



RFSI

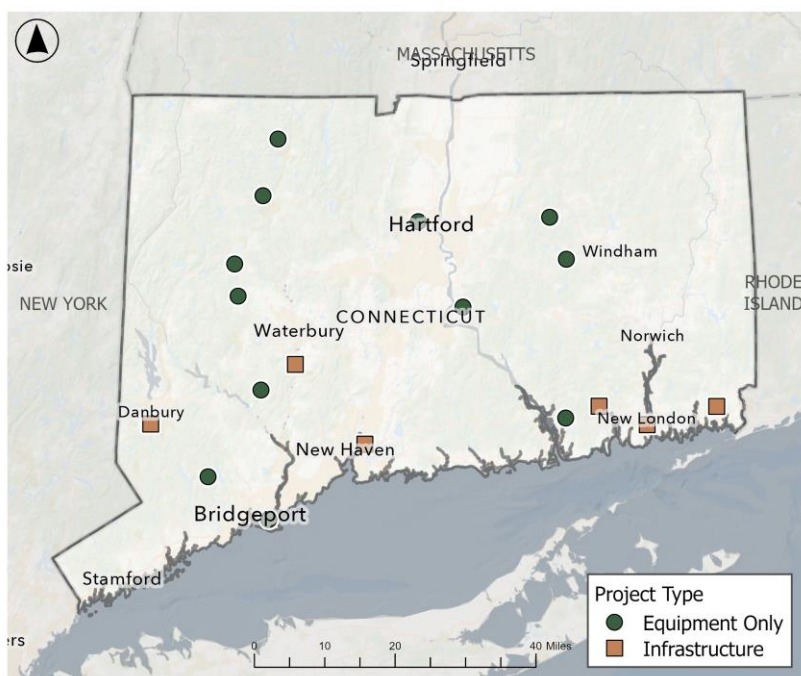
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Connecticut



State Overview

USDA awarded the Connecticut Department of Agriculture **\$2.7 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 20 Connecticut infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Increase value-added production of potato products for farm-to-school market outlets** with a blast chiller, fry cutter, and portable freezer box to process and distribute five tons of Connecticut-grown French fries within the first year.
- **Modernize storage and processing for value-added kelp and vegetables** with a commercial dehydrator, a commercial kettle, a cold storage container, and electrical upgrades.
- **Develop an online data platform that enables food hubs and aggregators to share information** on equipment, infrastructure, sales, and logistics, benefiting 86 local and regional producers with increased access to schools, restaurants, grocery stores, and other wholesale markets.

Anticipated Outcomes*

252

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

151

New Market Outlets
Established

18

New Value-Added
Products Developed

12

Jobs
Created

32

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

6

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

48

Processing Equipment
Purchased

**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.

Connecticut invested more than **\$1.2 million** across 6 Infrastructure projects benefiting 170 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Increasing cold storage and distribution capacity for fruits, vegetables, dairy, mushrooms, maple syrup, and honey;
- Expanding aggregation and distribution of local dairy products with cold storage, shelving and racking, an electric pallet jack, an ice machine, and a refrigerated delivery truck;
- Developing a shared use commercial kitchen to expand capacity for processing, preservation, and baking using local fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and other products; and
- Enhancing a non-dairy yogurt processing facility to add production of dairy yogurt with the installation of a milk separator and homogenizer, increasing production with 10 new value-added products.

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.

Connecticut invested more than **\$848,000** across 14 Equipment Only projects purchasing more than 35 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including walk-in freezers, cold storage units, refrigerated vehicles, and a vacuum packaging machine. The state expects 82 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to 109 new markets.

Statewide Standouts



More than half of Connecticut's projects support aggregation, storage, processing, and distribution of local fruit and vegetables, including raspberries, blueberries, broccoli, and hot peppers.



More than \$1 million of Connecticut's RFSI funding invests in dairy projects that develop local products, including milk, butter, gelato, and cheeses.



Connecticut is investing \$100,000 into automated shellfish processing equipment, such as washing systems, counters, and conveyers, to meet food safety regulations and create access to new markets for farmed clams and oysters.



Connecticut is funding 3 projects benefiting local egg producers with access to at least 10 new markets, including schools, clinics, hospitals, and farmers markets.