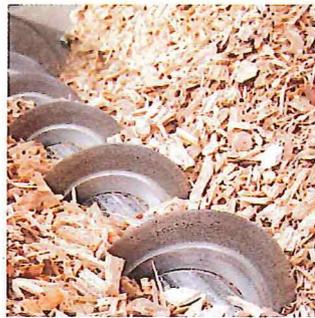




United States Department of Agriculture



CREATING A THRIVING BIOECONOMY IN RURAL AMERICA

Rural Development
Rural Business-Cooperative Service



In the time I have served as Secretary of Agriculture, emerging opportunities in the bioeconomy and biobased product manufacturing have come to the forefront for their potential to create jobs and open new markets for America's farm, ranch, and forest products.

Today, 3,100 companies use agricultural waste products and residues, woody biomass and other renewable materials to make biobased products. Across the Nation, advanced biorefineries have scaled up production to provide the renewable fuels of the future. More than 9,250 farmers and rural businesses have implemented advanced energy efficiency practices to boost their bottom line.

Recognizing the expanding potential of the industry, the 2014 Farm Bill makes a significant investment in renewable energy programs and the bioeconomy. It strengthens the flagship Rural Energy for America Program, which provides critical investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency across rural America and helps reduce our dependence on foreign oil. It continues support for the Biopreferred Program, which creates new opportunities for rural America in the emerging biobased products industry. The legislation expands the Biorefinery Assistance Program to include not only advanced biofuels production but also renewable chemical and biobased product manufacturing. Finally, the new farm bill provides support for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, which will allow new, non-food feedstocks to be planted and harvested in more regions across the country—helping to eliminate concerns about choosing between food and fuel production.

USDA stands ready to provide support and technical assistance to help America's farmers and ranchers break into the nearly limitless possibilities in the bioeconomy and biobased product manufacturing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Vilsack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "T".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture



In Fiscal Year 2013, Secretary Vilsack called for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to embark on a mission to promote and expand the bioeconomy. As Administrator of Rural Development's Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), I am proud to present this bioeconomy brochure highlighting the Department's commitment and achievements in promoting and expanding the bioeconomy.

In Fiscal Year 2013, RBS successfully delivered approximately \$118 million in funding to over 300 bioeconomy projects in 48 States. The projects ranged in both large and small scope, from building a local food distribution center to installing a wood-fired boiler heating system in a manufacturing facility.

The bioeconomy represents an exciting opportunity to improve the economies of rural communities throughout America. Through our loan guarantees and grants, we are able to partner with rural entrepreneurs by providing them with the requisite capital to develop, build, and sustain their bioeconomy businesses. We are now beginning to see the vast potential and opportunities in the bioeconomy.

An expanded bioeconomy enhances rural prosperity and reduces our Nation's dependence on fossil fuels. Bioeconomy projects not only bring much-needed jobs to rural America, but also provide an opportunity for farmers to grow the feedstock necessary to fuel the bioeconomy, bringing additional jobs to those supporting the entire supply chain. The biobased products being produced return wealth to the agricultural sector from far up the supply chain, while creating quality "green jobs" through the manufacture and sale of sustainable and environmentally friendly products.

As we move forward in Fiscal Year 2014 and beyond, RBS seeks to expand its investments in bioeconomy projects and to broaden the types of bioeconomy projects funded. Much progress has been made and RBS looks forward to building upon its accomplishments to date and positioning USDA to fully support all of the exciting bioeconomy opportunities in front of us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lillian E. Salerno".

Lillian E. Salerno, Administrator
Rural Business-Cooperative Service
USDA Rural Development

Creating a Thriving Bioeconomy in Rural America

What is the Bioeconomy?

The “bioeconomy” encompasses the whole of biological production - through the manufacturing, distribution, and sale of products derived from biological materials: Such products are referred to as “biobased products.”

Specific examples of bioeconomy production and activities are:

- A dairy farm in Washington using an anaerobic digester to turn the manure from its herds into electricity for sale to a utility.
- A family-owned business in North Carolina replacing the natural gas used to heat its greenhouse with a boiler using wood chips - which provides an additional market for local lumber mills and logging operations.

Why is the bioeconomy important?

The production of biobased products improves rural American economies in many ways, including increasing the demand for their biomass feedstocks. Expanding America’s biobased economy also decreases the country’s reliance on fossil fuels and petroleum-based products.

