

USDA Invests \$700 million to Provide Relief to Small Producers, Processors, Distributors, Farmers Markets and Seafood Processing Vessels and Processors Impacted by COVID-19

Press Release

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 9, 2021 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced it will soon publish Requests for Applications (RFAs) for new grant programs - the [Pandemic Response and Safety \(PRS\) Grant](#) program and the [Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant](#) program - to support agricultural stakeholders who haven't yet received substantial federal financial assistance in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. These grant programs will provide assistance to small businesses in certain commodity areas, including small scale specialty crop producers and processors, shellfish, aquaculture and other select producers, meat and other processors, distributors, farmers markets, seafood facilities and processing vessels. Today USDA released grant forecasts for these new programs to help potential applicants determine their eligibility and to prepare to apply for funding. Approximately \$650 million in funding is available for the PRS grants and \$50 million is available for

SPRS. All of these new programs are funded by the Pandemic Assistance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

“As the economy continues to gain strength after the Biden Administration’s historic vaccination and economic relief efforts, USDA is working with agricultural and food businesses to ensure they have the resources and tools to thrive in 2021 and beyond,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “The funding associated with USDA Pandemic Assistance is meant to serve as a bridge from disruptions associated with the pandemic to longer-term investments to help build back a better food system. Financial relief to these essential producers, distributors, processors and other small agricultural businesses is a critical to get our food system back on track.”

For the PRS grants, eligible entities are detailed in the Pandemic Response and Safety Grant Program forecast, [USDA-AMS-TM-PRS-G-21-0011](#). Eligible entities should visit the PRS grant portal at [usda-prs.grantsolutions.gov](#) for complete information on the program, including how to obtain a free of charge DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) *BEFORE* applying for this program. On September 23, USDA will issue another announcement indicating that entities may submit their applications through the grant portal; entities will need their DUNS number to submit an application.

For the Seafood PRS grants, USDA will allocate block grant funding to U.S. states and territories based on a formula that considers economic activity as demonstrated through commercial fisheries landings. Eligible entities are state agencies as detailed in the Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant Program forecast, [USDA-AMS-TM-SPRS-G-21-0012](#). The state agency will then provide funds to seafood processing facilities and processing vessels. Seafood processors and processing vessels should apply directly through their State agency; seafood processors and processing vessels should not apply through PRS and should instead contact their state agency for financial assistance once USDA awards funds to states. A listing of state contacts will be made available on the USDA website. Tribal government owned eligible entities may apply directly to USDA, details of which will be developed through tribal consultation in conjunction with Office of Tribal Relations.

Updated information regarding the PRS and Seafood PRS programs will be available on the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) website: [www.ams.usda.gov](#).

Any grant application submitted after the due date will not be considered unless the applicant provides documentation of an extenuating circumstance that prevented their timely submission of the grant application. Read more in [AMS Late and Non-Responsive Application Policy](#) (PDF, 431 KB).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In 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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