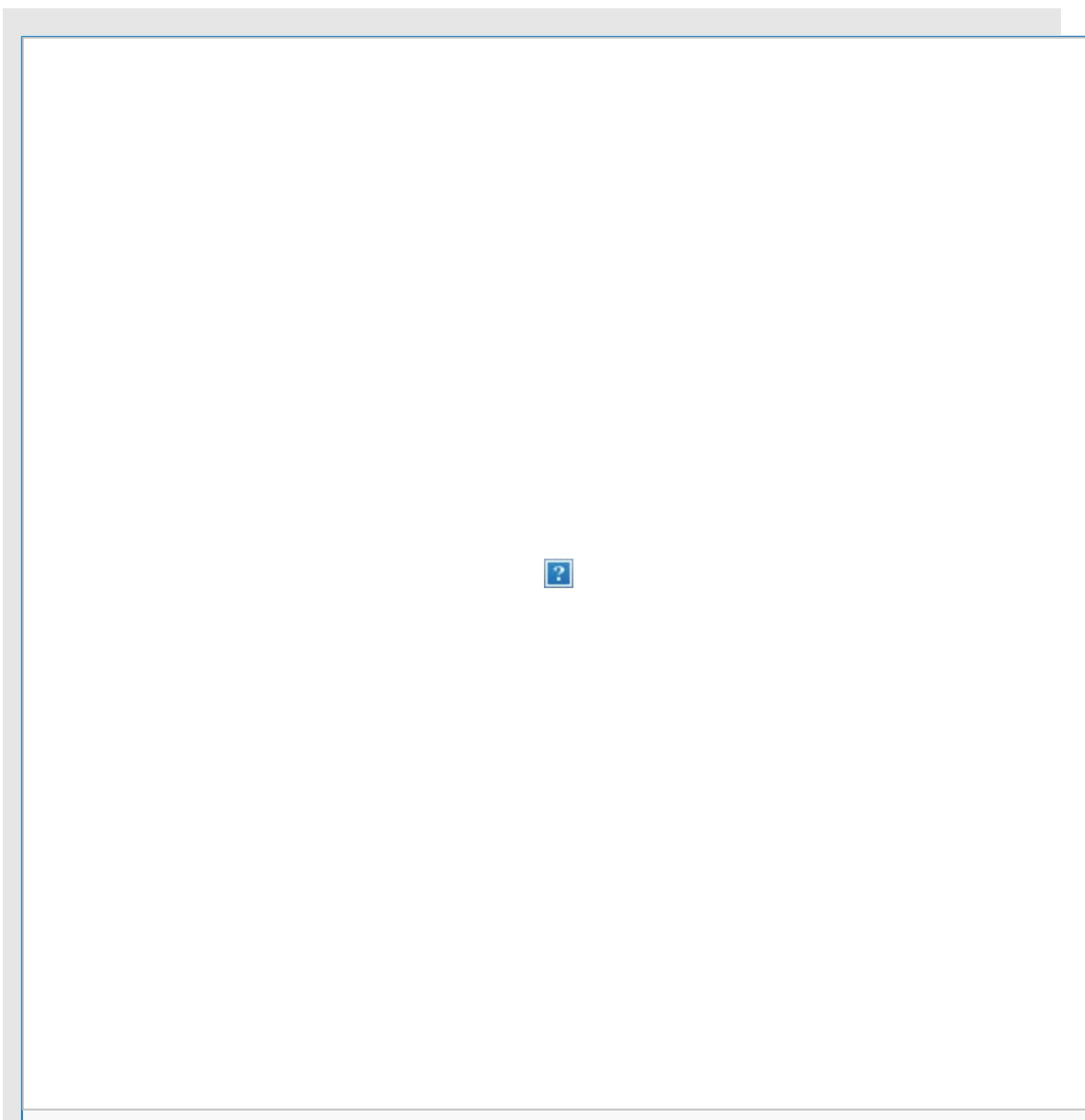


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Subject: USDA Office of Tribal Relations News



USDA's Office of Tribal Relations Newsletter

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Message from the Director

Hihanni waste, greetings.

I would like to thank those of you that made it to the White House Tribal Nation's Summit last month. There were some exciting announcements and events, including the [White House Tribal Nations Summit Progress Report](#), [USDA's 2022 Tribal Accomplishments](#), and the Office of Tribal Relations newly released deliverables of the [Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiative](#). If you would like to view the Summit, it is on the Department of the Interior's [YouTube page](#).

