



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of the  
Secretary

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# Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

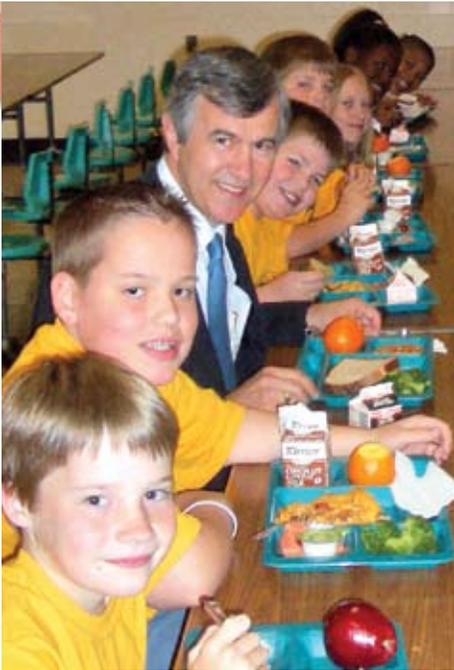
Alleviating Hunger and Revitalizing Communities



# Faith- Based and Community Initiatives



# WELCOME



President Bush created the Faith-Based and Community Initiative to transform the relationship between Government and the faith-based and community organizations performing daily works of service and compassion across the nation.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a long history of working with faith-based and community groups to help those in need. For example, USDA works with faith-based and community groups to provide vital assistance through our domestic food and nutrition programs, rural development opportunities, natural resources and conservation programs, and international food aid programs.

USDA recognizes the important role that faith-based and community organizations play in serving those in need. Through our partnership and grant opportunities, USDA welcomes faith-based and community groups as important partners in our work. And, as part of the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative, USDA is strengthening these partnerships and creating new ones.

We are proud to be a part of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative.

MIKE JOHANNIS  
SECRETARY  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# THE FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

For years, faith-based and other community groups have been on the front lines assisting people in need. They have saved and transformed countless lives with their compassion.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government has often not been a willing partner to these faith-based and community groups. Instead, it has put into place a regime of complicated rules and regulations that hinder these groups from competing for Federal funds on an equal footing with other types of organizations to provide necessary services.

President Bush believes that all groups – faith-based or secular, large or small – should compete on a level playing field, so long as they obey all legal requirements. That is the reason for the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative and why it is one of his top domestic priorities.

In one of his first official acts as President, President Bush created the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in January 2001. The President also established Faith-Based and Community Initiatives offices in a total of 10 Federal agencies, including the USDA. Together, these offices support the essential work of faith-based and other community organizations by ensuring they are

allowed to compete on an equal footing for Federal dollars, educating them on grant opportunities, and encouraging greater private support of these organizations.

On December 12, 2002, President Bush established by Executive Order an office for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at the USDA.

PRESIDENT BUSH BELIEVES THAT ALL GROUPS – FAITH-BASED OR SECULAR, LARGE OR SMALL – SHOULD COMPETE ON A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD, SO LONG AS THEY OBEY ALL LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

USDA has a long history of working with faith-based and community organizations to help those in need. As part of the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative, USDA is strengthening these partnerships and creating new ones to alleviate hunger, build strong communities, and enhance our environment by:

- ensuring that faith-based and community organizations have equal access to USDA programs;
- educating faith-based and community organizations about USDA programs that will enhance their capacity to serve;
- seeking opportunities to meet the needs of communities through USDA programs; and
- reporting on progress to ensure that USDA is producing real results for Americans in need.

This guide to selected USDA programs serves to highlight opportunities for faith-based and community groups to partner with the USDA to help people in need.

*For more information on the Initiative, contact:*

**USDA FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Room 200A  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
phone (202) 720-3631  
e-mail [fbc@usda.gov](mailto:fbc@usda.gov)  
[www.usda.gov/fbc/](http://www.usda.gov/fbc/)

To join our list serve and receive information on upcoming grant competitions and other important announcements, please visit [www.fbc.usda.gov/form/](http://www.fbc.usda.gov/form/)

# FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE



**U**SDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) increases food security and reduces hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

The following 4 pages highlight just several of the many ways that faith-based and community groups can partner with FNS to provide assistance to those in need. To learn more about all FNS programs, please visit [www.fns.usda.gov/fns/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/)

## SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does a child's need for good nutrition. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides free, nutritious meals and snacks to help children in low-income areas get the nutrition they need in order to learn, play, and grow during the summer months when they are out of school.

