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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards Over $3 Million to Improve Food Security in Massachusetts

Second Round of New Grant Program to Increase Access to Local Food

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

8/18/2020

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Governor's Press Office

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Department of Public Health

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

MEDIA CONTACT

Governor's Press Office

Phone

617-725-4025 (tel:6177254025)

Online

gov.press@state.ma.us (mailto:gov.press@state.ma.us)

BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced $3.3 million in grants to address urgent food insecurity for Massachusetts residents as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and make the Commonwealth's food system more resilient. This funding is being awarded as part of the second round of the new $36 million Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program, created following recommendations from the Administration's COVID-19 Command Center's Food Security Task Force, which promotes ongoing efforts to ensure that individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth have access to healthy, local food.

"Increasing access to fresh, local food is critical to ensure the health and wellbeing of all Commonwealth families," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "Through this grant program, we are helping residents and businesses who've been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic while making investments in building a strong and equitable local food system for Massachusetts that is prepared for the future."

"These grants are targeted to connect the Commonwealth's local food producers and distributors to the families and communities that are currently most underserved by fresh food options," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** "Additionally, these grants will help address the economic impact of the pandemic while funding important investments in customer and worker health and safety."

The goal of the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program is to ensure that individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth have equitable access to food, especially local food. The program also seeks to ensure that farmers, fishermen and other local food producers are better connected to a strong, resilient food system to help mitigate future food supply and distribution disruption.

The second round of the grant program includes 34 awards totaling $3,324,349 to fund investments in technology, equipment, increased capacity, and other assistance to help producers distribute food, especially to food insecure communities. When evaluating the applications, considerations included equity, economic impact and need, sustainability and scalability of efforts, and ability to support producer readiness to accept SNAP and HIP benefits. This round follows the first round of $2,941,838 in grants **awarded** (/news/baker-polito-administration-awards-3-million-in-food-security-grants) last month to 26 recipients.

"Massachusetts is lucky to have a rich and diverse supply of local food, but too many families and residents continue to struggle with hunger and food insecurity during this public health emergency," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides.** "Our administration is pleased to invest in our local producers and businesses through this grant program to help expand the distribution of healthy, fresh food throughout the Commonwealth."

"Every individual, family and community in the Commonwealth should have access to nutritious food, and the Command Center's Food Security Task Force has been working to address the increase in food insecurity for families as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic," **said COVID-19 Response Command Center Director and Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders.** "These grants support increased access to nutritious food in all corners of the Commonwealth and strengthen the food supply chain beyond the pandemic."

Applications will continue to be evaluated on a rolling basis through September 15, 2020. Eligible grantees include entities that are part of the Massachusetts local food system including production, processing and distribution, the emergency food distribution network, Buy Local, community and food organizations, school meal programming, urban farms and community gardens, non-profits, and organizations that provide business planning, technical assistance and information technology services. The Request for Responses for project proposals is available **here** (/service-details/food-security-infrastructure-grant-program).

The awardees for the second round of the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program include:

Grant Recipient	Location	Project Description	Grant Amount
United Way of Tri-County	Framingham	United Way of Tri-County (UWTC) will relocate and upgrade their MetroWest Cross Dock facility, which is where transfers occur between the Greater Boston Food Bank and the Tri-County food banks in MetroWest, greater Marlborough, and greater Clinton. A total of 26 food programs including food pantries and meal programs pick up their food at the Cross Dock each week. The facility upgrades will expand the storage capacity of the Cross Dock and allow UWTC to accept more and larger food donations.	$293,856
United Way of Tri-County	Framingham	UWTC will purchase a refrigerated truck and expand cold storage at their two hot meal program facilities. This will increase their ability to accept and transport larger food donations from further locations.	$128,006

