

USDA announces \$50 Million in grants awarded to states to support the seafood industry

February 14, 2022



WASHINGTON, Feb. 14, 2022 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced an investment of approximately \$50 million in grants to support seafood processors, processing facilities and processing vessels through the Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant Program (SPRS).

This grant funding, to be distributed through state agencies, will help defray costs incurred by seafood processing facilities and processing vessels preparing for, preventing exposure to, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. SPRS recipients include state agencies, commissions, or departments responsible for agriculture, fisheries, wildlife, seafood, commercial processing, or related commerce activities within Alabama, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, as well as the territory of American Samoa. This program is funded by the Pandemic Assistance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

“USDA is working with agricultural and food businesses to ensure that, following the pandemic disruptions, they have the resources and tools to continue building more and better markets, and to thrive in 2022 and beyond,” said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt. “This funding for seafood processors and processing vessels will serve as a bridge, providing relief to an industry that was greatly affected by the pandemic as well as the resulting changes in consumer demand. This

program is part of our larger pandemic assistance program, providing support to producers, distributors, processors and other small agricultural businesses to get our food system back on track.”

Once USDA has made awards, state agencies will provide funds to seafood processing facilities and processing vessels. Seafood processors and processing vessels should apply directly through their state agency. A listing of state contacts will be made available on the USDA website.

Additionally, states are encouraged to prioritize applications that benefit smaller processors and vessels, socially disadvantaged processors, veteran processors, and/or underserved communities. For grants intending to serve these entities, applicants should engage and involve those beneficiaries when developing projects and applications.

A complete list of the SPRS grant recipients is available on the Agricultural Marketing Service website at: Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety (SPRS) Block Grant Program.

AMS supports U.S. food and agricultural products market opportunities, while increasing consumer access to fresh, healthy foods through applied research, technical services, and Congressionally funded grants. To learn more about AMS’s investments in enhancing and strengthening agricultural systems, visit www.ams.usda.gov/grants.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.