Using agricultural feedstocks to make everyday finished products, such as lubricants, construction materials, and cleaners, adds value to the agricultural industry, creating jobs not just on the farm or near the farm gate, but throughout the manufacturing process on sales of these biobased products.



What are biobased products?

Biobased products are materials, chemicals, and energy derived from renewable biological resources and include diverse items such as:

- Biofuels (cellulosic ethanol, biodiesel, biojet fuel)
- Clothing and fibers
- Soil amendments and plant nutrients
- Bioplastics
- Pharmaceuticals
- Green building materials
- Cleaning agents, solvents, and lubricants

Biobased product—a product determined by the Secretary to be a commercial or industrial product (other than food or feed) that is either (1) composed, in whole or in significant part, of biological products, including renewable domestic agricultural materials and forestry materials; or (2) an intermediate ingredient or feedstock.

2008 Farm Bill



How Does RBS Support the Bioeconomy?

Did you know that USDA is the Federal leader in helping to advance the U.S. bioeconomy through the use of renewable agricultural (plant), marine and forestry raw materials?

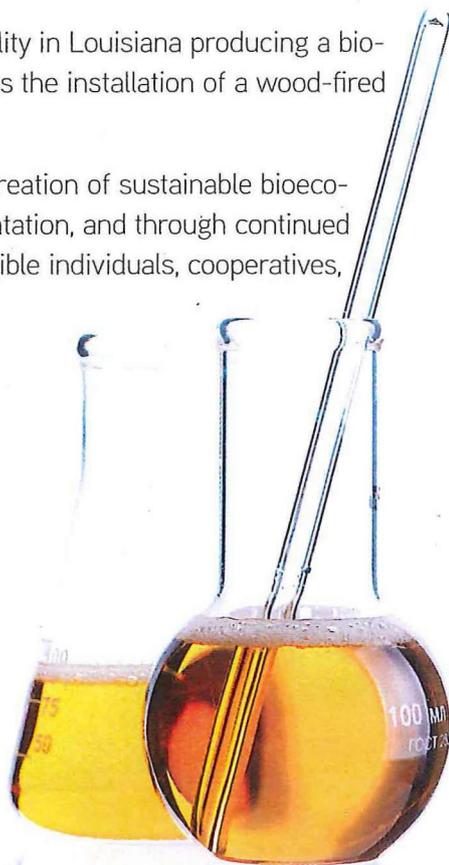
RBS provides funding and technical assistance to a wide range of bioeconomy projects, such as:

- the development of a solid biomass fuel production facility using renewable biomass material as its feedstock
- a project that turns corn and rice waste into fertilizer
- a feasibility study and business plan for processing canola into biodiesel and co-products
- a facility that takes distillers grain and produces a biopellet and powder product for use in the production of plastics

The projects we assist may be large scale, such as a facility in Louisiana producing a biochemical from renewable biomass, or small scale, such as the installation of a wood-fired boiler heating system in a manufacturing facility.

RBS provides financial and technical assistance for the creation of sustainable bioeconomy businesses, from their beginning through implementation, and through continued operation and growth. This assistance is available to eligible individuals, cooperatives, businesses, government and tribal entities, and others.

RBS provided a \$100,000 grant to the **Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology** and its partners to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of producing jet fuel, diesel fuel, and heating oil from sustainable alternative feedstocks such as biomass and municipal solid waste at a facility in rural Connecticut.



Assessing Bioeconomy Opportunities

Creating a business involves planning, assessing, and analyzing risk. Taking advantage of opportunities in the bioeconomy is no different. RBS can help entrepreneurs by providing technical assistance as well as funding for:

- Feasibility studies
- Business plans
- Marketing plans
- Community development strategic planning
- Cost-benefit with sensitivity analysis



Gammill Farms Partnership, AR, is using a \$50,000 economic planning grant to conduct a feasibility study and prepare a marketing plan for a business to convert corn and rice waste, using glycerol waste from a local bio-fuel biorefinery, into fertilizer. The Partnership includes purchasing biomass from multiple farms, including two small family farms, which then will have the option to buy discounted fertilizer.

Within an eight-county area of western Tennessee, the **Memphis Bioworks Foundation**, in partnership with the Northeast Tennessee Entrepreneur Center, is using a \$15,000 grant to conduct rural business accelerator programs for entrepreneurs focused on commercializing biobased products and biomass feedstocks



Constructing Bioeconomy Projects

Once a business or project is ready, owners often need financial assistance to bring their projects to fruition. RBS can provide funds to help:

- Purchase land
- Build facilities and projects
- Acquire/lease machinery and equipment

Engnity Worldwide LLC, MO, received a \$500,000 grant to build a solid biomass fuel production facility that will produce 18,000 tons of biomass fuel from renewable biomass each year. This fuel then will be sold to municipal utilities for electric power generation. The proposed operation is expected to generate 20 new jobs in central Missouri.



