

USDA Actions on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

**Alberto Gonzalez, MPP
Chief Policy Advisor
Food and Nutrition Service, USDA**

February 14, 2024



Session Description

- **Provide an overview of USDA's actions to reach the historic White House Conference goals to end hunger, improve nutrition and physical activity, and reduce diet-related diseases and disparities.**
- **Hear from various USDA Mission Areas how they are implementing the National Strategy and how you can help.**
- **Inspire new and enhanced non-government and private sector actions to accelerate progress.**

Today's Panelists

Deirdra Chester, PhD, RDN
Director
USDA Office of the Chief Scientist



Kate Fitzgerald
Senior Advisor for Food Systems
USDA Marketing and Regulatory
Mission Area



Kellie Kubena
Rural Health Liaison
USDA Rural Development





White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health





First White House Conference USDA Impacts

- **Significant expansions to Food Stamps (now known as SNAP)**
- **Increasing the reach of the National School Lunch Program**
- **Permanent authorization of the National School Breakfast Program**
- **Authorization of the pilot for what become known as WIC**
- **Setting the state for developing the Dietary Guidelines for Americans**




WHITE HOUSE
CONFERENCE ON
**HUNGER,
NUTRITION,
& HEALTH**







A photograph of the White House in Washington, D.C., taken at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, red, and purple. The American flag flies on a tall pole in front of the building. The White House is a large, white, neoclassical building with a prominent portico supported by columns. There are large green trees in the foreground and a fountain on the left side. A white text box is overlaid on the center of the image.

**FACT SHEET: The Biden-Harris
Administration Announces More Than
\$8 Billion in New Commitments as
Part of Call to Action for White House
Conference on Hunger, Nutrition,
and Health**



National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

Anchored around five pillars and provides a roadmap for:

- Actions the federal government will take administratively;
- Several legislative proposals; and
- A call to action for private sector; local, state, Tribal, territory governments; philanthropy; civil society; and other partners.

Improve food access and affordability

Integrate nutrition and health

Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices

Support physical activity for all

Enhance nutrition and food security research



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National Strategy Pillar 1: **Improve food access and affordability**



- Increase access to local and regional food systems
- Fund training and equipment purchases
- Invest in the school nutrition workforce
- Expand nutrition education for children

Stores Accepting SNAP Online



2023 Finalist

Lisa Gifaldi, Shelly Pierce, Andrea Gold-O'Connor

and the SNAP Online Purchasing Team

Management Excellence



SAMUEL J. HEYMAN
SERVICE TO AMERICA MEDALS®

PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot

Click on the states listed below that are currently participating in the SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot to see the participating retailers:

- [Alabama](#)
- [Alaska](#)
- [Arizona](#)
- [Arkansas](#)
- [California](#)
- [Colorado](#)
- [Connecticut](#)
- [Delaware](#)
- [District of Columbia](#)
- [Florida](#)
- [Georgia](#)
- [Hawaii](#)
- [Idaho](#)
- [Illinois](#)
- [Indiana](#)
- [Iowa](#)
- [Kansas](#)
- [Kentucky](#)
- [Louisiana](#)
- [Maine](#)
- [Maryland](#)
- [Massachusetts](#)
- [Michigan](#)
- [Minnesota](#)
- [Montana](#)
- [Nebraska](#)
- [Nevada](#)
- [New Hampshire](#)
- [New Jersey](#)
- [New Mexico](#)
- [New York](#)
- [North Carolina](#)
- [North Dakota](#)
- [Ohio](#)
- [Oklahoma](#)
- [Oregon](#)
- [Pennsylvania](#)
- [Rhode Island](#)
- [South Carolina](#)
- [South Dakota](#)
- [Tennessee](#)
- [Texas](#)
- [Utah](#)
- [Vermont](#)
- [Virginia](#)
- [Washington](#)
- [West Virginia](#)
- [Wisconsin](#)



New in 2023! Non-Congregate Meals

Could benefit more than
8 million children across
America



Launching in 2024! Summer EBT

Could benefit more than
29 million children across
America



We Now Have 3 Ways to Defeat Summer Hunger



Summer meal sites



To-go and delivered meals (rural areas only)



Summer grocery benefits

WIC:
Safeguarding
Our Nation
Since 1972



WIC Works!

