

Montana Agriculture Resiliency Program

Program Proposal & Overview



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Program Overview

During the pandemic, food production and supply chain disruptions resulted in shortages, waste, and inflated costs of agricultural products and inputs. Illnesses at centralized meat processing plants, border closures, and stay-at-home orders exposed shortcomings in the way crops and livestock are stored, processed, and distributed.

The Montana Department of Agriculture proposes using \$50,000,000 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to launch a three-tiered grant program targeting expanded production and distribution of locally marketed Montana crops and livestock, added processing capacity to add value to and finish more raw goods in Montana, on-farm storage to help producers weather market volatility, and major supply chain infrastructure investments for Montana agricultural commodities.

Tier A: Local Produce and Protein Production and Distribution

Tier A of the program aims to increase capacity of local food producers, processors and distributors. Projects that demonstrate the ability to broaden a service area and increase the number of consumers in underserved areas of the state will be prioritized.

Awards range from \$10,000 to \$250,000

Examples include on-farm infrastructure and equipment upgrades such as greenhouses, cold-storage, marketing and promotion, specialized delivery vehicles, retail storefronts, food safety enhancements, and other projects that enable the increased production and distribution of locally marketed foods.

Tier B: On-Farm Storage

This category will award grants to projects that expand on-farm storage capabilities. On-farm storage allows producers the ability to weather pandemic-related and other market disruptions.

Awards range from \$50,000 to \$500,000

Examples include grain bins, feed bunks, calving sheds, coolers, freezers, corrals, watering systems, and pasture improvements.

Tier C: Resilient Supply Chain Infrastructure

Tier C of the program aims to address major supply chain infrastructure hurdles that will enable Montana producers and ag businesses to navigate significant market disruptions and be more competitive on a global scale.

No cap on awards

Examples include but are not limited to: value-added processing facilities, infrastructure upgrades at rail-served loading facilities, feedlot expansions, slaughter facilities, grain elevator enhancements, rendering plants and more.