



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
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CONNER ANNOUNCES \$22.7 MILLION IN VALUE ADDED PRODUCER GRANTS

WASHINGTON - Acting Agriculture Secretary Chuck Conner recently announced the selection of 162 recipients in 40 states and Puerto Rico to receive \$22.7 million through the Value-Added Producer Grant program.

“These grants support farm families in rural America by helping them market their commodities and increase their financial returns,” Conner said. “I’m also pleased that some of these funds will help develop alternative fuels from renewable energy sources as part of President Bush’s comprehensive national energy policy.”

“Utah received funding for two VAPG grants “said Jack Cox, Utah State Director for USDA Rural Development. “Value-Added Producer Grants may be used for planning activities or to provide working capital to market value-added agricultural products and farm-based renewable energy projects. A value-added product is created when a producer takes an agricultural commodity, such as milk or vegetables, and processes or prepares it in a way that increases its value to consumers. Rural Development has committed more than \$158 million to value-added agricultural investments since 2001.”

Approximately one-third of the grants, 56, will go to recipients who requested \$50,000 or less in federal assistance. For example, in Mt. Pleasant, Utah, Kenneth Darrel Palmer, JDP ranch was selected to receive an award of \$13,400 to expand sales and profit margins to the ranch through funding a direct marketing of a frozen natural beef project.

Stephen T. Gillmor Sheep Company, Delta, Utah was selected to receive an award of \$225,000 to refine their products in order to increase the value of these products. The company along with participating producers will expand sales and profit margins through funding a value added Aussie and Scottish style meat pie for the ready to eat foods market. “Both Utah projects are fine examples of how USDA Rural Development can work with farmers and ranchers to improve sales and net-profits on the commodities they produce” said Richard Carrig, Business & Cooperatives Program Director.

A complete list of grant recipients is available at USDA’s web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. USDA Rural Development has invested more than \$76.8 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.5 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA’s web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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