Effective investment:
\$1 invested **saves** almost
\$2.50 in costs

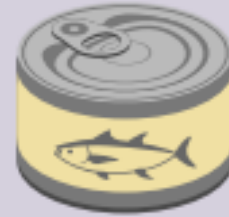


Proposed Updates to the WIC Food Package



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Increase support for mothers who mostly, but not exclusively, breastfeed **to support individual breastfeeding goals**



SEAFOOD

Improve access to **canned fish** to reflect the latest dietary guidance



DAIRY AND EGGS

Provide more options, such as different sizes of yogurt containers or substituting soy yogurt for milk or tofu for eggs



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Increase fruit and vegetable benefit **by 3-4x**, focus on whole fruit, and increase variety of fruits, veggies, and legumes offered



GRAINS

Expand whole grain options to include things like quinoa, blue cornmeal, and whole wheat bagels

Connecting
WIC
Participants
with
Produce



**Collaborating
to Ensure
All Families
Know About WIC**



Setting All Families Up to Thrive



Get Connected Today

Connect with your WIC State or local agency and engage with USDA on social media.



<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/modernization>



@USDANutrition



@usdagov





WHITE HOUSE
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**HUNGER,
NUTRITION,
& HEALTH**

National Strategy Pillar 2: **Integrate nutrition and health**



- Prioritize nutrition and food security in overall health
- Recognize the need for disease prevention and management
- Screen for food insecurity

Goal:
Encourage
action and
engagement





Support a
**diverse WIC
workforce**





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NUTRITION,
& HEALTH**




National Strategy Pillar 3: **Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices**

- Increase access to healthy food
- Encourage healthy workplace and school policies
- Invest in public education campaigns

PROPOSED RULE FOR SCHOOL MEAL STANDARDS

We all share a common goal: raising healthy kids and helping them reach their full potential!


School meals are the main source of nutrition for millions of children every school day. Here are some ways USDA is proposing to make these meals even more nourishing, while still keeping them appealing to kids. We welcome your feedback on these proposed changes through [public comments](#).




Added Sugars

Limit using a phased approach:

- **Phase 1:** Limits on specific high-sugar products like yogurt and cereal
- **Phase 2:** Overall weekly limits across all meals







Milk

Allow some* flavored milk with reasonable limits on added sugars.


* The proposed rule requests feedback on different options.






Whole Grains

Offer products that are primarily whole grain with the option for occasional non-whole, enriched grain products.





Sodium

Reduce weekly limits gradually and in line with FDA's recommendations for industry.



SNAP HEALTHY INCENTIVES

SNAP healthy incentive programs encourage healthy eating by making nutritious food more accessible and affordable through coupons, discounts, gift cards, bonus items, or extra funds.

Research shows that incentive programs are an effective way to promote healthy eating and improve [food and nutrition security](#). Improving what Americans eat can significantly reduce diet-related chronic diseases and disparities.

Interested in starting a SNAP healthy incentive program?

Visit the FNS [website](#) to learn more.



Where are incentives offered?

- Stores: from small, local markets to large national chains
- Farmers markets
- Online SNAP retailers



What are some types of incentives?

- Extra funds (e.g. "double bucks")
- Percentage discount
- Coupon for future purchases
- Bonus food items



What foods can be incentivized?

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Dairy
- Whole grains

An example of how SNAP healthy incentives can improve health:



Extra funds for fruits and vegetables



More fruits and vegetables purchased



More fruits and vegetables eaten



Improved health and well-being



Fewer diet-related diseases



MyPlate is on Instagram!

Follow us @myplate_gov





USDA Actions on Hunger, Nutrition and Health

February 15, 2024

Dr. Deirdra Chester
Director, *USDA Office of the
Chief Scientist*

FEEDING A GROWING WORLD





USDA **SCIENCE** AND RESEARCH STRATEGY, 2023 - 2026: Cultivating Scientific Innovation



USDA'S FIVE SCIENCE PRIORITIES



Priority 1:

Accelerating
Innovative
Technologies
& Practices

Priority 2:

Driving
Climate-Smart
Solutions

Priority 3:

Bolstering
Nutrition
Security
& Health

Priority 4:

Cultivating
Resilient
Ecosystems

Priority 5:

Translating
Research
into Action





Priority 1:

Accelerating Innovative
Technologies
& Practices



USDA ALTERNATIVE PROTEINS R&D

Since FY21, USDA's Research, Education, and Economics mission area has invested **over \$37M** in alternative protein research & development, including:

- **\$17.2M from the National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA) for extramural research projects**
- **\$20.2M from the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) to build USDA's internal research portfolio**





Priority 2:

Driving
Climate-Smart
Solutions

AIM FOR CLIMATE

The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate, also called **AIM for Climate**:

- Co-led by the U.S. & United Arab Emirates
- Raised **\$17 billion+** in global investments
- Expanded to **600+ partners** worldwide, **55** national governments
- **78** private sector-led innovation sprints





Priority 3:

Bolstering
Nutrition Security
& Health



ASCEND

FOR BETTER HEALTH



Priority 4:

Cultivating
Resilient
Ecosystems





Priority 5:

Translating
Research Into
Action



QUESTIONS?