Laurel Biocomposites, LLC, NE, received a \$5 million loan guarantee to help it become the first company in the United States to convert distillers grain into a new biobased product that replaces and/or enhances traditional petrochemical-based resins in various plastics manufacturing processes. The company used the loan guarantee to purchase equipment and provide start-up working capital to begin plant operation. Once full-scale production begins in 2014, Laurel Composites will produce 48 million pounds of finished bio-resin product. Located in a community of 964, Laurel Composites is creating 9 jobs and saving 3 jobs.

Singer River Electric Power Association, MS, received a \$1 million loan to purchase land for the construction of a new facility that will produce 500,000 tons of wood pellets per year. All of the raw material will be obtained within 70 miles of the facility. Once operational, an estimated 60 full-time jobs will be created at the facility.



Sustaining and Growing Bioeconomy Businesses

RBS can provide funding for businesses that need to sustain their operations, including reducing their operating expenses, and that want to expand their businesses.

- Working capital
- Refinance/restructure
- New equipment and improvements

Quachita Biomass, LA, a small-scale saw mill, needed financial assistance to expand its product lines. With a \$1.35 million loan guarantee, the company was able to refinance existing debt, purchase new equipment, and provide working capital that allowed the company to grow through new products such as high-end lumber, wood shavings, wood pellets, and fertilizers. Located in an area with an unemployment rate higher than the statewide unemployment rate, the project will create 2 jobs and retain 15 jobs in a community of 118.



Maxwell Farm, VT, needed to control its operating costs, particularly energy, bedding, and soil nutrients, to ensure future sustainability. The farm used a grant and loan guarantee -- totaling almost \$685,000 -- to complete construction of a methane-based energy generation system that will produce operating savings by reducing field fertilizer requirements, produce material suitable for use either in the dairy barn as bedding or for sale as a soil conditioner, and provide waste heat for hot water.



Global Fuels, MO, is using a \$3.9 million loan guarantee to finance improvements to a biodiesel production facility and to restructure its debt. The project enables the production of up to 5 million gallons of renewable biodiesel per year and will create 11 jobs and retain 5 jobs.



Regional Bioeconomy Projects

Different regions of the United States have different natural resources that affect the types of bioeconomy projects that can be sustained. Assessing and supporting these regional differences is an important part of how RBS assistance can help grow the bioeconomy.

The **Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council** is using a \$20,000 grant to create a marketing development plan that will assist businesses producing biomass feedstock for energy products and specialty chemicals. The goal is to grow demand for biomass feedstocks by supporting the design and construction of new biomass boiler systems, assisting with the siting and financing of a torrefield biomass briquette plant, and researching and documenting the needs (feedstock, workforce, etc.) of biofuel and biochemical production companies.



The **Northern Forest Center**, NH, used an \$85,000 grant to demonstrate the value and viability of heating homes and institutions with fully automated, centralized wood pellet boilers to reduce the heavy dependence on expensive heating oil in the Northern Forest region of northern portions of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Focused initially on Berlin, NH, the project resulted in replacing traditional oil boilers with 40 residential wood pellet boilers and the home-owners paying on average 40 percent lower heating bills, the local wood pellet boiler manufacturer expanding production and hiring workers, and a local contractor adding pellet boiler installation and maintenance services.

Not content with this one success, the Center is seeking to replicate this project so that efficient wood heating is accessible in every neighborhood within the Northern Forest region.

Other Bioeconomy Programs and Partnerships

The BioPreferred Program

The BioPreferred Program, administered by USDA's Departmental Management, was created under the 2002 Farm Bill. The goal of the Program is to increase the development, purchase, and use of biobased products through two initiatives: procurement preference by Federal agencies and voluntary product certification and labeling for consumers.



Preferred Procurement - USDA designates categories of biobased products that are required for purchase by Federal agencies and their contractors. As a part of this process, the minimum biobased content is specified. As of January 2014, 97 categories of biobased products have been identified for preferred procurement.

USDA Certified Biobased Product Labeling Program

- A voluntary initiative, biobased products that meet program requirements may earn a label for identification by the general public. As of January 2014, USDA has certified 1,000 biobased products in more than 50 different categories. Products range from construction, janitorial, and grounds-keeping products specified and purchased by the Department of Defense and Federal agencies to personal care and packaging products used by consumers every day.



