

# Stakeholder Toolkit

## Biden-Harris Administration Announces Historic Investment in Partnerships for 70 Climate-Smart Commodities and Rural Projects

The Biden-Harris Administration through the U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing up to \$2.8 billion in 70 selected projects under the first pool of the [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#) funding opportunity. Ultimately, USDA's anticipated investment will triple to more than \$3 billion in pilots that will create market opportunities for American commodities produced using climate-smart production practices. Projects from the second funding pool will be announced later this year.

These initial projects will expand markets for climate-smart commodities, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture, including for small and underserved producers. Applicants submitted more than 450 project proposals in this first funding pool, and the strength of the projects identified led USDA to increase its investment in this opportunity from the initial \$1 billion Vilsack announced earlier this year.

### We need your help to spread the word.

This toolkit is meant for partners, stakeholder groups and Congressional representatives to share information on Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities – specifically focusing on the September 14 projects and funding announcement – in their networks. It includes:

- Newsletter Article – *Please note, you may visit USDA's [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities projects page](#) for project details to be incorporated in your newsletter, or [download all project summaries](#).*
- Social Media
- Social Graphic (attached) and [Infographic](#)
- [Climate Solutions from USDA Video](#)
- Talking Points

Please email [climate-smart-commodities@usda.gov](mailto:climate-smart-commodities@usda.gov) with any questions about Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities. Contact Kaveh Sadeghzadeh ([kaveh.sadeghzadeh@usda.gov](mailto:kaveh.sadeghzadeh@usda.gov)), USDA Farm Production and Conservation Deputy Director for Communications, with questions about this toolkit or opportunities to collaborate on communications materials.

Find answers to many frequently asked questions on our [FAQs page](#).

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## Newsletter Article

### **Biden-Harris Administration Announces Historic Investment in Partnerships for 70 Climate-Smart Commodities and Rural Projects**

On September 14, 2022, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Biden-Harris Administration through the U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing up to \$2.8 billion in 70 selected projects under the first pool of the [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#) funding opportunity, with projects from the second funding pool to be announced later this year. Ultimately, USDA's anticipated investment will triple to more than \$3 billion in pilots that will create market opportunities for American commodities produced using climate-smart production practices. These initial projects will expand markets for climate-smart commodities, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture, including for small and underserved producers. Applicants submitted more than 450 project proposals in this first funding pool, and the strength of the projects identified led USDA to increase its investment in this opportunity from the initial \$1 billion Vilsack announced earlier this year.

“There is strong and growing interest in the private sector and among consumers for food that is grown in a climate-friendly way,” said Vilsack. “Through this announcement of initial selections for the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities, USDA is delivering on our promise to build and expand these market opportunities for American agriculture and be global leaders in climate-smart agricultural production. This effort will increase the competitive advantage of U.S. agriculture both domestically and internationally, build wealth that stays in rural communities and support a diverse range of producers and operation types.”

Earlier this year, Vilsack announced that USDA had allocated \$1 billion for the program, divided into two funding pools. Because of the unprecedented demand and interest in the program, and potential for meaningful opportunities to benefit producers through the proposals, the Biden-Harris administration increased the total funding allocation to more than \$3 billion, with projects from the second funding pool to be announced later this year. Vilsack made the announcement from the campus of Penn State University, which is the lead partner on one of the selected pilot projects to implement climate-smart practices, quantify and track the greenhouse gas benefits and develop markets for the resulting climate-smart commodities.

Funding for Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities will be delivered through USDA's [Commodity Credit Corporation](#) in two pools. Projects announced on September 14 are from the first funding pool, which included proposals seeking funds ranging from \$5 million to \$100 million. USDA received over 450 proposals from more than 350 entities for this funding pool,

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including nonprofit organizations; for-profits and government entities; farmer cooperatives; conservation, energy and environmental groups; state, tribal and local governments; universities (including minority serving institutions); small businesses; and large corporations. Applications covered every state in the nation as well as tribal lands, D.C. and Puerto Rico. The tentative selections reflect this broad set of applicants and geographic scope, and the proposals include plans to match on average over 50% of the federal investment with nonfederal funds.

USDA will work with the applicants for the 70 identified projects to finalize the scope and funding levels in the coming months. A complete list of projects identified for this first round of funding is available at [usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities](https://usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities).

Spanning up to five years, these 70 projects will:

- Provide technical and financial assistance to producers to implement climate-smart production practices on a voluntary basis on working lands;
- Pilot innovative and cost-effective methods for quantification, monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas benefits; and
- Develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities.

This will deliver significant impacts for producers and communities nationwide. USDA anticipates that these 70 projects will result in:

- **Hundreds of expanded markets and revenue streams** for producers and commodities across agriculture ranging from traditional corn to specialty crops.
- **More than 50,000 farms reached, encompassing more than 20-25 million acres of working land** engaged in climate-smart production practices such as cover crops, no-till and nutrient management.
- **More than 50 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered over the lives of the projects.** This is equivalent to removing more than 10 million gasoline-powered passenger vehicles from the road for one year.
- **More than 50 universities, including multiple minority-serving institutions,** engaged and helping advance projects, especially with outreach and monitoring, measurement, reporting and verification.
- Proposals for the 70 selected projects include plans to **match on average over 50% of the federal investment with nonfederal funds.**

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Projects were selected based on a range of criteria, with emphasis placed on greenhouse gas and/or carbon sequestration benefits and equity. The [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) included a complete set of project proposal requirements and evaluation criteria.