Deirdra Chester, PhD, RDN
Director, Office of the Chief Scientist



Deirdra.Chester@usda.gov



202-720-3444



@USDAScience



Using Purchasing to Build Health, Equity & Opportunity

Kate Fitzgerald
Senior Advisor for Food Systems, MRP USDA

"Sourcing local foods can help increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, and other under consumed foods, improve attitudes about healthy eating, and support local economies."

Biden-Harris Administration National Strategy on
Hunger, Nutrition, and Health



Goals

- Create a fairer food system
- Make nutritious food more accessible
- Seed new revenue streams for producers
- Build a more resilient food supply chain
- Emphasize equity



Local Food Purchase Programs

\$1 billion for local purchases by nutrition providers & schools:

- Meets immediate needs
- Responds to local preferences
- Provides fair prices to producers
- Fosters longterm relationships





**"The entire LFPA
experience has
been...by far the
deepest work I've ever
done."**

*Eve Morrisey, New London
Community Meal Center*





“We were thrilled to be able to get fresh food out to so many immigrant families, especially the African greens and foods that they know and love.... These veggie bags make a tremendous difference for so many.”

Hope House, MA



“It was extremely moving to see the happiness of the faces of many of our clients who were able to partake in quality fresh produce and extremely fresh dairy products, such as cottage cheese, yogurt, farmer cheese, and string cheese, which is not always available to them.”

Jewish Community Council of Canarsie, NY



“Recipients have commented that the quality of ground beef exceeds what they normally receive and are proud to support a local socially disadvantaged producer.”

Arkansas Dept. of Education





LFPA "increased access to fresh produce, reduced food waste, improved nutrition and cooking skills, and stronger community connections."

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians



“The impact this program has had on our producers cannot be overstated. It has been a remarkably valuable opportunity for our small-scale family farms to expand and invest in themselves.”

Tulsa OK farmers market





“The LPFA has been a major contributing factor in the success of our locally owned and operated business.”

A.J. Honey Farms, LLC, KS



For Tilghman Island Seafood, a new small blue catfish processor located in rural MD, the LFPA-funded purchases by the Maryland Food Bank literally "helped the business get off the ground."

MD Dept of Ag



“Thanks almost entirely to the LFS/PA Grant, we were able to provide a total increased revenue of \$440,000 to two local Arkansas processing plants in 2023.”