For the latest information on the BioPreferred Program, please visit the following link:
<http://www.biopreferred.gov>

State	Amount	Number of Awards	State	Amount	Number of Awards
Alabama	\$15,274	2	Montana	\$25,000	1
Alaska	\$299,804	3	Nebraska	\$8,889,809	6
Arizona	\$19,655	1	Nevada	\$90,680	2
Arkansas	\$1,009,517	4	New Hampshire	\$359,187	3
California	\$1,421,605	15	New Jersey	\$53,750	1
Colorado	\$303,045	2	New Mexico	\$520,142	5
Connecticut	\$142,153	3	New York	\$1,184,347	11
Florida	\$7,883,125	7	North Carolina	\$288,253	13
Georgia	\$381,716	6	Ohio	\$12,707,017	10
Hawaii	\$19,794	2	Oklahoma	\$5,573,580	1
Idaho	\$123,571	8	Oregon	\$861,285	13
Illinois	\$8,701,077	6	Pennsylvania	\$2,174,969	4
Indiana	\$4,039,180	12	Rhode Island	\$98,880	2
Iowa	\$9,555,879	12	South Carolina	\$608,703	4
Kansas	\$4,520,814	11	South Dakota	\$10,127,917	4
Kentucky	\$4,043,536	7	Tennessee	\$578,088	6
Louisiana	\$1,456,649	4	Texas	\$7,894,360	10
Maine	\$2,040,585	9	Utah	\$7,019	1
Maryland	\$266,342	1	Vermont	\$279,557	11
Massachusetts	\$44,510	4	Virginia	\$515,489	6
Michigan	\$24,321	10	Washington	\$3,352,991	15
Minnesota	\$1,808,142	6	West Virginia	\$49,740	2
Mississippi	\$1,640,627	7	Wisconsin	\$4,163,614	26
Missouri	\$7,636,565	11	Wyoming	\$40,000	1

USDA Rural Development State Offices

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/offices/state-offices>

Alabama

Sterling Centre, Suite 601
4121 Carmichael Road
Montgomery, AL 36106-3683
(334) 279-3400
www.rd.usda.gov/al

Alaska

800 West Evergreen Street, Ste 201
Palmer, AK 99645-6539
(907) 761-7705
www.rd.usda.gov/ak

Arizona

230 North First Avenue, Suite 206
Phoenix, AZ 85003-1706
(602) 280-8701
www.rd.usda.gov/az

Arkansas

700 W. Capitol Ave, Room 3416
Little Rock, AR 72201-3225
(501) 301-3200
www.rd.usda.gov/ar

California

430 G. Street, Agency No. 4169
Davis, CA 95616-4169
(530) 792-5800
www.rd.usda.gov/ca

Colorado

Denver Federal Center
Building 56, Room 2300
Denver, CO 80225-0426
(720) 544-2903
www.rd.usda.gov/co

Connecticut

451 West Street
Amherst, MA 01002-2999
(413) 253-4300
www.rd.usda.gov/ct

Delaware

1221 College Park Drive, Ste 200
Dover, DE 19904-8724
(302) 857-3582
www.rd.usda.gov/de

Florida

4440 NW 25th Place
Gainesville, FL 32614-7010
(352) 338-3402
www.rd.usda.gov/fl

Georgia

Stephens Federal Building
355 E. Hancock Ave, Stop 300
Athens, GA 30601-2768
(706) 546-2154
www.rd.usda.gov/ga

Hawaii

Federal Building, Room 311
154 Waiuanuenu Avenue
Hilo, HI 96720-2486
(808) 933-8380
www.rd.usda.gov/hi

Idaho

9173 W. Barnes Dr., Suite A1
Boise, ID 83709-1574
(208) 378-5600
www.rd.usda.gov/id

Illinois

2118 West Park Court, Suite A
Champaign, IL 61821-2986
(217) 403-6200
www.rd.usda.gov/il

Indiana

5975 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278-1996
(317) 290-3100
www.rd.usda.gov/in

Iowa

Federal Building, Room 873
210 Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50309-2117
(515) 284-4663
www.rd.usda.gov/ia

Kansas

1303 SW First American Place,
Suite 100
Topeka, KS 66604-4040
(785) 271-2700
www.rd.usda.gov/ks

Kentucky

771 Corporate Drive, Ste 200
Lexington, KY 40503-5439
(859) 224-7300
www.rd.usda.gov/ky

Louisiana

3727 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302-3327
(318) 473-7921
www.rd.usda.gov/la