**Who the program helps.** Children 18 years of age and younger may receive free meals and snacks through SFSP. Persons with disabilities over age 18 who participate in

school programs for people with mental or physical disabilities are also eligible for the program.

**How the program works.** States approve SFSP meal sites as open, enrolled, or campsites. Open sites operate in low-income areas where at least half the children come from families with incomes at or below 185 percent of the Federal poverty level, making them eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Enrolled sites provide meals to children enrolled in an activity program at the site where at least half of them are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Campsites receive payments only for the meals served to children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Sponsors receive cash reimbursement payments for the operational and administrative costs of the program. Please refer to your State agency or the FNS Web site for the most current reimbursement rates.

**For more information...** SFSP is a Federal program administered by the State. Contact the administering agency in your State to learn how to sponsor a program. To find the SFSP agency in your State, visit [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/contacts.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/contacts.html) Requests for information may also be sent to [CNDInternet@fns.usda.gov](mailto:CNDInternet@fns.usda.gov) or by calling 703-305-2590.

## STARFINDER FOUNDATION

A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION  
IN PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

*"Kids love to just run around and play soccer but no sooner had the games begun we noticed many of the children tiring quickly," says Tony Williams, founder of the Starfinder Foundation. At first, the staff joked with the kids about not being fit. "But when some of the children complained of aching stomachs," explained Tony, "we asked what they had eaten for breakfast and most replied 'nothing.'"*

*The Starfinder Foundation learned how to start a summer food program through the combined outreach efforts of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service and Faith-Based and Community Initiative. Starfinder now provides hundreds of soccer-loving youngsters in Philadelphia with healthy meals through the Summer Food Service Program.*

*The children receive fresh sandwiches, fruit, milk, educational materials, and training on the importance of good nutrition. "We could see a noticeable difference in the children's ability to learn from and enjoy the camp once they had eaten--and the complaints turned to compliments," says Tony.*

## SENIOR SUPPORT SERVICES

A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION  
IN DENVER, COLORADO

*The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) offered by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) was a welcome addition to the pantry and meal service of Senior Support Services in Denver, Colorado. Senior Support Services is a nonprofit community organization that has served Denver's inner-city low-income homeless seniors since 1976.*

*Cheri Lea, a staff member at Senior Support Services, learned about TEFAP when she met one of FNS's Faith-Based and Community Initiative liaisons at a monthly community resources forum sponsored by St. Joseph's Hospital. "TEFAP has helped strengthen our food assistance efforts with those we serve," says Cheri Lea.*



## THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) helps supplement the diets of low-income people, including the elderly, by providing them with nutrition assistance at no cost.

**How the program works.** The USDA makes commodity foods available to State agencies. State agencies then work out details of administration and distribution. They select local organizations that distribute directly to households, serve meals to the needy, or distribute to other local organizations that perform these functions.

**Available foods.** The types of commodity foods that USDA purchases for TEFAP distribution vary depending on the preferences of States and agricultural market conditions. More than 60 products were made available during fiscal year 2004. The following food commodities are commonly available for distribution: meat, poultry, fish, canned and dry fruits, canned vegetables, peanut butter, dry beans, fruit juices, pasta products, rice, and cereal.

**How to become a distributing organization.** Public and private nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that provide nutrition assistance to the needy are eligible. Organizations that distribute food for home use must determine the household's eligibility by applying income standards. Organizations that provide prepared meals are also eligible to receive commodities if they can demonstrate that they serve predominantly persons in need.

**For more information...** TEFAP is a Federal program administered by the State. Contact the administering agency in your State to learn how to sponsor a program. To find the TEFAP agency in your State, visit [www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap) Requests for information may also be sent to [fdd-psb@fns.usda.gov](mailto:fdd-psb@fns.usda.gov) or call 703-305-2680.