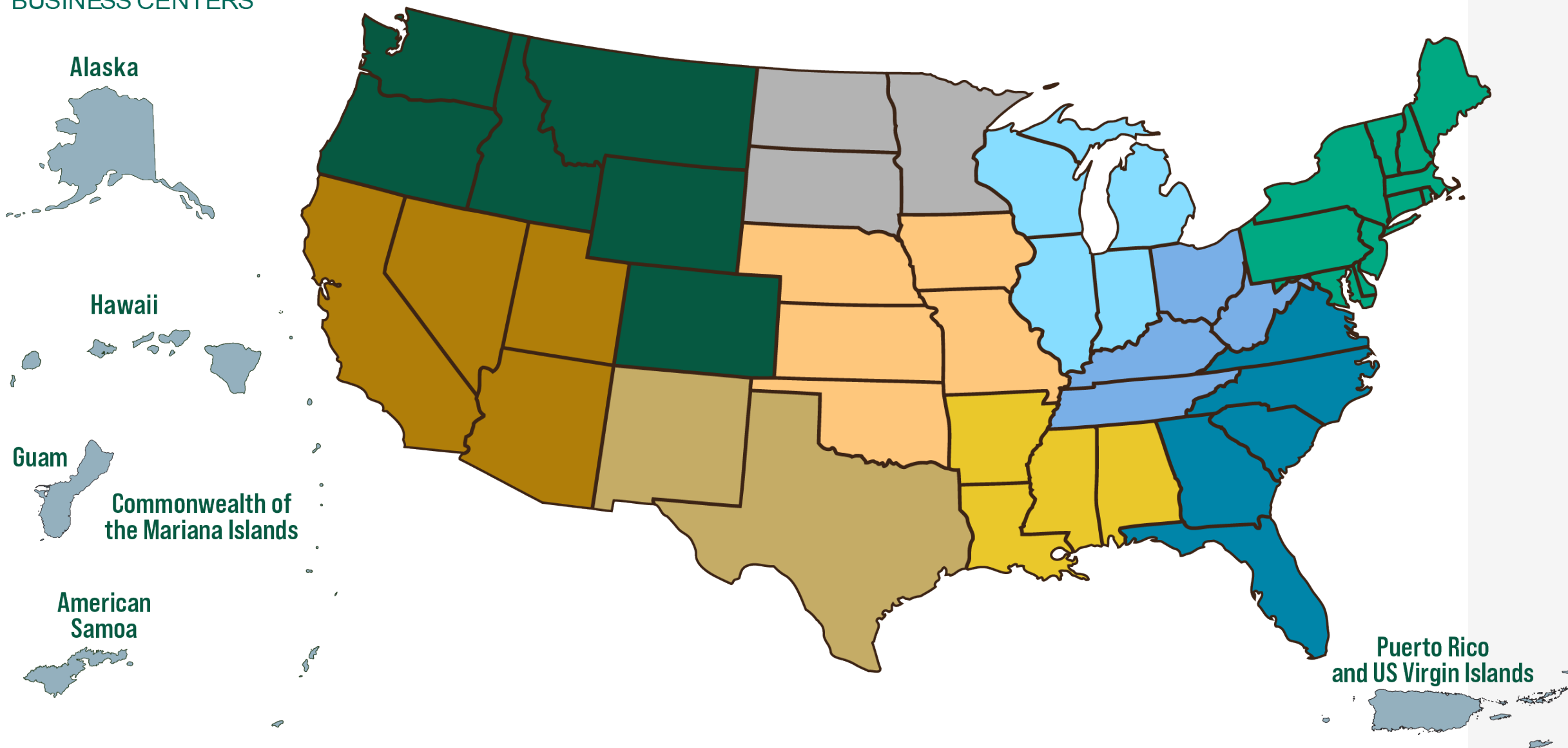
Natural State Beef, AR

A photograph of a bison standing in a field of tall grass and wildflowers. The bison is the central focus, facing slightly to the right. The background is a soft-focus landscape of green and yellow vegetation. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Bison Pilot Program

*Local tribal bison meat
for tribal communities
through FDPPIR*

USDA Regional Food Business Centers Geographic Regions



A photograph of a man in an orange long-sleeved shirt and a blue cap, smiling and looking towards the camera. He is standing behind a wooden fence. Several goats of various colors (black, brown, white, and spotted) are gathered around him. One black goat is perched on the fence to the left. A yellow bucket is visible on the fence behind the man. The background shows a wooden structure, possibly a barn or market stall.

“We understand that our success is not just measured in sales but in the impact we have on our community. By supporting local producers...we strive to leave a positive, lasting impression..”

Tulsa Farmers Market

THANK YOU
[USDA.gov/markets](https://www.usda.gov/markets)
kate.fitzgerald@usda.gov





