



RFSI

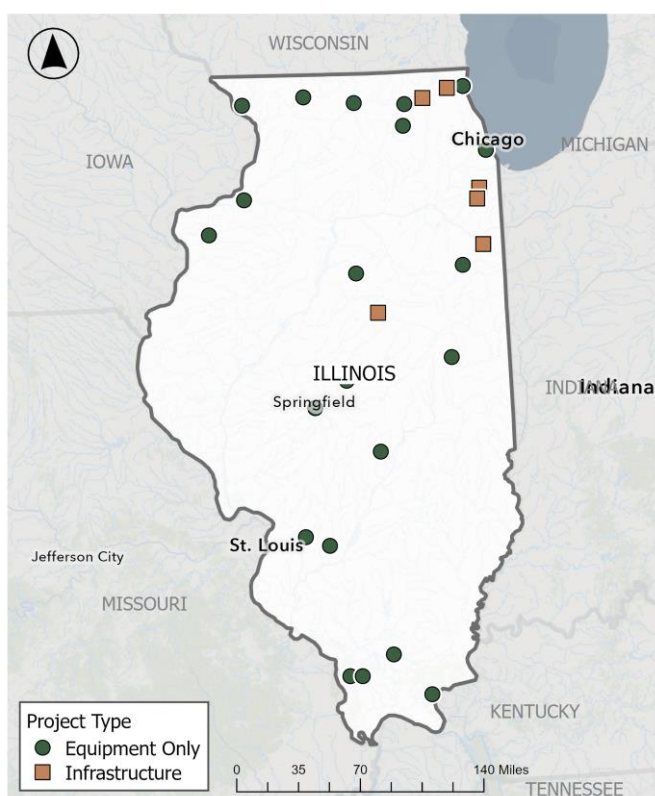
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Illinois



State Overview

USDA awarded the Illinois Department of Agriculture **\$6.3 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 27 Illinois infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Upgrade grain processing capabilities** with a conveyor and band sealer to develop 20 milled rye, corn, wheat, and dehulled buckwheat products, increasing local producers' access to 10 new market opportunities.
- **Equip a new commercial kitchen** to produce frozen tomato puree and other tomato-based value-added products, establishing new market channels into schools and grocery stores for at least six local growers.
- **Improve storage and distribution** capacity with new freezers, insulation, and a vehicle to distribute about 130,000 eggs per month as well as other regional products to wholesale, retail, and institutional markets, benefiting 22 local and regional producers.

Anticipated Outcomes*

623

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

238

New Market Outlets
Established

119

New Value-Added
Products Developed

2

New
Facilities
Constructed

139

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

15

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

162

Processing Equipment
Purchased

25

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.

Illinois invested more than **\$3.2 million** across 6 Infrastructure projects, benefiting 76 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Building a post-harvest facility to process peppers, beans, tomatoes, melons, berries, and other produce, benefiting at least 20 regional growers;
- Updating a processing facility with a temperature-controlled clean room for the development of an estimated 55 value-added microgreen products, benefiting at least 25 Illinois farmers;
- Constructing a new processing and distribution warehouse to clean, store, and package potatoes for new retail market opportunities, benefiting over 200 Illinois farmers; and
- Improving food safety with technology system investments to increase access to local school market outlets for eight local and regional vegetable 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.

Illinois invested more than **\$1.7 million** across 21 Equipment Only projects purchasing more than 203 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including refrigerated distribution vehicles, commercial freezers, walk-in coolers, and pallet jacks. The state expects 545 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to 210 new markets..

Statewide Standouts



Nearly \$690,000 will strengthen the Illinois dairy industry, supporting projects that aggregate, process, or distribute local milk, cheese, sour cream, butter, and yogurts.



More than a quarter of projects boost the aggregation, processing, or distribution of local eggs, expanding new wholesale and institutional market opportunities for Illinois egg producers.



Approximately 40% of Illinois projects expand the value-added production of local produce such as pickles, jams, salsas, and dehydrated vegetables.



Nearly half of projects are investing in refrigerated trucks, trailers, and cargo vans to assist in aggregating food from local farms and delivering more products to new market channels, benefiting more than 443 local farmers.