## FOOD STAMP PROGRAM GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The Food Stamp Program is the cornerstone of Federal nutrition assistance programs and provides crucial support to working poor and needy households. The program serves more than 25 million people. FNS administers two direct grant competitions to strengthen this important program.

### FOOD STAMP PROGRAM PARTICIPATION GRANTS

FNS awards funding for projects aimed at making the processes through which State agencies determine food stamp eligibility simpler and easier for applicants. The goal is to encourage participation by eliminating barriers caused by the complexity of application and certification procedures.



**Available funding.** FNS typically publishes a solicitation for grant applications in late winter each year and awards a small number of grants ranging from \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 for projects that promise innovative and durable improvements that could continue beyond the end of the grant period.

**Eligible organizations.** A wide range of governmental and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply, but all applications must show the meaningful participation of one or more of the 53 State agencies that provide food stamp benefits.

### FOOD STAMP PROGRAM OUTREACH GRANTS

FNS awards funding for projects that will test outreach strategies that show promise of increasing program participation. Generally, such grants require public education activities; partnerships within the community, including with the State and local food stamp offices; and an evaluation component to measure the project's effectiveness.

**Available funding.** Grant competitions are generally held annually, although only when funding permits. Award amounts range from \$100,000 to \$300,000.

**Eligible organizations.** Grants are awarded competitively to small, nonprofit faith-based and community groups, particularly those groups that have minimal experience with Federal grants.

**For more information on both of these grant opportunities...** Visit the FNS Grants Web page at [www.fns.usda.gov/fns/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/) and click on the "Grants" button.





## PROJECT HERITAGE

A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION  
IN DENVER, COLORADO

*"I had nowhere to go, I was really down on my luck," said Luz Lomeli, mother of three with no home and no job. She got her life back together when she came to stay at the Heritage House Center in Denver, Colorado. In a small but adequate apartment, she and her children received free meals thanks to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Over a period of two months, Lomeli was able to move her children into an apartment, ensure they were well-fed, find a job, and begin to turn her life back in the direction she wanted. Heritage House became aware that it qualified to participate in the CACFP through outreach efforts by the Food and Nutrition Service regional office on behalf of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative.*

## CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides healthy meals and snacks to children and adults receiving daycare. It plays a vital role in improving the quality of daycare and making it more affordable for many low-income families.

**Who the program helps.** Children age 12 and younger are eligible to receive up to two meals and one snack each day at a daycare home or center. Migrant children age 15 and younger; and, persons with disabilities, regardless of age, who are in care facilities serving predominantly children under age 18, are also eligible for CACFP. After-school snacks are available to children through age 18. Adult participants must be functionally impaired or age 60 and older, and enrolled in an eligible adult daycare center

where they may receive up to two meals and one snack each day through CACFP.

**How the program works.** CACFP provides reimbursement for meals served in participating centers and daycare homes. The following types of facilities may receive reimbursement for CACFP meals: child-care centers, family daycare centers, adult daycare centers, emergency shelters, and after-school-care centers. Sponsoring organizations enter into agreements with their State agencies to operate the program.

**For more information...** CACFP is a Federal program administered by the State. Contact the administering agency in your State to learn how to sponsor a program. To find your State agency, visit [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm). Requests for information may also be sent to [CNDInternet@fns.usda.gov](mailto:CNDInternet@fns.usda.gov) or call 703-305-2590.



# FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

**U**SDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) works with a variety of cooperating sponsors, including faith-based and community groups, to provide food aid around the world. Faith-based and community organizations have a long history of partnering with FAS to provide food to hungry people, humanitarian assistance to those in need, and agricultural development support to newly emerging democracies. The following three FAS administered programs provide opportunities for faith-based and community organizations, which work in eligible countries, to assist in this effort.

