



RFSI

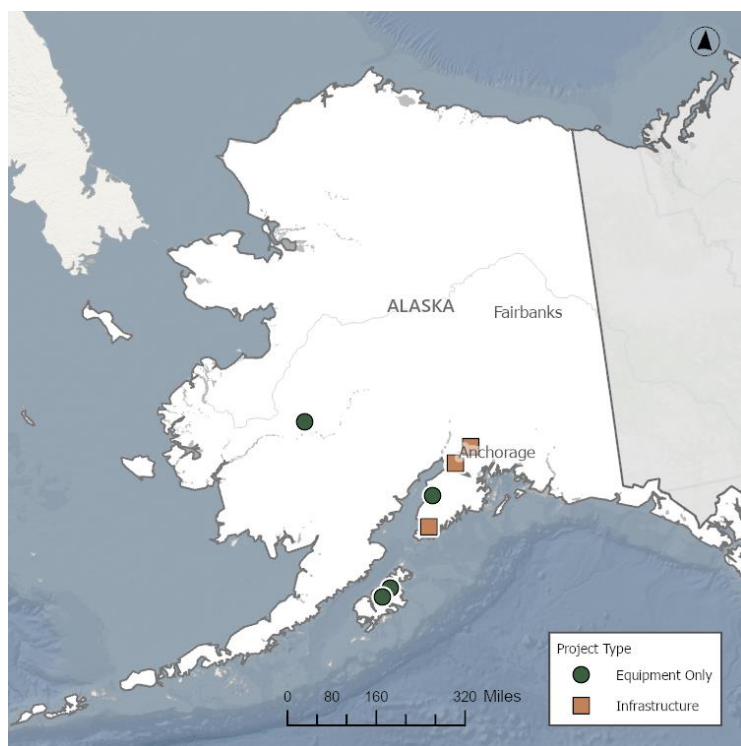
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Alaska



State Overview

USDA awarded the Alaska Division of Agriculture **\$2.2 million** through the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program. The objective of RFSI is to expand capacity for aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced agricultural food products. These federal funds will support 10 Alaska infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Purchase a blast chiller and freeze dryer equipment** to process 20,000 pounds of local products, benefiting 5 Alaska produce and grain farmers and improving distribution of baby food to rural communities.
- **Upgrade processing, canning, and packaging equipment** to increase production of locally fermented pickles, kombucha, and vinegars for regional grocery stores.
- **Construct a shared commercial kitchen** for small businesses to process more than 30 different value-added products—such as sauces, baked goods, and teas—with ingredients sourced from over 50 local and regional farmers.

Anticipated Outcomes*

148

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

61

New Market Outlets
Established

29

New Value-Added
Products Developed

2

New
Facilities
Constructed

9

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

2

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

13

Processing Equipment
Purchased

12

Jobs Created

**These numbers are reported by states and subawardees.*

RFSI was awarded to the 56 States and Territories in May 2023. Each state conducted a competitive grant review and selection process. States identified their funding priorities through extensive outreach with key industry stakeholders, which guided their selection process to ensure a robust state and local food system representation. Selected projects fund locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry.

Infrastructure Projects: Snapshot

Infrastructure Grant projects can involve facility and equipment expansion and upgrades, new construction, and modernized information technology systems.

Alaska invested more than **\$1.6 million** across 3 Infrastructure projects benefiting more than 68 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Modifying a preexisting root cellar into a certified, on-farm kitchen to process local vegetables and herbs into ferments, ready-to-eat meals, and herb salts;
- Constructing a shared-use commercial kitchen for small “cottage-style” businesses to expand market opportunities and create over 30 different value-added products; and
- Renovating a food processing facility and commercial kitchen to process 5 value-added fresh, dried, and frozen products derived from potatoes, rhubarb, and oats grown by 10 local and regional producers.

Equipment Only Projects: Snapshot

Equipment Only projects are intended to purchase special purpose equipment such as cold/dry storage, distribution vehicles, and processing and packaging equipment.

Alaska invested more than **\$400,000** across 7 Equipment Only projects purchasing more than 14 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including refrigerated distribution vehicles, conveyors, compressors, label applicators, and food processors. The state expects 80 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to 52 new markets.

Statewide Standouts



More than 50 percent of Alaska’s projects are located in rural towns and improve distribution of local vegetables and fruits to nearby communities.



Alaska is investing more than \$2 million in projects supporting specialty crops and value-added products, such as sauces, dried vegetables, kombucha, and prepared meals.



More than 25 percent of Alaska’s projects focus on vegetables, enhancing storage, processing, and distribution of produce, such as potatoes, carrots, onions, and celery.