



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Wisconsin - Rural Business & Cooperative Service

# Local & Regional Food Systems

## USDA Grant To Help Identify Local Food Opportunities in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa

### Outline of Need:

Recent trends have seen job numbers falling and obesity rates increasing. Supporting local food businesses will help address both these concerns through the creation of new food processing businesses and improved access to fresh, nutritious foods.

### How Rural Development Helped:

USDA Rural Development award Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission with a \$90,000 grant to assist with the development of a local food prospectus for rural areas in the tri-state region of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois.

### The Results:

SWWRPC will use the grant award with partner agencies in Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa, to improve the local food opportunities in the tri-state region.

The two-year effort will identify agricultural strengths, regional opportunities, and recommend a unified network of processing, storage, and distribution facilities throughout the region.



The goal is to transform the region into a highly productive local food system that is scaled to meet wholesale demand.

Through this process SWWRPC will:

- Create a local food system able to meet the demand throughout the upper Midwest.
- Build a more stable and lucrative industry using existing natural resources and accessing new forms of capital.
- Enhance regional access to fresh, healthy foods.
- Develop a replicable model of regional local food development.

*This is a Unique Project:*

- Using multi-State and inter agency partnerships
- A larger scale effort than most local food efforts to date, “commoditizing local foods”
- A demonstration region to show the country how to feed large populations using local foods, while creating jobs and a vibrant local economy.
- Involving community input in setting up the local food infrastructure.
- The project will ultimately be economically self sufficient in just a few years time.

## Fast Facts

**Program:** Rural Business Opportunity Grant

**Investment:** \$90,000 Grant

**Partners:** Wisconsin's Green County UW-Extension, Lafayette County WI Economic Development Corporation, Prosperity Southwest, and Southwestern Wisconsin CAP; Iowa's Delaware County Economic Development & Value-Added Ag Program, East Central Intergovernmental Association, and Prosperity Eastern Iowa ; and Illinois Tri-County Economic Development.

**Congressional District:** Multi-State

**Impact:**

- Identify agricultural strengths
- Recognize regional opportunities
- Improve the local food opportunities in a tri-state region

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