## FOOD FOR PROGRESS

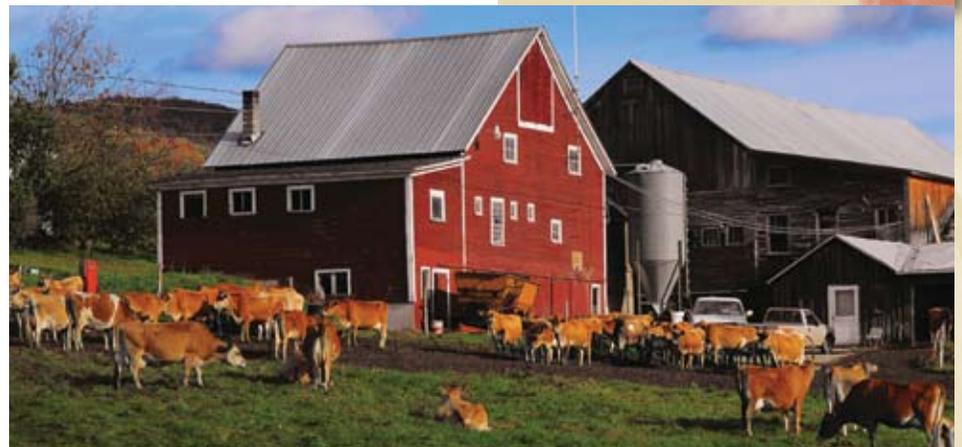
The Food for Progress Program is designed to support countries that have made commitments to introduce or expand free enterprise elements into their agricultural economies through changes in commodity prices, marketing, input availability, distribution, and private sector involvement.

*How the program works.* Under the Food for Progress Act of 1985, U.S. agricultural commodities are provided to developing countries and emerging democracies committed to expanding free enterprise in the agricultural sector. The Food for

Progress program is used mainly to support agricultural development projects in the recipient countries.

*Eligible organizations.* Foreign governments, private voluntary organizations, and the World Food Program can receive funding through this program. USDA will consider proposals from faith-based and community organizations that work in developing countries and territories that meet the requirements of the Food for Progress Act of 1985. Priority will be given to projects in countries that are engaged in private sector development, are net food importers, and have populations with low incomes.

*For more information...* To learn more about Food for Progress, visit [www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFP/ffp.html](http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFP/ffp.html) Requests for information can also be e-mailed to [PPDED@fas.usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@fas.usda.gov) or call 202-720-4221.



## INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

AN INTERNATIONAL FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION

*Like other villagers in northwest Bosnia-Herzegovina, Gojko, 40, works as a farmer and struggles to make ends meet. A corn harvester that he received from International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) makes it possible for him to increase production and support his family. Through USDA's Food for Progress program, IOCC is contributing to reconciliation and economic security in Bosnia. Through the Food for Progress program, IOCC received vegetable oil that was monetized and the generated funds were used for agricultural development, micro-credit lending, and infrastructure repair.*

## WORLD VISION

AN INTERNATIONAL FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION

*Eleven-year-old Thamina Saromie and her mother Karima live in Afghanistan where her mother is a math teacher at Hatifee School in Herat. Her school has gone from 700 students to 8,000 in 1 year, thanks to the work in Afghanistan of World Vision, a Christian relief and development organization.*

*World Vision, with USDA assistance, has built or rehabilitated 9 schools in Herat, Badghis, and Kabul provinces and has provided tons of food commodities under the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program to feed 37,000 schoolchildren and 675 teachers.*

*“We are very enthusiastic about the future,” says Ms. Melhin, the headmistress. “We are creating the teachers, doctors, and engineers of the future.”*

## McGOVERN-DOLE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Food for Education Program assists countries that have made a commitment to support and enhance the quality of their education and nutrition sectors.

**How the program works.** A major thrust of the program is school and pre-school feeding to increase access to education, especially for girls. Commodities produced in the United States will be provided to increase the nutritional status and learning potential of children, with particular attention given to children under the age of 5 years, pre-school, and primary-school-age children, in addition to pregnant women and lactating mothers.



