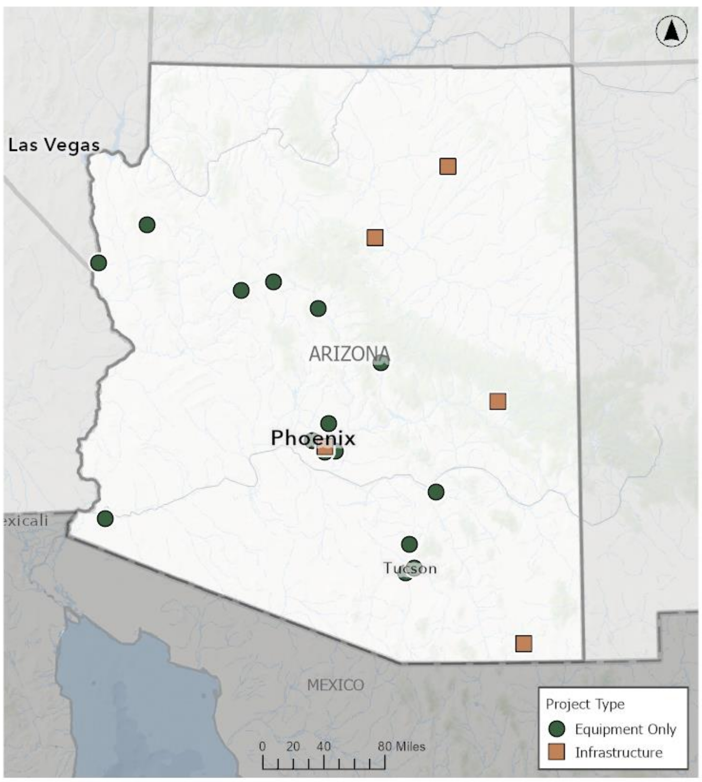
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

RFSI Arizona

Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

State Overview

USDA awarded the Arizona Department of Agriculture **$4.6 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 25 Arizona infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Build new cold storage, enhance logistics technology, and acquire refrigerated vehicles** to enhance a producer-owned cooperative's capacity to supply wholesale and institutional markets and streamline coordination with three Arizona food hubs.
- **Acquire a mobile grain and bean thresher** to process arid-adapted varieties of dry beans, including pinto, black, tepary, fava, lima, cowpeas, and garbanzo beans, benefiting 10 farmers.
- **Improve cold chain continuity and distribution capacity with a new refrigerated vehicle** to support 12 producers of fruit, root vegetables, leafy greens, and microgreens in the Phoenix area.

Anticipated Outcomes*

390 Local/Regional Producers Benefited	**147** New Market Outlets Established	**96** New Value-Added Products Developed	**2** New Facilities Constructed
47 Storage/Aggregation Units Purchased	**14** Distribution Vehicles Purchased	**16** Processing Equipment Purchased	**49** 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.

Arizona invested more than **$1.9 million** across 5 Infrastructure projects benefiting 166 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Installing new cold storage, upgrading facilities, and acquiring delivery vehicles to support access to local corn, cornmeal, chiles, squash, and other culturally significant food products on a tribal reservation;
- Constructing a multi-purpose facility in Southeastern Arizona that will serve as a produce aggregation, processing, and distribution hub for at least 8 farmers across Cochise County;
- Developing a food hub facility, purchasing a refrigerated van, and providing relevant food safety training for at least 40 local growers in Northeastern Arizona; and
- Acquiring cold storage and a refrigerated vehicle in Northern Arizona to aggregate produce from at least 16 farms and enable distribution to stores, restaurants, food banks, colleges, and other markets.

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.

Arizona invested more than **$1.2 million** across 20 Equipment Only projects purchasing more than 44 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including packaging machines, wash stations, and freeze dryers. The state expects 224 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to 119 new markets.

Statewide Standouts

More than 70 percent of projects expand cold storage facilities and equipment to support aggregation, improve shelf life, reduce spoilage, and increase capacity of local food businesses.

Arizona is investing more than $2 million in projects that include aggregation, processing, and distribution of the staple “Three Sisters” crops—corn, beans, and squash.

Forty percent of projects support the value-added production of local produce into tomato juice, pickles, baked goods, dried fruit, and other products.

Arizona has invested about $455,000 in projects that aggregate, store, package, and distribute locally grown microgreens.