Maine

967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4
Bangor, ME 04401-0405
(207) 990-9168
www.rd.usda.gov/me

Maryland

1221 College Park Dr., Ste 200
Dover, DE 19904-8724
(302) 857-3582
www.rd.usda.gov/md

Massachusetts

451 West Street
Amherst, MA 01002-2999
(413) 253-4300
www.rd.usda.gov/ma

Michigan

3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200
East Lansing, MI 48823-6350
(517) 324-5190
www.rd.usda.gov/mi

Minnesota

375 Jackson Street, Suite 410
St. Paul, MN 55101-1853
(651) 602-7800
www.rd.usda.gov/mn

Mississippi

Federal Building, Suite 831
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269-1608
(601) 965-4316
www.rd.usda.gov/ms

Missouri

601 Business Loop 70 West
Parkade Center, Suite 235
Columbia, MO 65203-2579
(573) 876-0976
www.rd.usda.gov/mo

Montana

2229 Boot Hill Court
Bozeman, MT 59715
(406) 585-2530
www.rd.usda.gov/mt

Nebraska

Federal Building, Suite 308
100 Centennial Mall North
Lincoln, NE 68508-3859
(402) 437-5551
www.rd.usda.gov/ne

Nevada

1390 South Curry Street
Carson City, NV 89703-9910
(775) 887-1222
www.rd.usda.gov/nv

New Hampshire

87 State Street, Suite 324
Montpelier, VT 05601
(802) 828-6031
www.rd.usda.gov/nh

New Jersey

5th Floor North, Suite 500
8000 Midlantic Drive
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054-1522
(856) 787-7700
www.rd.usda.gov/nj

New Mexico

6200 Jefferson Street NE,
Room 255
Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 761-4953
www.rd.usda.gov/nm

New York

441 South Salina Street, Suite 357
Syracuse, NY 13202-2541
(315) 477-6400
www.rd.usda.gov/ny

North Carolina

4405 Bland Road, Suite 260
Raleigh, NC 27609-6293
(919) 873-2000
www.rd.usda.gov/nc

North Dakota

Federal Building, Room 208
220 East Rosser
Bismarck, ND 58502-1737
(701) 530-2037
www.rd.usda.gov/nd

Ohio

Federal Building, Room 507
200 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43215-2418
(614) 255-2400
www.rd.usda.gov/oh

Oklahoma

100 USDA, Suite 108
Stillwater, OK 74074-2654
(405) 742-1000
www.rd.usda.gov/ok

Oregon

1201 NE Lloyd Boulevard, Ste 801
Portland, OR 97232-1274
(503) 414-3366
www.rd.usda.gov/or

Pennsylvania

One Credit Union Place, Suite 330
Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996
(717) 237-2299
www.rd.usda.gov/pa

Puerto Rico

IBM Building, Suite 601
654 Munoz Rivera Avenue
San Juan, PR 00936-6106
(787) 766-5095
www.rd.usda.gov/pr

Rhode Island

451 West Street
Amherst, MA 01002-2999
(413) 253-4300
www.rd.usda.gov/ri

South Carolina

Strom Thurmond Federal Building
1835 Assembly Street
Room 1007
Columbia, SC 29201-2449
(803) 765-5163
www.rd.usda.gov/sc

South Dakota

Federal Building, Room 210
200 4th Street SW
Huron, SD 57350-2461
(605) 352-1100
www.rd.usda.gov/sd

Tennessee

3322 West End Avenue, Suite 300
Nashville, TN 37203-1071
(615) 783-1300
www.rd.usda.gov/tn

Texas

Federal Building, Suite 102
101 South Main
Temple, TX 76501-7651
(254) 742-9700
www.rd.usda.gov/tx

Utah

Wallace F. Bennett Federal Bldg
125 South State Street, Rm 4311
Salt Lake City, UT 84138-1106
(801) 524-4324
www.rd.usda.gov/ut

Vermont

87 State Street, Suite 324
Montpelier, VT 05601
(802) 828-6031
www.rd.usda.gov/vt

Virginia

Culpeper Building, Suite 238
1606 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, VA 23229-5014
(804) 287-1551
www.rd.usda.gov/va