**Eligible organizations.** Nonprofit charitable organizations, cooperatives, and international organizations commonly conduct the school feeding and nutrition projects within recipient countries. The commitment to education by the government in the recipient country is a factor in a successful proposal. Faith-based and community organizations that work in developing countries are encouraged to apply. Applicant organizations should consider the following factors when determining which country/region to target for a proposal submission: (1) countries/regions where there is both a need in the education sector and a need for food to improve the nutrition status of beneficiaries, (2) countries/regions with a high prevalence of food insecurity, i.e., net food importers, and (3) countries listed as low-income or lower-middle-income economies (World Bank definition). Organizations should consider the appropriateness of a particular commodity for use within the recipient country.

**For more information...** To learn more about Food for Progress, visit [www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFE/FFE.html](http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/FFE/FFE.html) Requests for information can also be e-mailed to [PPDED@fas.usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@fas.usda.gov) or call 202-720-4221.

## SECTION 416(B) OF THE AGRICULTURE ACT OF 1949

Section 416(b) allows USDA to donate commodities that are owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to carry out assistance programs in developing and friendly countries.

### *How the program works.*

Commodities donated under Section 416(b) may be used for direct feeding or may be sold in the recipient country, with the proceeds used to support agricultural, economic, or infrastructure development programs in that country.

Availability of commodities depends on CCC inventories and acquisitions, and programming varies from year to year.

### *Eligible organizations.*

Commodities are made available for donation through agreements with foreign governments, private voluntary organizations, cooperatives, and the World Food Program.

*For more information...* To learn more about Section 416(b) and whether commodities are available, visit [www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/416b/section416b.html](http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/FoodAid/416b/section416b.html) Requests for information can also be e-mailed to [PPDED@fas.usda.gov](mailto:PPDED@fas.usda.gov) or call 202-720-4221.



## AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

AN INTERNATIONAL FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION

*Fourth-grade student Ramzi Gadamamadov of Roshtkala District School is one of the many children grateful for the milk from USDA. The little boy is one among more than 22,000 children in Tajikistan and 16,000 in Afghanistan who receive milk each schoolday from the Aga Khan Foundation, a faith-based, non-denominational, international development agency. Through Section 416(b), USDA donated 5,000 metric tons of nonfat dry milk to help support the Aga Khan Foundation's food distribution efforts in 376 schools in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Since the milk distribution began, teachers report that school attendance, test scores, and student grades have improved.*



# RURAL DEVELOPMENT



**U**SDA Rural Development is committed to helping build stronger, more vibrant rural communities across the Nation. Rural Development partners with faith-based and community organizations on projects that bring housing, community facilities, utilities, and other services to rural communities. The following 5 pages highlight these partnership opportunities.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES DIRECT LOANS, GUARANTEED LOANS, AND GRANTS

Through the Community Facilities loan program, Rural Development helps to ensure that essential community facilities — such as health care clinics, police and fire stations, schools, and child-care centers — are readily available to

all rural Americans. Community Facilities programs can make and guarantee loans to develop essential community facilities in cities, towns, or unincorporated areas of up to 20,000 in population.

The purpose of this program is to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services to rural residents. Community facilities projects typically fall into the following categories: health care, public safety, public services, educational, cultural, and transportation. All facilities financed in whole or in part with Rural Housing Service funds shall be for public use.

***Eligible organizations.*** Loans and loan guarantees are available to eligible entities including public bodies, Indian tribal organizations, nonprofit organizations, and private corporations that meet all necessary eligibility requirements. Assistance is authorized for eligible applicants in any of the 50 States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

***For more information...*** Visit Rural Development's Web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov) or call (202) 720-1500.

## SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAMS

Through Rural Development's Single-Family Housing Programs, many families have been able to achieve the American dream of home ownership.

## MUTUAL SELF-HELP HOUSING GRANTS

Mutual Self-Help Housing Grants combine the Rural Development direct lending program for home purchases with a grant program that helps nonprofit organizations guide borrowers in the construction of new homes, reducing by almost 20 percent the total cost of purchasing a home.

The program is targeted at families who are unable to buy affordable, safe housing through conventional lenders, due to low income. The



families provide at least 65 percent of the labor and work together to build each other's homes, usually in groups of 5-12 families.

