

VALUE-ADDED GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED 30 DAYS

WASHINGTON, July 3, 2001 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that the application deadline for the second round of grants to producer-owned valued-added processing plants has been extended 30 days to 4:00 pm, EDT, July 27, 2001.

On March 6, 2001, USDA announced that \$25 million in grants was available for the development of agricultural producer-owned processing businesses. The new Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grants program is designed to encourage independent producers of agricultural commodities to process their raw products into marketable goods, thereby increasing farm income.

On June 25, 2001, USDA announced the approval of 28 value-added agricultural product market development grants totaling nearly \$10 million for round one. In round two, another \$10 million will be allocated to grant recipients to establish value-added business ventures. The remaining \$5 million will be awarded to establish a pilot project know as the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center.

This program is administered by USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Service. Further information is available at the USDA Rural Development state offices, or at the following Web Address: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm>. The Federal Register announcement is at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadgcenter.pdf> & <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadgext.pdf>.

In Nebraska contact the Lincoln State Office at 402-437-5551 or Rm. 152 Federal Building 100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, Nebraska 68508.

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