

Illinois



The potential to grow and make innovative products in rural America is limitless. Since 2009, the Obama Administration has made targeted investments to help rural businesses grow. Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s projects in affordable housing, energy efficiency, roads and bridges, and internet access, coupled with loans and grants for rural businesses, the Administration has helped to attract and retain a talented rural labor force, improve connectivity and access to information, move products to market, and make rural communities competitive—**ultimately supporting strong local economies and expanded opportunity for rural Illinois families.**

SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL

USDA has supported Chicago-based Faith in Place to expand 15 winter farmers markets in the city, helping reduce some of the volatility in farmers’ seasonal incomes while improving consumer access to fresh, local food year-round.

Local food sales were valued at \$11.7 billion in 2014. In Illinois, USDA has invested in 546 local food projects, helping to develop food hubs, small-scale processing, farmers markets and other market opportunities in local food.



SUPPORT FOR RURAL BUSINESSES

USDA has made investments to help **493 rural businesses in Illinois thrive and grow.**

USDA investments in everything from advanced biofuels manufacturing facilities to food hubs help businesses, many of them small, capitalize on emerging markets for rural-made products. **In rural America, small businesses support one in three jobs.**



RENEWING RURAL MANUFACTURING

The rural economy includes more than products that come from farms. **Rural manufacturing supports 83,938 jobs in Illinois.** USDA has invested **\$49 million** to help rural manufacturers in **Illinois** increase production and capacity.



GROWING EXPORTS

In 2013, exports of farm and ranch products alone contributed **\$8 billion** to **Illinois** economy. The President’s Made In Rural America initiative helps rural businesses capitalize on demand for American-made products and identify ways they can participate in global markets.



HOUSING

Access to safe, affordable housing is critical to maintaining the rural labor force. USDA has helped **33,164 Illinois families** purchase or repair homes.



CONNECTIVITY

USDA has invested **\$155.8 million** in telecommunications projects serving **rural Illinois families**, which has **helped** to expand access to state-of-the-art health care, educational, and cultural resources and helps rural businesses compete in the global economy.



WATER

USDA has invested **\$261 million** to support efficient water supply, treatment and storage facilities, and wastewater treatment systems. That investment has **improved the health of thousands of rural Illinois families** who now have access to clean water and reliable sanitation.