

# Technical Assistance Resources

*Purpose: to document resources currently available for Cuyama Valley farmers, ranchers, and land stewards.*

*May 23rd, 2022*



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## **Cuyama Valley Food Action Network**

The Cuyama Valley Food Action Network (CVFAN) works to develop an equitable, engaging, and resilient food system via collaboration, resource sharing, and educational opportunities available both within the Valley as well as throughout Santa Barbara County. CVFAN will catalyze increased and sustainable small farmer/rancher food production for Cuyama Valley/local consumption through:

1. Generating market incentives/increased demand;
2. Promoting sound stewardship of the Valley's fragile landscapes with water efficient, climate smart and environmentally friendly technologies and practices;
3. Creating sustainable economic prosperity for small farmers, ranchers, and businesses;
4. Improving overall food access; and
5. Creating a greater sense of community within our rural community.

**View working group members at [www.visitcuyama.com/cvfan](http://www.visitcuyama.com/cvfan)**

## **Aims**

### **Improve access to food for all Cuyamans**

- Provide healthy, locally grown and produced food to more members of the Cuyama community (addressing the issue of being a food desert in an agriculture community)

### **Market Cuyama Valley raw and value-added products to a wider regional audience**

- Create an online marketplace
- Strategically distribute and capitalize on social media resources, visual assets, and content. Treat social media campaigns as opportunities for storytelling and resource sharing (i.e. utilize the Buckhorn's tv systems to loop SBCFAN promotional videos)

### **Support small and medium sized farms with technical assistance and best practices training**

- Introduce and grow partnership with SBCFAN
  - Leveraging the community strengths that already exist to build resilience in our local food system
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## **Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS)**

Focused on Technical Assistance for Agricultural Producers Only

- Technical Assistance Programs
  - Five Steps to Assistance
  - New Farmers- Get Started
  - NRCS Ranchers
  - NRCS Specialty Crops
  - NRCS Specialty Crops- Spanish
  
- Financial Assistance Programs
  - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

[Beginning Farmers and Ranchers | Farmers.gov](#)

- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Series (online); See *Flier in Folder*

[Small scale solutions for your farm | NRCS \(usda.gov\)](#) ; See *Flier in Folder*

## **Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau**

[HOME | SBCFB](#) ; <https://www.sbcfb.com/>

## **UC Cooperative Extension**

Though the Small Farm Program has a number of official small farm advisors, each county office of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) has a specialist who has been designated a small farm contact. Farm advisors extend useful, technical, and research-based information to producers in their counties. They provide leadership on local subject matter and expertise in assigned areas to determine and evaluate clientele problems. Major issues small farm advisors consider are: improvement of production practices, resource management, pest management, food safety, worker safety, postharvest handling, alternative crops, enterprise and market analysis, and agricultural education to the public.

<https://sfp.ucanr.edu/overview/coopextcontacts/>

## **Regional Technical Assistance Contacts:**

### **Primary Contact for NRCS, available to make site visits**

Emma Chow

District Conservationist

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

[emma.chow@usda.gov](mailto:emma.chow@usda.gov)

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Office: 805-863-9926

**Primary Contact for CRCD, available to make site visits**

Anna Olsen  
Executive Director  
Cachuma Resource Conservation District  
805.868.4013  
aolsen@rcdsantabarbara.org

**Primary Contact for UCCE Extension Small Farms Technical Assistance:**

Kirsten Pearsons  
UCCE Small Farm Advisor  
SLO & SB County  
kapearsons@ucanr.edu  
(925) 487-8374 (cell)

**California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA) Primary Contact:**

Carmen Carrasco (she/her/ella)  
Small Farm Liaison, Farmer Equity Program  
California Department of Food and Agriculture  
E-mail: carmen.carrasco@cdfa.ca.gov  
Phone: +1 (909) 219-2991  
Website: CDFA Farmer Resource Portal

**USDA Rural Development State Contact:**

Bret Helgren,  
[bret.helgren@usda.gov](mailto:bret.helgren@usda.gov)

**USDA Resource Liaison Contact:**

Office of Partnerships & Public Engagement  
Juan M. Alvarez  
Office: (559) 278-8311  
[juan.alvarez@usda.gov](mailto:juan.alvarez@usda.gov)

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## **Grants to be aware of:**

**California BIPOC Farmer & Land Steward Relief Fund** that will be opening up on Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup> for farmers and producers that were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This grant program is funded through CDFA's California Underserved and Small Producer (CUSP) Program, but CDFA is collaborating with an organization called **Mandela Partners** who will be in charge of administering the funding and the application process.

This is a statewide program, eligible applicants in all regions of the state can apply. Depending on the region, CDFA can provide technical assistance with the application process through partnerships with different regional organizations. You can find a list of the technical assistance providers on the CDFA CUSP Program [website](#) or through this link: [CUSP List of Organizations Helping Producers \(ca.gov\)](#)

Grant amounts will range from \$1,000 to \$20,000 depending on funding availability and estimated economic losses, and the application will be available starting on Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup> and remain open for one month, at the following website:

[www.peopleslandfund.org](http://www.peopleslandfund.org)

This is some of the information on the eligibility and focus of the grant program:

- (1) Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color led farms and food-growing projects (including individuals, nonprofits, tribes, businesses). Businesses must be majority BIPOC owned. Nonprofits must be majority BIPOC staff and majority BIPOC board.
- (2) Applicant and their farm or food-growing project must be located in California.
- (3) Applicant demonstrates negative financial impact to themselves or their farm or food-growing project and need for assistance to cover basic needs.
- (4) Applicant's total net assets is less than \$200,000 for a family of 3 or more (\$150,000 for family of 2, or \$100,000 for family of 1), excluding a house or farmland.
- (5) Must have at least 1 year of sales

*The following USDA grant supports direct to consumer markets like farmers markets and CSAs.*

1. [Farmers Market Promotion Program \(FMPP\)](#): Awards funding for capacity building, community development, training, and technical assistance. These grants can be used for market startup, operation, infrastructure, training and education, outreach, **market analysis and planning, customer and producer surveys**, vendor and customer recruitment, and new venue establishment. [Click here for information on how to apply to FMPP](#)  
**Deadline: May 16, 2022** Applications must be submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

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The following USDA grant supports indirect to consumer markets like **food hubs and value-added product incubators**.

