For the latest updates and information related to COVID-19, visit the Kansas COVID-19 Response and Recovery website. covid.ks.gov.

Governor Laura Kelly, Department of Agriculture Announce $12 Million in Grants Strengthened Kansas' Food Supply System

Feb 24, 2021

Governor Laura Kelly and the Kansas Department of Agriculture announced that the COVID Relief Fund (discretionary CARES Act funding allocated to Kansas) supported nearly $12 million of grants to help secure local food systems.

"Agriculture is and always will be the backbone of the Kansas economy," **Governor Kelly said**. "The pandemic underscored how critical it is that we protect our food supply system, as our agriculture workers have kept food in stores and on tables across our state and nation during the worst public health crisis in a century."

The program, administered by the Kansas Department of Agriculture and initially supported by the Kansas Department of Commerce, focused on providing grants to Kansas-owned food-related businesses to increase capacity, including expansion of facilities, new equipment and technology to improve business resilience, and support to ensure worker safety and social distancing guidelines.

There were 257 grantees across 80 counties. Types of businesses that received grants included slaughter and other food processing facilities, direct-to-consumer food businesses, grocery stores, farmer's markets, food pantries, and more.

As a result of this grant, the Journey Bible Church in Johnson County was able to upgrade its kitchen to commercial grade status to reach the increased needs in their community.

"It has gone so well…. we have launched The Kindness Kitchen to serve hundreds of meals each week to families in need!" **Brandon Champagne, Community Impact Pastor, said.**

The grant also helped Hillside Honey in Eaton. A veteran and family owned business, Hillside Honey was able to expand its production footprint and convert an old football field into garden acreage for year-round production. Cedar Vale Locker and Alta Vista Locker, both meat processors, were able to add employees to increase processing capacity.

"These grants have already made a significant impact across the state, as local Kansas businesses and nonprofits have expanded their capacity in simple and concrete ways, and have been able to turn the table on their business model to change the way they interact in their delivery of goods to Kansans," **Agriculture Secretary Beam said.**

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