Speaking of exciting announcements, please see below the new opportunities available at USDA as well as outside of USDA. In particular, USDA's Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) are taking applications for a Special Policy Advisor on Tribal Agricultural Lands. For more information about the position, check out the listing below. We would also like to congratulate the Intertribal Agriculture Council for their 35th anniversary, and largest attended, annual conference last week. USDA was honored to have Special Advisor Dr. DeWayne Goldmon, General Counsel Janie Hipp, Farm Service Agency Administrator Zach Ducheneaux, National Agricultural Statistics Service Administrator Hubert Hamer, Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief Terry Cosby, and Risk Management Agency Administrator Marcia Bunger all join as speakers.

Finally, I would like to remind you that the application process is open for its [second round](#) of the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations Self-Determination Demonstration Projects. Applications are Due January 31, 2022. Created in the 2018 Farm Bill, these tribes administering the [Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations](#) can enter into self-determination contracts with USDA to directly purchase food for the FDPIR food packages distributed to their tribe. Eight tribes took part in the first round of the demonstration project with tremendous results, most purchasing local Indigenous foods for their food packages. Please let FNS or OTR know if you have any questions.

In addition, also supporting tribal foods sovereignty and the ability for tribal nations to purchase local and Indigenous foods to distribute to their nation is the [Local Food Purchase Assistance program](#). Through the program, USDA partners with tribes and state governments to purchase foods from underserved and tribal producers and processors and distribute that food in a way that makes sense to their communities. These non-competitive cooperative agreements are one of the new steps USDA is taking to support tribal food sovereignty interests. USDA recently announced that the second funding cycle increases [targeted tribal government funding to \\$100 million](#) to extend current projects and for new tribal applicants. Stay tuned for the official request for applications.

The dedicated staff of OTR and USDA look forward to identifying opportunities to support your goals and objectives. If you need anything, please contact OTR at 202-205-2249 or via email at Tribal.Relations@usda.gov. Please also visit our website at www.usda.gov/tribalrelations.

[Heather Dawn Thompson](#), Director: 202-205-2249

[Deb Dumontier](#), 202-235-4950 (*Tribal Self-Determination Initiative*)

[Josiah Griffin](#), 202-205-2249 (*Economic Development, Farming/Ranching, and Supply Chain*)

[Jeff Harris](#), 202-768-0812 (*Food, Research, Consultation, Youth, Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiative*)

[Taylor Schad](#), 202-875-9236 (*Forest Service and Natural Resources*)

Lila wopila (much thanks),

Heather Dawn Thompson
Director, USDA Office of Tribal Relations

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## White House & USDA Initiatives

### White House Initiatives/Executive Orders

- [Executive Order on Equity and Barriers](#)
- [White House Memo on Tribal Consultation](#)
- [White House Memo on \(ITEK\) Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge](#)
- [Treaty Rights MOU](#)
- [Sacred Sites MOU](#)
- [Native Languages MOA](#)

### USDA Initiatives

- [USDA Food Sovereignty Initiative](#)
- [USDA Tribal Self Determination Initiative](#)
- [USDA-DOI Joint Secretarial Order on Tribal Homelands](#)
- [USDA-DOI Tribal Treaty Database](#)

### COVID-19 News for Producers

**USDA COVID Response Page.** USDA maintains a COVID-19 response page at [www.usda.gov/coronavirus](http://www.usda.gov/coronavirus), which has news updates, answers to frequently asked questions, and other important information.

### Employment/Board Opportunities

#### Special Policy Advisor on Tribal Agricultural Lands (1-2 Year Short Term Appointment)

The Special Policy Advisor on Tribal Agricultural Lands will serve as the liaison between the Office of Tribal Relations, the Farm Service Agency, the Department of the Interior (DOI), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This be a shared contract position between the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) and the Office of the Administrator of Farm Service Agency (FSA). The position will be remote but based at USDA Headquarters in Washington D.C. The advisor will report directly to the OSEC Office of Tribal Relations Director, in partnership with the FSA Administrator.

The responsibilities include:

- Mastering USDA and DOI programs, handbooks, leases, and policies, to design and implement a plan for all aspects of the MOU between the USDA and DOI Memorandum of Understanding “Relative to Planning and Implementing Certain United States Department of Agriculture Programs on Indian Lands.”
- Analyzing land and leasing related barriers to Native American and tribal government participation in USDA agricultural and conservation programs and opportunities and work collaboratively with program staff and leadership at both USDA and DOI to develop and implement detailed actionable solutions.
- Serving as part of the lead team for Tribal Consultations on Farming, Ranching, and Conservation, as well as participate in those targeting tribal communities.