2. [Local Food Promotion Program \(LFPP\)](#): Assist in the **development**, improvement, or expansion of local and regional food business enterprises, meaning **organizations or business entities that function as intermediaries between producers (farmers or growers) and buyers**. [Click here for information on how to apply to LFPP](#).  
**Deadline: May 16**, 2022 Applications must be submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

*This next CDFA grant seems very aligned, but not ready yet.*

3. [Community Food Hub Grant Program](#) (no web page yet)  
CDFA's Farm to Community Food Hub Program will provide **planning and implementation grants to mission driven food hubs** throughout the state of California. This is a new grant program. Please check back on the CDFA grants website for additional details as this program is developed.  
Program Type: TBD      Eligible Entities: TBD [www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants/](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants/)

Other notable grants

4. [Farm to School Incubator Grant Program](#) - CDFA  
The California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) 2021 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program is focused on supporting local and regional farm to school projects that promote nutrition education, sustainable food production and procurement, and high-quality student engagement through experiential learning.  
Program Type: Healthy food systems, Outreach and Education  
Eligible Entities: Farmers and Ranchers; Federal / State / Local government; Non-profits; Schools (K-12)  
Applications open March TBD and **deadline in May TBD**  
[Previous Awards](#) \$20,000 up to \$500,000
5. [Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program](#)  
Through this program, CDFA funds energy efficient refrigeration units in corner stores and small businesses in low-income or low-access areas throughout the state to stock California-grown fresh produce, nuts and minimally processed foods. The purpose of the program is to improve access to healthy food choices in the small retail environment for underserved communities, while promoting CA-grown agriculture.  
Program Type: Economic Development; Healthy Food Systems  
Eligible Entities: Farmers and Ranchers; Government; Higher Education; Non-Profit; Other Business

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## **Deadline in Nov/Dec TBD**

*For after the establishment of a Cuyama Farmers Market...*

### 6. [Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program](#)

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is 100 percent federally funded and provides seniors 60 years of age or older who are on a limited income one-time box of fresh produce from local farmers throughout California.

Program Type: Healthy Food Systems

Eligible Entities: Federal / State / Local government; Non-profits

*Depending on how things develop, CVFAN or another entity will be well-positioned for this USDA grant next year:*

### 7. [Value-Added Producer Grant](#) (VAPG) - [Local Agriculture Marketing Program \(LAMP\)](#) -

Planning Projects: up to \$75,000; Working Capital: \$250,000

#### [Guidelines](#)

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures, as defined in the [program regulation](#), are eligible to apply for this program.

**Deadline: April 25, 2022** for online applications and May 2, 2022 for paper applications.

## **American Rescue Plan Technical Assistance Investment to Benefit Underserved Farmers, Ranchers and Forest Landowners Grant Program:**

The primary goal of American Rescue Plan Technical Assistance Investment Program is to ensure improved understanding of and equitable participation in the full range of USDA programs and services among underserved farmers, ranchers, forest land owners and operators through supporting the organizational delivery of technical assistance projects and establishment of technical assistance networks. USDA is authorized to support and facilitate the establishment of technical assistance projects toward this goal. Projects must provide a range of technical assistance services to underserved agricultural producers. The term "agricultural producer" is used to refer to agricultural farmers, ranchers, and private forest land owners and operators.

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**Estimated Total Program Funding:** \$25,000,000; Range of Awards: \$500,000 - \$3,500,000

**Link to view grant description Request for Application:** [FY 2022 ARPA RFA \(usda.gov\)](#).

**\*\*\*Please note:** Letter of intent due date: **None**

Cost Sharing Requirements: **No match required**

**\*\*\*Note:** **Due Date (Closing): June 1, 2022**

## **Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program**

The USDA Rural Development (RD) is seeking proposals for the Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program. This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.

**Link to view grant description and application:** [Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program in California | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)

### **How may funds be used?**

Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and / or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment and pay related project expenses.

Examples of essential community facilities include:

- Health care facilities such as hospitals, medical clinics, dental clinics, nursing homes or assisted living facilities
- Public facilities such as town halls, courthouses, airport hangars or street improvements
- Community support services such as child care centers, community centers, fairgrounds or transitional housing
- Public safety services such as fire departments, police stations, prisons, police vehicles, fire trucks, public works vehicles or equipment
- Educational services such as museums, libraries or private schools
- Utility services such as telemedicine or distance learning equipment

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- Local food systems such as community gardens, food pantries, community kitchens, food banks, food hubs or greenhouses

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## **Notifications for Resources**

### **USDA Resource Development Newsletter Subscription:**

[Sign-up for Email Updates | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](https://www.rd.usda.gov/highlight/sign-email-updates)

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/highlight/sign-email-updates>

### **CA Dept of Food & Agriculture Resource Development (CDFA) Newsletter:**

[CDFA - Subscribe](https://www.cdfa.net/cdfa/cdfaweb.nsf/pages/subscribe.html)

<https://www.cdfa.net/cdfa/cdfaweb.nsf/pages/subscribe.html>