Eligible applicants include any State, political subdivision, private or public nonprofit corporation, or Indian tribal organization.

## TECHNICAL & SUPERVISORY ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Technical & Supervisory Assistance Grants provide funding for local organizations to assist low-income rural families in obtaining adequate housing to meet their needs and/or to provide the necessary guidance to promote their continued occupancy of already adequate housing.

Grants facilitate the delivery of housing programs to serve the most needy low-income families in rural areas of greatest need for housing. Eligible grantees include public or private nonprofit corporations, agencies, institutions, Indian tribes, and other associations.

*For more information...* To learn about these programs, visit the Rural Development Web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov) or call (202) 720-1474.



## MERCY HOUSING

A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION IN ESPARTO, CALIFORNIA

*"It required working every weekend for 18 months, but the results were well worth it," said Terri Bueno of Esparto, California. Terri participated in the Mutual Self-Help Housing Program with the help of the Mercy Housing Corporation. "Before this project, I was not aware of the things that USDA Rural Development is involved in. Now we have a new, clean, perfect house, and I know every nail, screw, and bolt that went into it. It was a great experience."*

*Mercy Housing, affiliated with Catholic Charities San Francisco, is an example of successful outreach of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative. Mercy Housing develops affordable housing for families, seniors, and individuals with special needs who lack the necessary economic resources to access quality, safe housing.*



## CONCERNED ACTION FOR THE ELDERLY

A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION  
IN ST. ANNE, ILLINOIS

*The Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Office seeks to provide access for organizations like Concerned Action for the Elderly. As an organization dedicated to assisting the elderly through the often-difficult later years of life, Concerned Action for the Elderly received assistance from USDA Rural Development to construct a housing complex known as Northlake Villa Apartments for the very-low-income elderly and disabled of St. Anne, Illinois.*

*“Elderly and disabled families now have a new home on a beautiful setting and will not be forced to relocate to a larger community (away from family and friends) to have safe and affordable housing in their ‘golden years’,” says Linda Duby, Executive Director of Concerned Action for the Elderly.*

## MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAMS

Multi-Family Housing makes and guarantees loans and provides grants to housing developers for the construction and renovation of multi-family housing facilities in rural areas.

### GUARANTEED RURAL RENTAL HOUSING LOANS

Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Loans allow for the construction, acquisition, or rehabilitation of rural multi-family housing. Funds can be used to purchase a site or a leasehold interest in a site; to construct housing or community rooms; to pay fees to purchase durable household furnishings; and to pay construction loan interest.

Occupants must be very-low-, low-, or moderate-income households, elderly, handicapped, or disabled persons with income not in excess of 115% of the area median income.

### RURAL RENTAL HOUSING LOANS

Rural Rental Housing Loans are made to finance building construction and site development of

multi-family apartment living. This provides an alternative for people who cannot afford the purchase price and maintenance cost of an individual house due to very low, low, and moderate incomes. Some units are reserved for people ages 62 and older.

Eligible applicants for both loan programs must be a citizen of the United States or a legally admitted alien for permanent residence in the United States, a state or local public agency, a limited liability company, limited partnership, consumer cooperative, trust, a non-profit organization, Indian tribe, or a for-profit corporation.

### RURAL HOUSING PRESERVATION GRANTS

Rural Housing Preservation Grants are available to recipients of Single-Family Housing and Multi-Family Housing program assistance. This program assists very-low- and low-income rural residents, individual homeowners, and rental property owners to bring their dwellings up to development standards through repair and rehabilitation projects.

*For more information on all these programs...* To find the Rural Development office serving your area, visit [www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd\\_map.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html) You may also visit [www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov) or contact the Rural Housing Service staff at (202) 720-3773.

## THE FARM LABOR HOUSING LOAN AND GRANT PROGRAM

The Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant Program is the only nationwide program designed to provide decent, safe, and sanitary low-rent housing and related facilities for domestic farm laborers.

