



Wisconsin — Rural Housing Service

Local & Regional Food Systems

New Food Processing Center, Staffed by Disabled Adults, Opens Doors

Outline Of Need:

The Hodan Center, Inc. a sheltered workshop that provides and promotes opportunities for work and personal development for persons with disabilities, enabling them to achieve individual life goals. In support of this mission, the clients of the Hodan Center have a number of canned good products that they package and distribute for sale under the Papa Pat's food line.

Since its inception in 2001, Papa Pat's has mushroomed to include 150 different bottled liquids and dry mixes, sold at more than 700 stores in 26 states. Due to the increased demand, the Hodan Center out grew the previous space where Papa Pat's is manufactured. In order to have adequate space, the rehabilitation center undertook the Wisconsin Innovation Kitchen Project.



New Village of Pepin Municipal Building.

How Rural Development Helped:

Rural Development approved a loan \$56,000 and a \$56,000 grant through the Community Facility Program. Funds were used for the purchase of kitchen equipment, helping to provide the job skills to persons with disabilities at the Wisconsin Innovation Kitchen.

In addition to essentials, some custom equipment was purchased, as well as a forklift, conference room table and chairs, 16-person locker with coat rack, office computer, and four-drawer legal file cabinet.

The Results:

The Wisconsin Innovation Kitchen is a new 10,000 square foot State Certified food processing facility that includes retail space, kitchens, and food storage areas. All of this is needed to enable the Hodan Center to provide jobs and job skills training for more than 130 developmentally disabled clients from a three counties; Iowa, LaFayette, and Grant.

With four separate kitchen areas where three different processors can work at the same time, when the Hodan Center is not using the facility the kitchen will also serve as an incubator kitchen. Space will be available to small, start up businesses to rent, helping new and existing farmers and food entrepreneurs develop and grow exciting food businesses that showcases the benefits of local foods.

Many of the goods and services needed by outside processors will also be available through the Hodan Center including custom processing, labeling, packaging, storage, and shipping.

Fast Facts

Program: Community Facilities

Investment: \$112,000 Loan and Grant

Partners:

Congressional District: WI-03

Demographics:

- Grant, Iowa, and Lafayette Counties; Mineral Point, WI
Rural Population - 2,617

Impact:

- 130 jobs for developmentally disabled
- New kitchen incubator space for area small and start-up businesses to grow.
- Help new and existing farmers and food entrepreneurs develop and grow food businesses that showcases benefits of local foods.

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