



RFSI

Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Minnesota



State Overview

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded the Minnesota Department of Agriculture **\$12.2 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 support 11 Minnesota infrastructure projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Purchase specialty sunflower processing equipment** to expand capacity and storage to upcycle cold-pressed sunflower oil byproducts into high-fiber, high-protein sunflower meal for value-added products for 30 Minnesota sunflower producers.
- **Construct and equip two new commercial kitchens** to increase food-processing access, expand storage capacity, and support value-added production—creating 6 value-added products, establishing 6 new market outlets, and benefiting 116 producers.
- **Increase packaging capacity with a gallon filler and milk-bag filler equipment**, expanding manufacturing capacity by 25 to 35 percent and supporting wholesale milk market access, including public schools and universities.

Anticipated Outcomes*

497

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

158

New Market Outlets
Established

3

Distribution Vehicles
Purchased

4

New Facilities
Constructed

44

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

28

New Value-Added
Products Developed

212

Processing Equipment
Purchased

86

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.

Minnesota has invested more than **\$9.6 million** across 11 projects to support infrastructure needs. The State's awardees are collectively building resilience in the middle of the supply chain by constructing 4 new facilities, modernizing 7 existing facilities, and purchasing and installing more than 240 pieces of equipment to expand processing, packaging, labeling, and related capacity. The state expects projects will train more than 130 employees on specialized equipment and worker safety, providing workforce development benefits.

Of the 11 projects:

- Ninety percent focus on specialized processing needs, such as an oat-milling facility that is expected to produce 364,800 cwt of high quality, allergen-free groats and use oat hull byproducts for energy;
- Nine expand storage space to preserve product quality, meet food safety standards, increase aggregation capacity for local or regional producers, and enable access to markets such as public schools;
- Seven increase packaging and labeling capabilities to meet product merchandizing requirements and establish new market access for local and regional producers;
- Several expand processing capacities—such as adding product types, increasing production volumes, and creating wholesale or retail product lines—for approximately 28 value-added products, including an additional 5.5 million pounds of locally-sourced sliced cheese annually; and
- Two modernize commercial kitchens with cold storage and processing equipment to enable year-round processing, additional winter sales for produce and grains, increased access to 6 markets, and increased market access to 6 markets—benefiting at least 100 producers.

Statewide Standouts



Three of Minnesota's projects include equipment for producing value-added foods for farm-to-school programs as well as other institutional markets.



Minnesota invested more than \$2.7 million into infrastructure to support processing seeds and legumes such as edamame, peas, beans, and sunflower seeds.



Grains and wild rice represented the third-largest allocation of RFSI funding in Minnesota, with more than \$3 million invested in infrastructure to expand processing, storage, and distribution of oats and wild rice.



Nine of Minnesota's 11 projects include processing equipment, emphasizing outcomes such as value-added product development and increased production volume.