



Farm Service Agency
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250
www.fsa.usda.gov

News Release

Contact:
Isabel Benemelis (202)720-7809

USDA Establishes New Partnerships to Link Underserved Farmers to FSA Programs *Minority, Women, New and Beginning, Military Veteran and Urban Producers to Receive Training and Information on Agency Services*

WASHINGTON, April 27, 2016 – The U.S. Department Agriculture (USDA) today announced cooperative agreements with 55 partners to educate farmers and other producers that have been underserved by USDA programs historically about Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs that provide financial, disaster or technical support. Nearly \$2.5 million will go to nonprofits, associations, universities, and foundations that will provide training and information on agricultural best practices, local networking opportunities, and more.

“We’re always working to find new ways for our programs to reach more producers and create more jobs in agriculture,” said FSA Administrator Val Dolcini. “The organizations selected as part of this effort share USDA’s priority of helping more Americans build successful farms and ranches.”

FSA, which solicited applications last fall, received nearly 100 proposals that requested over \$9 million in funding. Cooperative agreements, encompassing more than 28 states, will be between \$20,000 and \$75,000 each and several involve multi-state or national efforts. A list of awardees can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach.

FSA also announced today that it is accepting proposals for consideration in the second evaluation period. Applications are due no later than July 11, 2016. Projects not selected during the first evaluation period will be reconsidered during the second period. Additional information on the funding solicitation and the related FSA programs can be found at www.grants.gov using reference number USDA-FSA-CA-2016-001. For nonprofits and public institutions of higher education that are considering participation, a recording of the online informational session held with stakeholders is posted on the web at www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach.

USDA is also helping producers find an entry into farming through urban agriculture opportunities and the increasing consumer demand for locally-produced items. Under this Administration, USDA has invested more than \$1 billion in over 40,000 local and regional food businesses and infrastructure projects. USDA is committed to helping farmers, ranchers, and businesses access the growing market for local and regional foods, which was valued at \$12 billion in 2014 according to industry estimates. More information on how USDA investments are connecting producers with consumers and expanding rural economic opportunities is available in [Chapter IV](#) of [USDA Results on Medium](#).

Since 2009, USDA has worked to strengthen and support American agriculture, an industry that supports one in 11 American jobs, provides American consumers with more than 80 percent of the food we consume, ensures that Americans spend less of their paychecks at the grocery store than most people

in other countries, and supports markets for homegrown renewable energy and materials. USDA has also provided \$5.6 billion of disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; expanded risk management tools with products like to Whole Farm Revenue Protection; and helped farm businesses grow with \$36 billion in farm credit. USDA has engaged its resources to support a strong next generation of farmers and ranchers by improving access to land and capital; building new markets and market opportunities; extending new conservation opportunities; offering appropriate risk management tools; and increasing our outreach, education, and technical support including 102,000 direct and guaranteed farm operating and ownership loans. USDA has also provided more than 18,000 microloans totaling over \$406 million since the program began in January 2013. Nearly 89 percent of microloans, or more than \$363 million, were used by new, beginning and underserved farmers to grow their farming operations. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/results.

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).