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AGRICULTURE SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES \$8 MILLION TO PROMOTE RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24, 2009 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that 58 recipients have been selected to receive \$8 million in grants to spur economic development in rural communities in 41 states, the Territory of Puerto Rico and the Western Pacific.

"Rural businesses are the lifeblood of rural communities and their financial health is vital as we work to create jobs and expand entrepreneurship throughout the country," Vilsack said. "The funding we are announcing today will help lay the foundation for economic growth in many communities, consistent with the Obama Administration's vision of rebuilding and revitalizing rural America."

The funds are being provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program, which finance development of small and emerging rural business. The grants may be used for project planning, land acquisition and development, transportation and infrastructure improvements; renovation or construction, equipment purchases, establishment of working capital or revolving loan funds, adult job training and technical assistance.

In Bottineau, N.D., Dakota College at Bottineau has been selected to receive a \$90,750 grant to provide technical assistance to North Dakota producers in expansion of the organic vegetable industry. The USDA funding will help create jobs in the Center of North American Collation (CONAC) Rural Enterprise Area Partnership (REAP) Zone.

The grants are administered by USDA Rural Development and funding of each recipient is contingent upon the recipient meeting the conditions of the grant agreement.

Below is a complete list of Rural Business Enterprise grants announced today:

Alabama:

MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians - \$80,000

Alaska:

Ketchikan Gateway Borough - \$99,000

Arkansas:

Independence County - \$450,000

California:

New Season Community Development Corporation - \$229,970

Colorado:

Southeast Colorado RC&D - \$90,300

Florida:

City of Cedar Key - \$164,100

Georgia:

Hampton Downtown Development Authority - \$90,000

Hawaii:

County of Maui - \$369,918

Idaho:

Ketchum Community Development Corporation - \$49,999

Framing Our Community, Inc. - \$36,732

Illinois:

Lake Land College - \$148,250

Iowa:

Upper Iowa University - \$99,000

Chamber & Development Council of Crawford County - \$65,000

Kansas:

Heartland Center for Leadership Development - \$99,000

Wichita County Economic Development, Inc. - \$53,400

Smoky Hill Development Corporation - \$40,000

Kentucky:

Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, Inc. - \$198,787

Louisiana

Acadiana RC&D, Inc. - \$123,991

Maine:

Town of Milo - \$500,000

Maryland:

Maryland Hawk Corporation - \$500,000

Massachusetts:

Massachusetts Woodlands Institute, Inc. - \$99,000

Michigan:

Target Alpena - \$99,000

Minnesota:

Hubbard County Regional Economic Development Commission - \$99,590

Windustry - \$200,000

Worthington Regional Economic Development Corp. - \$99,900

Mississippi:

Coahoma County Board of Supervisors - \$60,614

Missouri:

National Center for Beef Excellence - \$297,000

City of Mansfield - \$117,000

Montana:

Snowy Mountain Development Corporation - \$50,000

Snowy Mountain Development Corporation - \$13,500

Nebraska:

Region V Foundation - \$99,900

Center for Rural Affairs - \$99,000

Nebraska Venture Capital Forum dba Invest Nebraska Corporation - \$92,000

New Hampshire:

Coastal Economic Development Corporation - \$25,000

New York:

Snow Belt Housing Company, Inc.; - \$99,000

North Carolina:

Town of Franklinton - \$75,000

North Dakota:

Minot State University - Bottineau College - \$90,750

Ohio:

Gallia County Board of Commissioners - \$99,000

Oklahoma:

Ada Industrial Development Corporation - \$500,000

Oregon:

Oregon Small Business Development Center Network - \$99,999

Economic Development Council of Tillamook County - \$50,000

Pennsylvania:

Main Street Gettysburg, Inc. - \$99,000

Puerto Rico:

Municipality of Coamo - \$500,000

Rhode Island:

Rhode Island Rural Development Council - \$20,000

South Dakota:

Glacial Lakes Area Development, Inc. - \$99,000

Tennessee:

City of Columbia - \$99,000

Greater Van Buren County - Spencer Chamber of Commerce - \$99,500

Texas:

Alamo EDC - \$250,000

Utah:

Friends of Green River - \$88,800

Vermont:

Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation - \$73,725

Vermont Cheese Council, Inc. - \$71,740

Virginia:

Scott County Economic Development Authority - \$80,000

Staunton Creative Community Fund, Inc. - \$98,000

Washington:

Institute for Washington's Future - \$36,400

Western Pacific:

The Latte Stones Foundation - \$10,000

West Virginia:

Fairmont Community Development Partnership, Inc. - \$99,500

Glenville State College Research Corporation - \$249,500

Wisconsin:

CAP Services, Inc. - \$70,832

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development fosters growth in homeownership, finances business development and

supports the creation of critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbeg.htm.

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