Rural Health and Nutrition USDA Rural Development

Kellie Kubena

USDA Rural Health Liaison

15 February 2024

USDA Rural Development

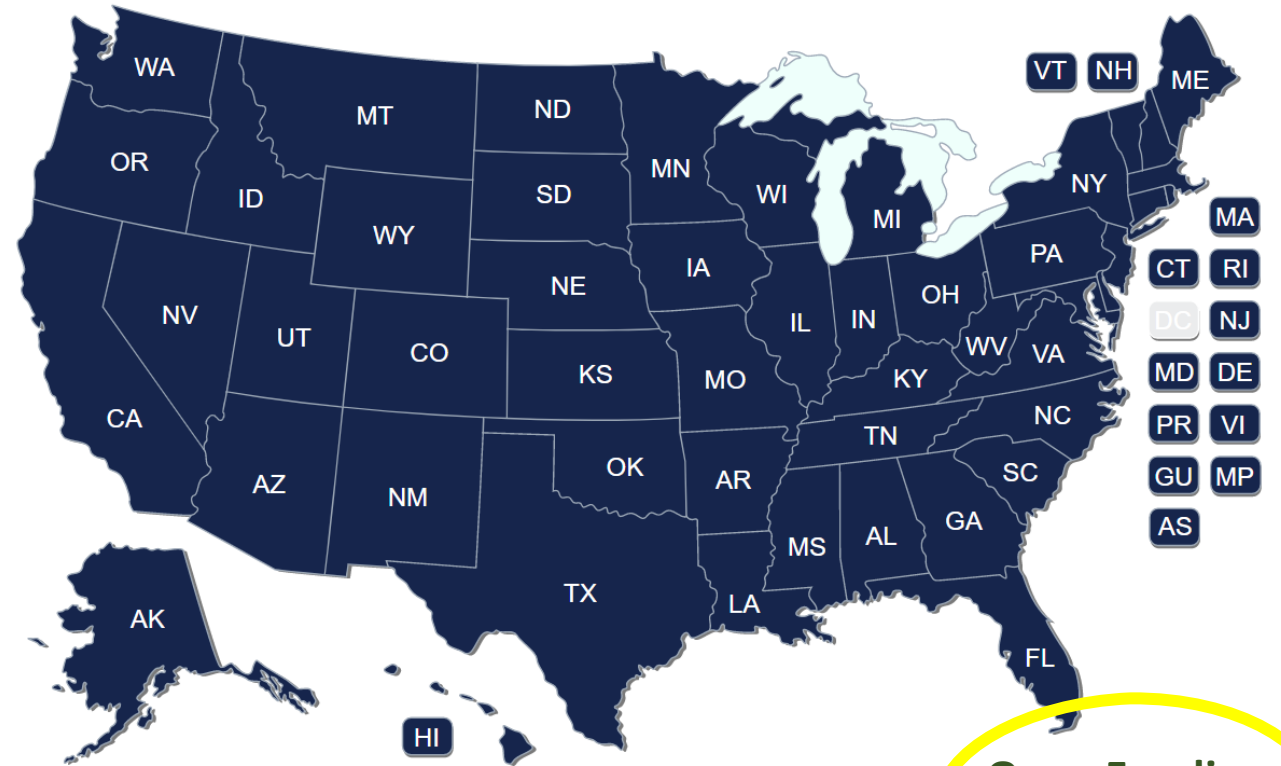
Rural Development

Innovation Center

Rural Housing Service

Rural Business and Cooperative Service

Rural Utilities Service



Open Funding Announcements

Rural Health Liaison

- Rural Health Liaison appointed in March 2022
- 2018 Farm Bill created USDA Rural Health Liaison to
 - Coordinate across USDA, with Dept of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other partners to promote rural health
 - Share information and data related to USDA programs with customers and rural health information with USDA programs and partners
- 2022-2023 Accomplishments
 - Rural Health InfoHub for USDA employees with an Inventory of USDA programs/products related to rural health
 - Mental Health Awareness Month [2023 Workshop Series](#)
 - Rural Health Day Outreach
 - Led USDA participation in Federal Social Determinants of Health Playbook, Implementation plan for Fentanyl Adulterated with Xylazine, National Drug Control Strategy
 - Launched Maternal Health Pilot Project with HRSA



How RD supports rural health and nutrition security?

USDA Rural Development operates **over 70 financial assistance programs, such as loans and grants, for a variety of rural projects that impact a community's health.**

For example:

- **Community Facilities**
- **Distance Learning and Telemedicine**
- **Rural Economic Development Grants**
- **Healthy Food Financing**
- **Strategic Economic and Community Development**



Rural Partners Network

Purpose: Advance equitable rural prosperity through local job creation, infrastructure development, and community improvement

- **Place based support:**
 - **3-4 staff per state focused, on all of government perspective**
 - **Navigation, application and capacity building support**
 - **Learning and feedback to federal partners**
- **Federal Agency Commitment**
 - **Rural desk officers identified**
 - **[Rural.gov](https://www.rural.gov), a rural focused website of federal resources**



Ideas for Moving Forward

- **Exploration:**
 - Better understand factors affecting farmers and behavioral health interventions that are successful
 - Equip our USDA field staff with mental health literacy tools to best support our customers and each other
- **Leadership:**
 - Update of National Suicide Prevention Strategy
 - Maternal Health Pilot Project with HRSA
 - Support for rural hospital feasibility analysis



Let's Connect!

USDA Rural Development

- Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/>
- Subscribe for updates [here](#)
- Twitter: @usdaRD
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Rural Data Gateway](#)

USDA Rural Health

- Subscribe: [Rural Health](#)
- Contact: rural.health@usda.gov
or kellie.kubena@usda.gov
- Phone: 202-579-5715

Rural Partners Network:

- Website: Rural.gov
- Subscribe: [Rural Connections](#)
- Twitter: @ruralgov
- Contact:
RuralPartnersNetwork@USDA.gov