The program provides capital financing to buy, build, improve, or repair housing and related facilities for domestic farm laborers, including persons whose income is earned in aquaculture and those engaged in on-farm processing. The loans and grants may be used for construction, repair, or purchase of year-round or seasonal housing; acquiring the necessary land and making improvements on land for housing; and developing related support facilities including central cooking and dining facilities, small infirmaries, laundry facilities, daycare centers, other essential equipment and facilities, or recreation areas.



*Eligible applicants.* Grants are available to eligible applicants only where there is a pressing need and when it is doubtful that such facilities could be provided unless grant assistance is available. Loans are available to farmers, Indian tribes, States, and public or private nonprofit organizations that meet specific regulatory requirements. Funds for off-farm housing may be used in urban areas for nearby farm labor.

### RURAL RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Rural Rental Assistance is available to recipients of Farm Labor Housing Grants and Loans and Rural Rental Housing Loans (listed under Multi-Family Housing). This program provides rental assistance to tenants living in Rural Development-financed properties. With this program, eligible tenants pay no more than 30 percent of their adjusted income for rent.

*For more information* on these programs... Visit the Rural Housing Service's Web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs) or call (202) 720-3773. To find your State office, go to [www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd\\_map.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html)



### CATHOLIC CHARITIES

A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION  
IN DOVER, FLORIDA

*In Florida, there is a lack of clean, safe, and sanitary housing for the thousands of farmworkers and their families. To solve this problem, Catholic Charities, Inc. applied for and received loan funds and grant funds from Rural Development to help build the San Jose Mission. The Mission has 80 farmworker housing units and is located in a rural agricultural community supported by an onsite health, education, and social services campus for low-income farmworker families.*

## WILCOX UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION  
IN WILCOX, ARIZONA

*When Ryan Benavides and his wife began to raise their children in Willcox, a small ranching community in southern Arizona, they discovered that there were no certified childcare facilities in the area.*

*In 2004, USDA Rural Development provided a Community Facilities loan and grant to the Willcox United Methodist Church to build a new facility offering certified infant care as well as daycare for pre-schoolers and after-school programs.*

*“Without this facility, we’d have to try to find home care,” said Benavides, “and that’s difficult to find here.” Benavides said that having a certified childcare facility means that there is both structure and dependability for his children. “This facility provides preparation for our kids for entering school as well as a solid after-school program for school-age kids,” said Benavides. “I’m extremely happy they now can offer this in Willcox!”*

*Toby Collins, one of the childcare facility’s board members, noted that without the help from Rural Development, “we probably would not have been able to do this expansion. We very much appreciate Rural Development’s help.”*

## DISTANCE LEARNING AND TELEMEDICINE PROGRAM

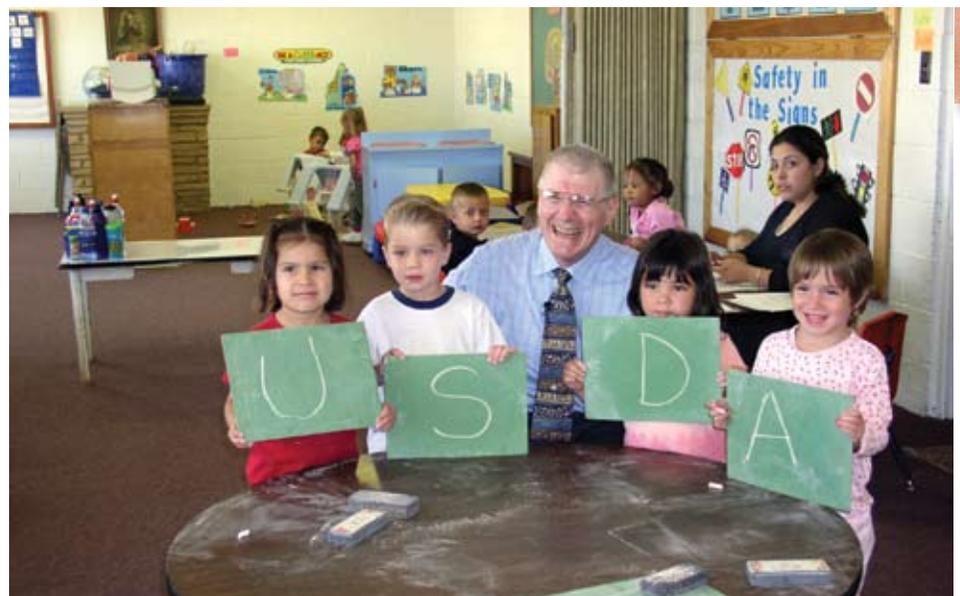
The Rural Utilities Service’s (RUS) Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program is designed to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America through the use of advanced telecommunications technologies.