Participate in high level staff and other meetings across the Department and with tribal nations and producers, as requested by FSA and OTR Leadership.

- Developing issue papers, decision memos, sample leases, and policy solutions, based on analysis of both barriers to participation, and areas of success identified in concert with cooperators.

Deliverables will include a written implementation plan, working with DOI to design a new master lease that works with Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) programs, and specific recommendations to FPAC for incorporation of programmatic flexibility on tribal lands. This is a contract position, all taxes, withholdings, health insurance, and other benefits will be the responsibility of the contractor, but equipment, phone, required travel, and access to USDA networks and facilities will be provided by USDA at no cost to contractor.

If you are interested, please email the Office of Tribal Relations at [Tribal.Relations@usda.gov](mailto:Tribal.Relations@usda.gov).

**Management and Program Assistant, USDA Office of Tribal Relations (Temporary Detail Position: Internal to USDA)**

This is a GS-05/06/07 position for individuals already working at USDA. There is no temporary promotion associated with this detail, and this position can be remote.

This position is located in the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR), immediate Office of the Secretary, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is established to be the continuity for tribal and Native affairs within the Department. The mission of OTR is to serve as a single point of contact for consultation with American Indian and Alaskan Native Governments to ensure strong partnerships that preserve tribal sovereignty and result in high quality service for farmers ranchers, consumers, and other constituents.

The primary purpose of this position is to plan and coordinate the administrative work of the office through knowledge of administrative procedures and requirements and the application of a variety of office skills and analytical capabilities to increase the effectiveness of the office. The incumbent is supervised by the director of USDA's Office of Tribal Relations.

To view the detail listing, please contact [Jeffrey.Harris@usda.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Harris@usda.gov).

**Tribal Agriculture Fellowship (Non-USDA)**

Tribal Agriculture Fellowship is looking to fill its second cohort with the next generation of agricultural professionals and will be accepting applications from November 28, 2022 – February 10, 2023. The mission of the Tribal Agriculture Fellowship is to create opportunities for Indigenous students to advance their education in agriculture, increase specialized knowledge and preserve the legacy of agriculture in tribal communities.

**Who should apply:**

- **College students who are Native American, Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian**
- Member or descendant of a tribe or Indigenous community.
- Rising and current technical, undergraduate, and graduate student

**Tribal Agriculture Fellowship resources can be utilized for:**

- tuition & fees,
- housing,
- meal plans,
- equipment fees and testing costs,

and professional development.

For more information visit: [www.taffellows.org](http://www.taffellows.org) or email: [info@taffellows.org](mailto:info@taffellows.org).

## USDA Hall of Tribal Nations

### USDA Requests your Tribal Flag for the Hall of Tribal Nations

In recognition of the diplomatic nation-to-nation relationship, between tribes and the federal government, USDA is proud to host a Hall of Tribal Nations, akin to our sister agency the Department of Interior – Bureau of Indian Affairs. Agriculture Secretary Vilsack shared a [video dedicating this new space](#) during the November 2021 White House Tribal Nations Conference.

USDA invites more tribal nations to contribute flags to this growing collection. Please contact [Tribal.Relations@usda.gov](mailto:Tribal.Relations@usda.gov) to learn more or send your 3ft. x 5ft. tribal flag to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Attention: Tribal Flags/Office of Tribal Relations  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Room 200A J.L. Whitten Building  
Washington, D.C. 20250

### Regulation Review/Public Comment/Public Notification

[USDA Seeks Comments on Commodity Procurement Program's New Vendor Process | Agricultural Marketing Service](#) – Comments Due: December 27, 2022

[Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\): Revisions in the WIC Food Packages](#) – Comment Deadline: February 21, 2023

### Grant/Loan/Program Opportunities

[2022 Temporary Bridge Funding Opportunity](#) – Application Deadline: December 20, 2022

The USDA Forest Service is announcing the availability of up to \$8 million in funding to support the establishment of temporary bridge rental programs for portable skidder bridges, bridge mats, or other temporary water crossing structures, to minimize stream bed disturbance on non-Federal land and Federal land.

