



RFSI

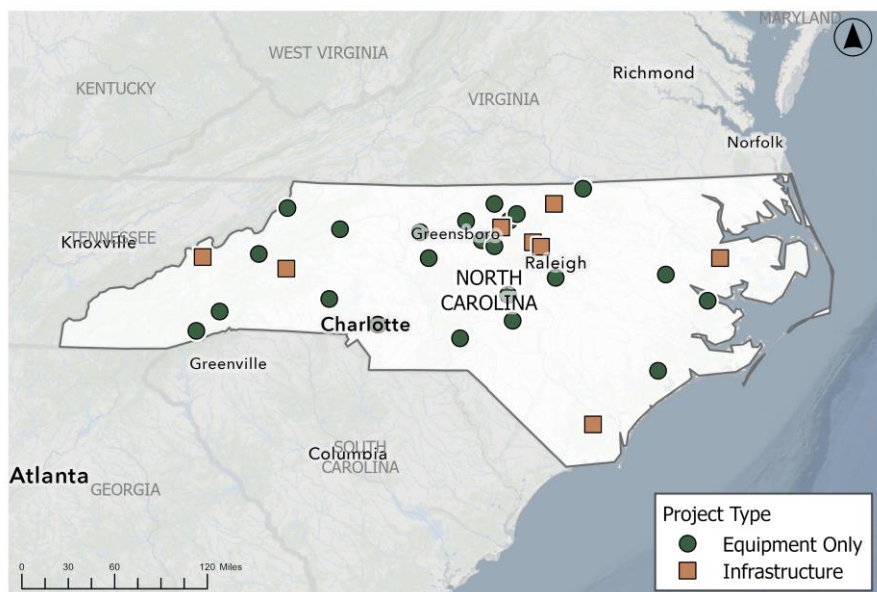
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

North Carolina



State Overview

USDA awarded the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services **\$7.5 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 31 North Carolina infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Purchase efficient grain handling equipment for a small regional flour mill** in Hendersonville, NC, benefiting at least seven local grain producers with improved market access to local bakeries and regional customers.
- **Construct a new on-farm dairy processing facility** that will source ingredients from other local and regional producers to develop new products, such as flavored milks, artisan cheeses, and kefir.
- **Support over 30 local and regional producers at the largest producer-only farmers market in Forsyth County** with the installation of a commercial-grade refrigerator and freezer to store local and regional fruits, vegetables, and eggs.

Anticipated Outcomes*

1,062

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

288

New Market Outlets
Established

103

New Value-Added
Products Developed

4

New
Facilities
Constructed

79

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

21

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

2,331

Processing Equipment
Purchased

60

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.

North Carolina invested more than **\$3.5 million** across 8 Infrastructure projects, benefiting 590 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Upgrading a food hub's warehouse facilities and operations technology to increase capacity for fresh produce deliveries to wholesale and retail markets across the Southeastern US, generating an estimated \$25 million in new revenue for local and regional farmers;
- Installing a dual-zone walk-in cooler, expanding dry storage space, and acquiring a refrigerated truck to support 142 North Carolina specialty crop farmers with stronger supply chain solutions to store and transport value-added products, such as pickles, honey, apple cider, and salsa;
- Modernizing a warehouse with additional cold storage to boost aggregation and storage capacity by 11 million pounds for local products like peanuts, broccoli, watermelon, and sweet potatoes;
- Outfitting a food hub with new equipment, including a new refrigerated vehicle, walk-in cooler and freezer, pallet jack, and forklift—to connect at least 75 local produce farmers to local restaurants, medical centers, churches, and colleges; and
- Acquiring a new refrigerated delivery vehicle, expanding cold storage, and renovating existing farm facilities for value-added processing that will enable 14 local fruit and vegetable farmers to reach more food banks, grocery stores, and restaurants.

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.

North Carolina invested over **\$1.75 million** across 23 Equipment Only projects purchasing more than 2,322 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including commercial leafy greens spinners, electric tilt kettles, walk-in coolers, and potato peeling machines. The state expects 451 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to 138 new markets.

Statewide Standouts



Thirty percent of North Carolina's projects support the production and distribution of value-added items, including sweet potato chips, apple cider, pickles, salsa, and casseroles.



North Carolina is investing more than \$875,000 in local dairy to help farmers process milk into cheese, custard, protein shakes, yogurt, and other products.



More than \$680,000 of North Carolina's funding is being used to grow local grain supply chains, with new seed cleaning, storage, milling, and delivery capabilities that aim to support an estimated 158 local producers.



More than 20 percent of North Carolina's projects support processing, storage, and distribution of local eggs.