



PRESS RELEASE

## USDA Announces \$15 Million in Funding Opportunities to Support Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers

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**WASHINGTON, July 21, 2020** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced approximately \$15 million in available funding to help socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers own and operate successful farms. Funding is made through the USDA’s Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program (also known as the 2501 Program). The program is administered by the USDA Office of Partnerships & Public Engagement (OPPE).

“Socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers deserve equal access to USDA programs and services,” said Mike Beatty, director of the USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement. “2501 grants go a long way in fulfilling our mission to increase awareness of and ensure equitable participation in our programs. This can lead to more sustainable farming and ranching operations.”

For 30 years, the 2501 Program has helped reach socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who have experienced barriers to service due to racial or ethnic prejudice. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded the program to veteran farmers and ranchers. The 2018 Farm Bill increased mandatory funding for the program through fiscal year 2023. With 2501 program grants, nonprofits, institutions of higher education and Indian Tribes can support socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers through education, training, farming demonstrations, and conferences on farming and agri-business, and by increasing access to USDA’s programs and services.

Since 1994, 484 grants totaling more than \$119 million have been awarded. Among recent FY 2019 grantees, Developing Innovation in Navajo Education, Inc. was awarded funds to improve the operations and profitability of Arizona's Navajo socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers, and increase the local production and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and healthy food. The Mississippi Association of Cooperatives helped socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers and youth own and operate viable agricultural enterprises through an educational outreach program on farm management practices, financial management, and marketing.

Eligible 2501 program applicants include not-for-profit organizations, community-based organizations, and a range of higher education institutions serving African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Hispanic, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities.

The deadline for applications is August 26, 2020. See the [request for applications](#) for full details.



The Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement will host an upcoming teleconference during the open period of this announcement, and more sessions may be added. No registration is required to participate.

- July 28, 2020, 2 p.m. EDT  
Telephone Number: (877) 692-8955  
Passcode: 6433267

USDA's Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement develops and maintains partnerships focused on solutions to challenges facing rural and underserved communities in the United States, connecting those communities to the education, tools, and resources available to them through USDA programs and initiatives.

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CONTACT:

USDA Press

EMAIL:

[press@oc.usda.gov](mailto:press@oc.usda.gov)



U.S. Department of Agriculture