With DLT loans, grants, and loan-grant combinations, RUS helps rural communities enjoy the enhanced infrastructure needed to reach the schoolhouse or clinic door and the equipment required inside that door. The goal is to provide rural residents—students, teachers, parents, patients, and physicians—with innovative and affordable educa-

tional and health care opportunities that were once only available in urban areas.

**Eligible organizations.** Applicants must be legally organized as an incorporated organization or partnership, Indian tribal organization, State or local unit of government, consortium, or other legal entity.

**For more information...** The latest DLT developments, including application guides, program regulations, toolkits, and the notice of application filing deadline are posted on the DLT Web page at [www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm](http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm) Contact the DLT program staff by calling 202-720-0413 or by e-mailing [dltinfo@usda.gov](mailto:dltinfo@usda.gov)



# NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



**T**he Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. The following three programs provide opportunities for faith-based and community organizations to partner with NRCS.

## CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is a voluntary program intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. This is done through leveraging Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection and in conjunction with agricultural production.

Competitive grants are awarded to non-Federal governmental or non-governmental organizations, Indian tribal organizations, or individuals. CIG benefits agricultural producers by providing more options for environmental enhancement and compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations.

## THE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

The Conservation Partnership Initiative (CPI) is a voluntary program established to foster conservation partnerships that focus technical and financial resources

on conservation priorities in watersheds and air sheds of special significance.

Under CPI, funds are awarded to State and local governments and agencies, Indian tribal organizations, and nongovernmental organizations that have a history of working with agricultural producers.

## THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program accelerates the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources; improves the general level of economic activity; and enhances the environment and standard of living in RC&D areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Through the establishment of the RC&D areas, led by a council, the program works with local organizations to establish or improve coordination systems in rural communities and build rural community leadership skills to effectively utilize Federal, State and local programs for the communities' benefit.

RC&D councils are strong potential partners for faith-based and community organizations. Although this is not a direct grant program, RC&D councils can assist faith-based and community groups in identifying and applying for grants from other funding sources.

*For more information on all these programs...* Visit the NRCS Web site at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/) for more details on these programs, including application deadline information.



# COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE



## AID FOR FRIENDS

A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION  
IN PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

*Jose Elias Baergas is an 88-year-old resident of North Philadelphia with a crippling disability and no one to rely on to provide regular care.*

*Aid for Friends' Director Tom Wallin heard about the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) from the Faith-Based and Community Initiative Liaison at a Food and Nutrition Service conference. Now Aid for Friends, in cooperation with Federal, State, and local agencies, is able to act as an intermediary to provide homebound seniors like Baergas with meals and companionship. Today, Aid for Friends volunteers deliver program benefits to 200 clients. In Baergas' words, this program is "a blessing from God."*

USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) advances knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities through national program leadership and Federal assistance. CSREES works with faith-based and community groups to help make communities more self-reliant at maintaining their food systems.

## COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

Community Food Projects are designed to increase food security in communities. Projects should meet specific State, local, or neighborhood food and agricultural needs for infrastructure improvement and development, plan long-term solutions, and create and implement innovative marketing strategies that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

These grants are intended to help eligible private nonprofit entities that need a one-time infusion of Federal assistance to establish and carry out multi-purpose community food projects.

Projects are funded from \$10,000 to \$300,000 and from 1 to 3 years. These are one-time grants that require a dollar-for-dollar match in resources.

*For more information...* Visit the CSREES Web site for application deadline information and instructions for proposal development: [www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/funding.cfm](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/funding.cfm)

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