[2022 Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Program](#) – Application Deadline: December 20, 2022

The USDA Forest Service is announcing the availability of up to \$12.5 million in funding to provide financial assistance to facilities that purchase and process byproducts from ecosystem restoration projects from federal or Indian lands in areas at risk of unnaturally severe wildfire or insect and disease infestation. The intent is to substantially decrease the cost of conducting restoration projects involving vegetation removal on federal or Indian lands. These byproducts could include the trees and woody biomass harvested through timber sales, thinning, hazardous fuels reduction treatments, or other restoration management activities.

[Fertilizer Production Expansion Program](#) – Application Deadline: December 29, 2022

The purpose of FPEP is to expand capacity, improve competition, and increase supply chain resilience within the agricultural fertilizer and nutrient management sector, in

connection with the production of agricultural commodities. To meet its purpose, FPEP will support the production of agricultural commodities through the manufacturing and processing of fertilizer and nutrient alternatives.

**Agriculture and Food Research Initiative** – Foundational and Applied Science Program  
– Application Deadline: December 31, 2022

The AFRI Foundational and Applied Science Program supports grants in six AFRI priority areas to advance knowledge in both fundamental and applied sciences important to agriculture. The six priority areas are: Plant Health and Production and Plant Products; Animal Health and Production and Animal Products; Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health; Bioenergy, Natural Resources, and Environment; Agriculture Systems and Technology; and Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities. Research-only, extension-only, and integrated research, education and/or extension projects are solicited in this Request for Applications (RFA). See Foundational and Applied Science RFA for specific details.

**Solid Waste Management Grant Program** – Application Deadline: December 31, 2022

Evaluate current landfill conditions to determine threats to water resources; provide technical assistance and/or training to enhance operator skills in the operation and maintenance of active landfills; provide technical assistance and/or training to help communities reduce the solid waste stream; provide technical assistance and/or training for operators of landfills which are closed or will be closed in the near future with the development and implementation of closure plans, future land use plans, safety and maintenance planning, and closure scheduling within permit requirements.

**Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program** – Application Deadline: December 31, 2022

Funds may be used to pay expenses associated with providing technical assistance and/or training (TAT) to: Identify and evaluate solutions to water problems relating to source, storage, treatment, or distribution; identify and evaluate solutions to waste problems relating to collection, treatment, or disposal; assist applicants, that have filed a pre-application with RUS, in the preparation of water and/or waste loan and/or grant applications; and/or provide technical assistance and/or training to water/wastewater system personnel that will improve the management, operation and maintenance of water and waste disposal facilities.

**Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant** – Application Deadline: Multiple (2<sup>nd</sup> Q December 31, 2022, 3<sup>rd</sup> Q March 31, 2023, 4<sup>th</sup> Q June 30, 2023)

The Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program provides funding for rural projects through local utility organizations. USDA provides zero-interest loans to local utilities which they, in turn, pass through to local businesses (ultimate recipients) for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas. The ultimate recipients repay the lending utility directly. The utility then is responsible for repayment to USDA. USDA provides grants to local utility organizations which use the funding to establish Revolving Loan Funds (RLF). Loans are made from the revolving loan funds to projects that will create or retain rural jobs. When the revolving loan fund is terminated, the grant is repaid to USDA. The Agency anticipates the following maximum amounts per award: Loans - \$2,000,000; Grants - \$300,000.

**Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program** – Application Deadline: Multiple (2<sup>nd</sup> Q December 31, 2022, 3<sup>rd</sup> Q March 31, 2023, 4<sup>th</sup> Q June 30, 2023)

It provides loans and grants to Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs) to help microenterprises startup and growth through a Rural Microloan Revolving Fund and

provide training and technical assistance to microloan borrowers and micro entrepreneurs.

**FY23 Farm to School Grant** – Application Deadline: January 6, 2023

Each year \$5 million is provided to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support grants, technical assistance, and other activities related to USDA's Farm to School Program. Additional funding for the Farm to School Program was made available from the FY 2018 through FY 2022 agriculture appropriations acts and, as a result, USDA expects to award approximately \$12 million under this solicitation.

**Specialty Crop Research Initiative Pre-Applications** – Application Deadline: January 12, 2022

The purpose of the SCRI program is to address the critical needs of the specialty crop industry by awarding grants to support research and extension that address key challenges of national, regional, and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of food and agriculture, including conventional and organic food production systems.

**Tribal Nations: National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program** – Application Deadline: January 13, 2023

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) is announcing the availability of up to \$500,000 in funds in the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP) to support Tribal projects in the topic areas including: Projects to Deliver Outreach & Education on Animal Disease Prevention, Preparedness, and Response; Projects to Increase Livestock and Poultry Biosecurity; Projects that Support Training & Exercises for Tribal Nations Animal Agriculture Sector Responders; Projects to Develop, Enhance, and Exercise Tribal Animal Disease Emergency Response Plans; Projects to Enhance Animal Disease Traceability for a Disease Outbreak.

