



United States Department
of Agriculture

Rural Development

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News Release

For Immediate Release
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USDA GRANTS PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN RURAL INDIANA

Indiana Groups Receive Part of \$30 Million Awarded Nationwide

Indianapolis (04-13; 2-20-04): USDA Rural Development recently announced the awarding of nearly \$30 million of Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grants, authorized as part of the 2002 Farm Bill, in 40 states. This grant program provides an opportunity to refine agricultural commodities and products to increase their value in the marketplace.

Three grants were awarded to Indiana organizations for \$375,250 including a \$70,000 grant to the Beef Ventures Group LLC of Indianapolis. The grant will be used to study a beef processing system for Niche Markets, for small to medium size cattle operations.

Robert White, USDA Rural Development State Director, presented a check in Indianapolis today for the funding to Roger Dale Robinson, Steering Committee Chairman, Beef Ventures Group LLC, at a gathering held in conjunction with the Indiana Beef Cattle Association's (IBCA) annual meeting. "Looking Beyond The Fence" is the theme for the 2004 IBCA annual convention.

Robinson commented, "Because the economic climate is continually changing, beef cattle producers must be "looking beyond their own fences" to foster growth and success in an ever-challenging environment. This USDA grant will enable us to continue to explore new ways for producers to pursue additional economic development ventures." The Beef Ventures Group is a major component of IBCA's Economic Development strategy to create profit opportunities for Indiana beef producers.

"These grants are in keeping with the mission of USDA Rural Development which is to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure", added White. "We are committed to improving the quality of life in rural Indiana. When rural Indiana makes progress, all of Indiana benefits."

More information about the Beef Ventures Group can be obtained by contacting Phil Anderson or Brian Shuter at the Indiana Beef Cattle Association (317-872-2333). Further information on USDA Rural Development loan and grant programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