USDA is currently evaluating project proposals from the second Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities funding pool, which includes funding requests from \$250,000 to \$4,999,999. Projects from this second funding pool will emphasize the enrollment of small and/or underserved producers, and/or monitoring, reporting and verification activities developed at minority-serving institutions. USDA expects to announce these selections later this Fall.

### **More Information**

Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities is part of USDA's broader strategy to position agriculture and forestry as leaders in climate change mitigation through voluntary, incentive-based, market-driven approaches. Visit [usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities](https://usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities) to learn more about this effort, and [usda.gov/climate-solutions](https://usda.gov/climate-solutions) for climate-related updates, resources and tools across the Department.

## Social Media and Graphics

### Twitter

- [@USDA](#) announced 70 projects for Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities, investing \$2.8 billion to create market opportunities for America's climate-smart producers. Second funding pool selections are expected later this year. [usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities](https://usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities)

[+ Graphic Below] #Climate

- [@USDA](#)'s Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities will expand markets, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production, and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture. [usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities](https://usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities)

[+ Graphic Below] #Climate

### Facebook

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Biden-Harris Administration through the @U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing up to \$2.8 billion in 70 selected projects under the first funding pool of Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities. Projects will expand markets for climate-smart commodities, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture, including for small and underserved producers. Ultimately, USDA's anticipated investment will triple to more than \$3 billion in pilots that will create market opportunities for American commodities produced using climate-smart production practices, with projects from the second funding pool to be announced later this year.

Learn more: [usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities](https://usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities)

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## Talking Points

- America's farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners are on the front lines of climate change. At the same time, they are uniquely positioned to deliver climate solutions by implementing climate-smart production practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon.
- There is strong and growing interest in the private sector and among consumers for food that is grown in a climate-friendly way, creating a major market opportunity for climate-smart agriculture.
- USDA's [Partnerships for Climate Smart-Commodities](#) seeks to build and expand market opportunities for American commodities produced using climate-smart practices through pilot projects, positioning American producers as global leaders in climate-smart agricultural production.
- This effort will increase the competitive advantage of U.S. agriculture both domestically and internationally, build wealth that stays in rural communities, and support a diverse range of producers and operation types.
- On September 14, 2022, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Biden-Harris Administration through the U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing up to \$2.8 billion in 70 selected projects under the first pool of the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities funding opportunity.
  - Funds will be provided through USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.
- Proposals for the 70 selected projects include plans to match on average over 50% of the federal investment with nonfederal funds.
- USDA initially allocated \$1 billion for the program. Because of unprecedented demand and interest, and the potential for meaningful opportunities to benefit producers through the proposals, the Biden-Harris administration increased the total funding allocation for Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities to more than \$3 billion. Projects from the second funding pool will be announced later this year.
- USDA received over 450 proposals from more than 350 groups for the first funding pool, which included proposals seeking funds ranging from \$5 million to \$100 million.
- Proposals were received from nonprofit organizations; for-profits and government entities; farmer cooperatives; conservation, energy and environmental groups; state, tribal and local governments; universities (including minority serving institutions); small businesses and large corporations. Applications covered every state in the nation as well as tribal lands, D.C., and Puerto Rico.
  - The selections announced on September 14 reflect this broad set of applicants and geographic scope.

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- The 70 selected Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities projects – spanning up to five years – will:
  - Provide technical and financial assistance to producers to implement climate-smart production practices on a voluntary basis on working lands;
  - Pilot innovative and cost-effective methods for quantification, monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas benefits; and
  - Develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities.
- USDA anticipates that these projects will result in:
  - **Hundreds of expanded markets and revenue streams** for producers and commodities across agriculture ranging from traditional corn to specialty crops.
  - **More than 50,000 farms reached, encompassing more than 20-25 million acres of working land** engaged in climate-smart production practices such as cover crops, no-till and nutrient management.
  - **More than 50 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered over the lives of the projects.** This is equivalent to removing more than 10 million gasoline-powered passenger vehicles from the road for one year.
  - **More than 50 universities, including multiple minority-serving institutions,** engaged and helping advance projects, especially with outreach and monitoring, measurement, reporting and verification.
  - Proposals for the 70 selected projects include plans to **match on average over 50% of the federal investment with nonfederal funds.**
- In total, the 70 projects reach every state in the union and every major commodity.
- A complete list of projects identified for this first funding pool is available at [usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities](https://usda.gov/climate-smart-commodities).
- Projects were selected based on a range of criteria, with emphasis placed on greenhouse gas and/or carbon sequestration benefits and equity. The [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) includes a complete set of project proposal requirements and evaluation criteria.
- USDA will work with the applicants for the 70 identified projects to finalize the scope and funding levels in the coming months.
- USDA is committed to equity in program delivery and will ensure that all projects benefit small and/or underserved producers.
- Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities is a key element of a broader USDA strategy to position American agriculture as a leader in delivering climate solutions through voluntary, incentive-based, market-driven approaches. Visit [usda.gov/climate-solutions](https://usda.gov/climate-solutions) to learn more.

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