**USDA APHIS American Rescue Plan: SARS-CoV-2 in Animals** – Application Deadline: January 15, 2023

This funding opportunity is provided to carry out the animal health provision as described in Section 1001 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP). Through this provision, APHIS will provide funds to address gaps in surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 in animals, determine susceptibility of target species to SARS-CoV-2, understand transmission mechanisms in different animals, develop and optimize SARS-CoV-2 diagnostics and surveillance strategies for multiple species, and develop prevention and intervention strategies. Additional details about this funding opportunity, including additional information for applicants, are available on the USDA APHIS <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/onehealth/funding-opportunities> website.

**Biotechnology Risk Assessment Research Grants Program** – Application Deadline: January 19, 2023

The purpose of the BRAG program Assistance Listing 10.219 is to support the generation of new information that will assist Federal regulatory agencies [USDA's – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Biotechnology Regulatory Services (APHIS-BRS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Food and Drug Administration (FDA)] in making science-based decisions about the environmental effects of introducing genetically engineered (GE) organisms by techniques that use recombinant, synthesized, or amplified nucleic acids to modify or create a genome. The organisms include plants, microorganisms (including fungi, bacteria, and viruses), arthropods, fish, birds, livestock, and other animals. These include related wild and agricultural organisms.

**Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities** – Application Deadline: January 19, 2023

The AgrAbility program increases the likelihood that farmers, ranchers, farm workers and farm family members with disabilities will experience success in agricultural production. The program supports projects between State Cooperative Extension System and private, non-profit disability organizations who work in partnership to provide agricultural education and assistance directed at accommodating disability in farm operations for individuals with disabilities, and their families, who engage in farming and farm-related occupations.

**[Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants](#)** – Application Deadline: January 20, 2023

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program provides financial assistance to enable and improve distance learning and telemedicine services in rural areas. DLT grant funds support the use of telecommunications-enabled information, audio and video equipment, and related advanced technologies by students, teachers, medical professionals, and rural residents. These grants are intended to increase rural access to education, training, and health care resources that are otherwise unavailable or limited in scope.

**[USDA APHIS American Rescue Plan: SARS-CoV-2 in Animals Tribal Funding Opportunity](#)** – Application Deadline: January 31, 2023

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is announcing the availability of up to \$5,000,000 in funds provided by the American Rescue Plan to Tribes, Tribal Nations, and organizations working on their behalf to support projects in the priority areas below: 1) Address gaps in surveillance and investigation activities for SARS-CoV-2 in animals, including farmed animals, captive wildlife, free-ranging wildlife, and companion animals. 2) Expand knowledge of species susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 to improve understanding of potential roles or routes of transmission. 3) Develop surveillance tools and strategies for the rapid detection and characterization of new variants of SARS-CoV-2 to support an early warning system to prevent or limit future SARS-CoV-2 outbreaks. 4) Identify effective interventions, and other measures to prevent transmission of SARS-CoV-2 at the human-animal interface and/or impacts to the food supply.

**[Development and Implementation of Healthy Meals Incentives School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants](#)** – Application Deadline: February 1, 2023

Under this RFA, the *School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grant* Cooperative Agreement will reflect FNS' commitment to encourage the offering of healthier food products in the marketplace for school meals through engagement with the food industry and incentivizing innovation and partnerships. Increasing access to nutritious and appealing foods for kids is critical to the success of strong school meal standards. The selected Cooperator(s) will collaborate with food industry partners to support school districts, food producers, suppliers, distributors, and community partners.

**[Methyl Bromide Transition Program](#)** – Application Deadline: February 13, 2022

The Methyl Bromide Transition Program (MBT) addresses the immediate needs and the costs of transition that have resulted from the phase-out of the pesticide methyl bromide. Methyl bromide has been a pest and disease control tactic critical to pest management systems for decades for soilborne and postharvest pests. The program focuses on integrated commercial-scale research on methyl bromide alternatives and associated extension activity that will foster the adoption of these solutions. Projects should cover a broad range of new methodologies, technologies, systems, and strategies for controlling economically important pests for which methyl bromide has been the only effective pest control option. Research projects must address commodities with critical issues and include a focused economic analysis of the cost of implementing the transition on a commercial scale.

