



RFSI

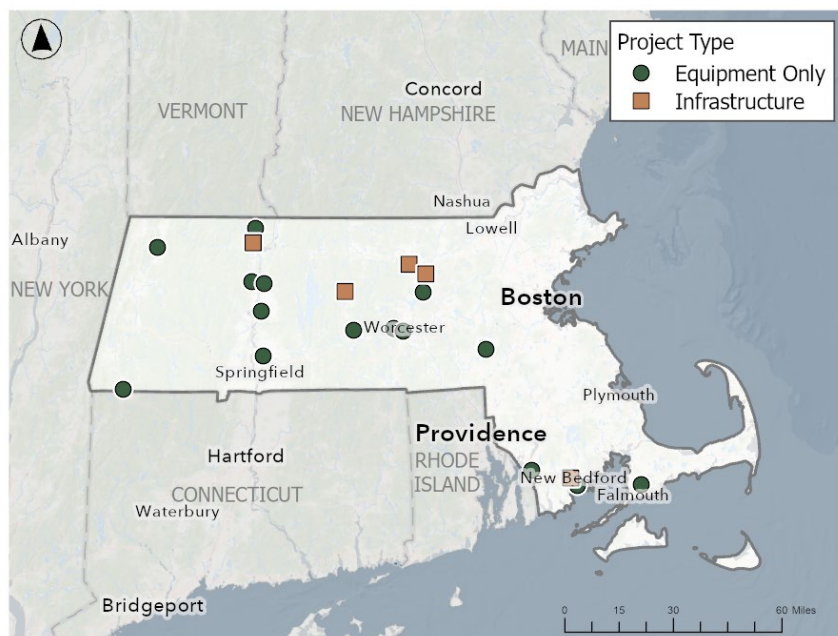
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Massachusetts



State Overview

USDA awarded the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources **\$3.4 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 22 Massachusetts infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Improve a processing center to provide aggregation, processing, and storage** for local produce such as leafy greens, root vegetables and herbs from 55 regional farmers.
- **Purchase equipment including an oyster counter and bagging machine** to enhance processing capacity for aquaculture products, such as oysters and clams from three local and regional producers.
- **Expand processing with a new berry press, a commercial herb dryer, and a food-safe processing station** to develop nine new value-added products from blueberries, elderberries, thyme, rosemary, and peppermint.

Anticipated Outcomes*

356

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

224

New Market Outlets
Established

134

New Value-Added
Products Developed

5

Existing
Facilities
Improved/
Expanded

38

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

9

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

39

Processing Equipment
Purchased

3

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.

Massachusetts invested more than **\$1.6 million** across 5 Infrastructure projects benefiting more than 131 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Installing creamery infrastructure such as a pasteurizer, cheese vat, and cream separator to process 10 new value-added dairy products including cheese, yogurt, and butter;
- Purchasing and installing a blast freezer, HVAC system, epoxy flooring, and hot water system to ensure food safe processing for frozen fruits and vegetables from 15 local and regional producers; and
- Modernizing an aggregation facility with a walk-in cooler, a freight lift, and electric pallet jacks to handle fruits and vegetables from 50 local growers.

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.

Massachusetts invested more than **\$1.3 million** across 17 Equipment Only projects purchasing more than 49 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including canners, milk fillers, cold storage, and an herb dryer. The state expects 225 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to 146 new markets.

Statewide Standouts



Nearly 40 percent of Massachusetts' projects purchase a distribution vehicle to improve the transportation of local products to markets.



Massachusetts is investing over \$2 million in the aggregation, processing, and distribution of local produce, such as blueberries, apples, tomatoes, herbs, and mushrooms to regional markets.



More than \$350,000 supports projects storing and preserving aquaculture shellfish, such as clams, mussels, and oysters.



Massachusetts' projects develop more than 134 value-added products, including canned oysters, roasted chestnuts, cheese, palava sauce, sofrito, and maple syrup.