Virgin Islands

4440 NW 25th Place
Gainesville, FL 32614-7010
(352) 338-3402
www.rd.usda.gov/vi

Washington

1835 Blacklake Blvd., SW, Suite B
Olympia, WA 98512-5715
(360) 704-7740
www.rd.usda.gov/wa

West Virginia

1550 Earl Core Road, Suite 101
Morgantown, WV 26505-7500
(304) 284-4860
www.rd.usda.gov/wv

Wisconsin

5417 Clem's Way
Stevens Point, WI 54482
(715) 345-7610
www.rd.usda.gov/wi

Wyoming

100 East B Street, Room 1005
Casper, WY 82601
(307) 233-6700
www.rd.usda.gov/wy

Select Rural Business-Cooperative Service Programs

Business & Industry Guaranteed Loans

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-industry-loan-guarantees>

PROGRAM'S GOAL

Provide an incentive for business lending that will save and create jobs (typically for larger businesses)

TYPE OF FUNDING

Loan Guarantees

WHO CAN APPLY?

Banks, credit unions, and other commercial lenders that make loans to rural businesses

WHAT CAN FUNDS BE USED FOR?

Real estate, equipment, working capital & refinancing—for nonfarm businesses

Rural Energy for America Program

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-renewable-energy-systems-energy-efficiency>

PROGRAM'S GOAL

Increase the use of renewable energy systems (RES) and energy efficiency improvements (EEI) among agricultural producers and rural small businesses

TYPE OF FUNDING

Grants and loan guarantees

WHO CAN APPLY?

Agricultural producers and rural small businesses for RES and EEI projects; banks and other commercial lenders that make loans to agricultural producers and rural small businesses; State or local governments, tribes, colleges, and electric coops and publicly owned utilities for energy audits and renewable energy development assistance (EA/REDA) activities

WHAT CAN FUNDS BE USED FOR?

Purchasing and installing renewable energy systems (wind, solar, biomass, biofuel, digesters, geothermal, and micro-hydro); making energy efficiency improvements; and conducting activities specific to the completion of EA/REDA activities

Biorefinery Assistance Program

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/biorefinery-assistance-program>

PROGRAM'S GOAL

Provide an incentive for the construction of first-of-a-kind biorefineries to produce advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals, and biobased products manufacturing

TYPE OF FUNDING

Loan Guarantees

WHO CAN APPLY?

Individuals, entities, tribes, State and local government units, corporations, farm cooperatives, ag producers associations, national laboratories, higher education institutions, rural electric cooperatives, public power entities, and consortiums of the above

WHAT CAN FUNDS BE USED FOR?

Development, construction, and retrofitting of new and emerging technologies for the development of advanced biofuels renewable chemicals, and biobased products manufacturing

Value-Added Producer Grants

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>

PROGRAM'S GOAL

Support producers in ventures that will increase the return on their agricultural commodities

TYPE OF FUNDING

Grants

WHO CAN APPLY?

Farmers, ranchers, foresters and fishers; coops; producer groups and joint ventures

WHAT CAN FUNDS BE USED FOR?

Grants for planning or working capital to operate value-added ventures; minimum 1:1 match required

Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-economic-development-loan-grant-program>

PROGRAM'S GOAL

Promote specific community or business development projects for improving the local economy

TYPE OF FUNDING

Loans and grants

WHO CAN APPLY?

Electric and telephone utilities eligible for USDA's Rural Utilities Service

WHAT CAN FUNDS BE USED FOR?

Loans: nonfarm business or community project for real estate and equipment
Grants: community facility, education or health care project

Intermediary Relending Program

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/intermediary-relending-program>

PROGRAM'S GOAL

Capitalize locally run revolving loan programs for small businesses unable to qualify for bank financing

TYPE OF FUNDING

Loans to a local revolving loan fund for relending to nonfarm businesses

WHO CAN APPLY?

Nonprofit groups, tribes, and public bodies that will make loans to rural businesses and community projects

WHAT CAN FUNDS BE USED FOR?

Setting up a loan program that makes business loans for nonfarm, rural businesses

For additional information on Rural Development and other RD and RBS programs, please visit: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd>



“There are 3,100 companies today that are taking agricultural waste products, agricultural residues and turning them into new products. We want to expand that number each and every year.”

Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack
January 14, 2013
Remarks at 94th Annual Meeting
of the Farm Bureau Federation

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

To File an Employment Complaint

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor (PDF) within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html.

To File a Program Complaint

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Persons with Disabilities

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers.

All Other Inquiries

For any other information not pertaining to civil rights, please refer to the listing of the USDA Agencies and Offices for specific agency information.