**[Crop Protection and Pest Management Competitive Grants Program](#)** – Application Deadline February 13, 2023



The purpose of the Crop Protection and Pest Management program is to address high priority issues related to pests and their management using IPM approaches at the state, regional and national levels. The CPPM program supports projects that will ensure food security and respond effectively to other major societal pest management challenges with comprehensive IPM approaches that are economically viable, ecologically prudent, and safe for human health. The CPPM program addresses IPM challenges for emerging issues and existing priority pest concerns that can be addressed more effectively with new and emerging technologies. The outcomes of the CPPM program are effective, affordable, and environmentally sound IPM practices and strategies needed to maintain agricultural productivity and healthy communities.

**[Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program](#)** – Application Deadline: February 16, 2023

The Food Safety Outreach Program will complement and expand the national infrastructure of the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Competitive Grants Program. The Food Safety Outreach Program will build upon that national infrastructure, with a sustained focus on delivery of customized training to members of the target audiences. Awardees will develop and implement food safety training, education, extension, outreach and technical assistance projects that address the needs of owners and operators of small to mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially-disadvantaged farmers, small processors, or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. Grant applications will be solicited directly from those in local communities to include those from community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, food hubs, farm cooperatives, extension, and other local groups.

**[Antimicrobial Resistance Dashboard 2022-2023 Cooperative Agreements](#)** – Application Deadline: February 20, 2023

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services is announcing the availability of up to \$3 million in funds in the Antimicrobial Resistance Dashboard (AMR Dashboard).

**[Agriculture Innovation Center Grant Program](#)** – Application Deadline: March 6, 2023

The primary objective of the program is to provide grants to Agriculture Innovation Centers that will provide technical assistance to agricultural producers to market value-added agricultural products.

**[USDA The Emergency Food Assistance Program \(TEFAP\) Reach and Resiliency 2023](#)** – Application Deadline: March 6, 2023

USDA announced a \$1 billion investment in the country's emergency food network so that food banks and local organizations can reliably serve their communities. Of that \$1 billion amount, USDA is making \$100 million available for a grant initiative – TEFAP Reach and Resiliency - aimed at helping food assistance organizations meet The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) requirements, strengthen infrastructure, and expand TEFAP's reach into underserved communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on our nation's food systems and economy, forcing many Americans to turn to the country's emergency food network for aid. Food banks, food pantries, and other community organizations have valiantly stepped up to meet this increase in need while simultaneously ensuring that staff and recipients are not unnecessarily exposed to the dangers of COVID-19. However, some inequities within the broader emergency food network remain – especially in remote, rural, tribal, and/or low-income communities. Round 2 grants seek to expand TEFA's reach into remote, rural, tribal, and/or low-income areas that are underserved by the program.

## News

### USDA Indian Country Blogs

To look at USDA blogs involving Indian Country, check out the [USDA blog page](#). To see videos of USDA's work in Indian Country visit OTR's [Video and Radio page](#).

### Agriculture and Food Sovereignty

[USDA Takes Steps to Support Food Sovereignty with the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa](#)

[USDA Takes Steps to Support Food Sovereignty with the Monacan Indian Nation](#)

[USDA Takes Steps to Support Food Sovereignty with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe](#)

[USDA Extends Regional Food Business Centers Request for Applications Deadline to Jan. 6, 2023](#)

[Access to Farmland by Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers: Issues and Opportunities](#)

[America's Farms and Ranches at a Glance: 2022 Edition](#)

[2023 Dairy Margin Coverage Deadline Extended – Jan. 31, 2023, Last Day to Enroll](#)

[USDA Announces December 2022 Lending Rates for Agricultural Producers](#)

[USDA and Social Security Administration Collaborate to Improve Nutrition Security through SNAP](#)

[USDA Further Invests in Expanding the Reach and Resiliency of the Emergency Food System](#)

[USDA Launches New Virtual Nutrition Center of Excellence](#)

### Business & Community Development

[U.S. Department of Agriculture Announces Additional Farm Service Agency and Rural Development State Directors](#)

### Conservation & Forestry

[USDA Forest Service signs 11 new agreements to advance tribal co-stewardship of national forests](#)

[Vilsack Highlights USDA's Climate Initiatives and Investments at COP27](#)

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces an Additional \\$325 Million in Pilot Projects through Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities, for Total Investment of \\$3.1 Billion](#)

[USDA Offers Expanded Conservation Program Opportunity to Support Climate-Smart Agriculture](#)



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