



RFSI

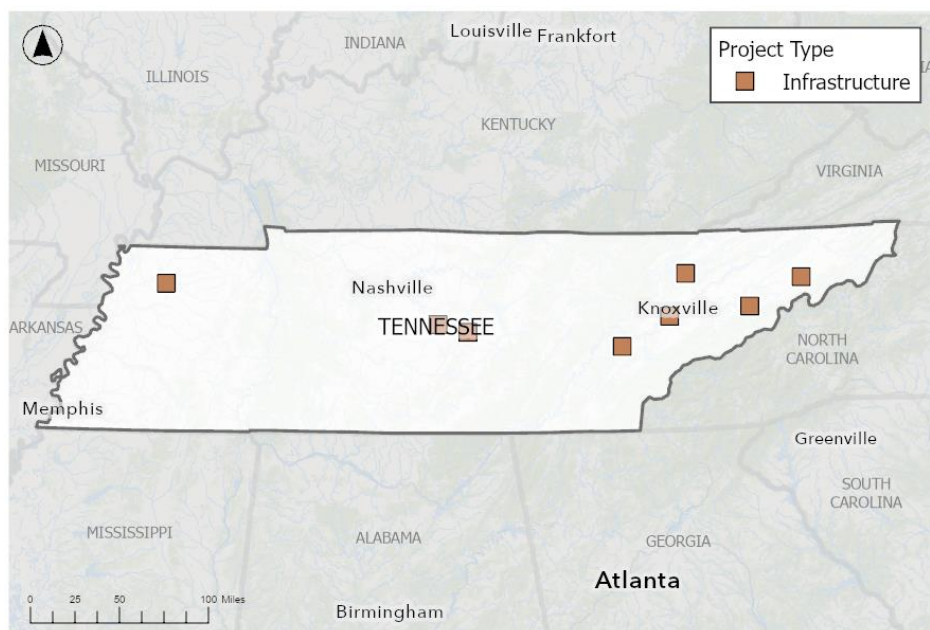
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Tennessee



State Overview

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded the Tennessee Department of Agriculture **\$5.7 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 eight Tennessee infrastructure projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Construct a 6,000-square foot distribution warehouse in Northeast Tennessee** for still and sparkling wine, cider, juice, and other beverages made with locally grown fruit, to increase production by 1.5 million pounds sourced from at least 50 local producers.
- **Increase capacity for value-added dairy production** with the construction of a 30-by-30-foot processing room equipped with a milk processing line, bottle filler, butter churn, and other essential machinery for producing bottled milk, ice cream, and butter.
- **Modernize a tomato processing and distribution facility** to benefit 43 local growers with access to improved sorting, grading, packing, and warehousing services, increasing market opportunities for local grape, cherry, round, and Roma tomato varieties across the Southeast and Midwest United States.

Anticipated Outcomes*

156

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

2,194

New Market Outlets
Established

526

Jobs
Created

111

New Value-Added
Products Developed

3

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

64

Processing
Equipment
Purchased

56

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

4

New Facilities
Constructed

**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.

Tennessee has invested more than **\$5.6 million** across 8 projects to support infrastructure needs. The State's awardees are collectively building resilience within their middle of the supply chain by constructing 4 new facilities, modernizing 8 existing facilities, and purchasing and installing 110 pieces of equipment to expand processing, packaging, labeling, and related capacity. The state expects projects will train more than 53 employees on specialized equipment and worker safety, providing workforce development benefits.

Of the eight projects:

- Three expand dairy processing by constructing new facilities and modernizing equipment such as pasteurizers, homogenizers, cream separators, and batch freezers;
- Eighty-eight percent enhance storage and aggregation capabilities for local food by investing in new warehouse infrastructure and equipment, including walk-in coolers, freezers, and forklifts;
- Three increase packaging and labeling capacities to meet merchandizing standards and requirements for wholesale and institutional market channels; and
- Five increase capacity for processing or value-added production of fruits and vegetables with the acquisition of new equipment such as fermentation tanks, optical sorting graders, and canning machines.

Statewide Standouts



Tennessee is expanding the state's dairy industry with \$1.8 million in increased value-added production of butter, yogurt, ice cream, cheese, and other products made from local milk.



More than \$3.7 million supports aggregating, processing, and distributing produce, including peaches, apples, peppers, garlic, and tomatoes.



Two projects are focused on helping wineries increase their sourcing of local grapes and other fruit to benefit at least 56 vineyards.



Approximately \$570,000 will support the production of teas, tinctures, and kombucha made from Tennessee basil, turmeric, raspberries, peaches, strawberries, and other fruit.