United Way of Tri-County	Framingham	UWTC will purchase refrigeration equipment and a truck to increase deliver capacity of UWTC's WHEAT Community Connections program, as it has expanded hot meal programs to adults in senior housing and families in subsidized housing.	$78,121
Apex Orchards, Inc.	Shelburne	Apex Orchard will purchase a tractor and expand the cold storage facility in order to increase crop yield and extend the length of the operating season.	$72,400
The Black Sheep, Ltd	Amherst	The Black Sheep will transition their dine-in space into a grocery-store style market to provide groceries in an area without other grocery options.	$98,000
Trustees of Tufts College / New Entry Sustainable Farming Project	Boston	This grant will fund the purchase of two refrigerated vehicles, additional refrigeration equipment, and equipment in order to increase production and distribution to their food access partnerships (senior centers, public housing authorities, etc.)	$163,550
Lawrence Partnership's Revolving Test Kitchen	Lawrence	This grant will fund the build out of kitchen space and food storage space in order to adapt to supply chain disruptions and to serve food to food insecure Lawrence residents. The layout will increase spacing between workers and improve sanitation.	$108,757
McCray’s Farm	South Hadley	McCray’s Farm will purchase new milk processing equipment because current use is overwhelming the machinery and is experiencing frequent mechanical breakdowns.	$165,763
Queen's Greens	Amherst	Queen’s Greens will build three new tunnel greenhouses which are used to grow spinach in the winter. This will enable them to increase production and serve approximately 25% more customers.	$106,000
Queen's Greens	Amherst	Queen’s Greens will purchase farm and greenhouse equipment that will assist the farm in growing and distributing greens throughout the winter.	$20,982
Mills River Cranberry Co.	Barnstable	Mills River Cranberry Co. will build a storage building to store cranberry harvest and harvesting equipment.	$36,115

Village Cooperative Inc	Leverett	Village Cooperative will purchase glass-door coolers to replace failing equipment. These refrigerators are used to display, store, and sell produce and refrigerated groceries. This is the only grocery store serving Leverett, Wendell, and Shutesbury.	$18,897
Northborough Public Schools	Southborough	This grant will fund a convection oven and freezer for the elementary school. The school is now federally required to offer breakfast service but does not have the capacity to prepare or store the food in their current kitchen. The new oven and freezer will allow the school to prepare food onsite rather than transporting food from a different location.	$13,724
River Rock Farm	Brimfield	River Rock Farm will purchase a refrigerated van in order to expand meat delivery service and store meat at farmer's markets.	$55,000
Volante Farms Inc.	Needham	Volante Farms will build out a cold storage room that would allow the farm to store root vegetables into the winter.	$37,043
Langwater Farm	Easton	Langwater Farm will build a year-round farm-stand/store with commercial kitchen and refrigerated storage facilities in order to provide direct-to-consumer produce throughout the year.	$304,843
Warner Farms LLC	Sunderland	Warner Farms will construct a packing building and purchase a refrigerated box truck. The packing shed will expand the farm's packing facilities needed to keep up with the farm's growing operations and to provide greater distancing and hygiene facilities for staff. The refrigerated box truck will help with increased demand and decrease load on the farm's older vehicles.	$225,191
Wellspring Harvest	Springfield	Wellspring Harvest will purchase a truck cab and chassis to install their refrigeration unit on. This will enable them to deliver CSA boxes throughout the state.	$75,500
The Outreach Program	Duxbury	The Outreach Program will purchase a new delivery van to deliver ingredients and then packaged meals to food pantries and homeless shelters.	$35,000
The Food Project	Lincoln	The Food Project will purchase farm equipment, compost, and vehicles to sustain and increase operations that provide food to food insecure clients of hunger relief organizations and	$159,363

		individuals experiencing food insecurity. The project will add storage, processing and delivery equipment to adapt to supply chain disruptions and increase farm production capacity.	
Cooks Farm Orchard	Brimfield	Cooks Farm Orchard will purchase an apple cider processor with UV light to increase production capacity and food safety.	$14,979
P. J. Cranberries	Sandwich	P. J. Cranberries will purchase packaging and processing equipment to increase availability of bagged fruit. Request also contains hand washing station and plexi-glass dividers to improve safety of processing operation.	$11,505
Red's Best	Boston	Red’s Best will build a fish processing line, purchase a fish packing machine, and an industrial freezing machine in order to process and package fish. This project is intended to adapt to demand disruptions to the seafood industry and prepare fish for distribution to grocery outlets.	$490,000
Centre Street Food Pantry	Newton	Centre Street Food Pantry will purchase and install a walk-in outdoor refrigerator to increase storage of produce, dairy, and refrigerated foods. This will help meet increased demand for food at the pantry and provide greater flexibility in storing large quantities of refrigerated items.	$23,000
Cape Cod Native Shellfish LLC	Barnstable	Cape Cod Native Shellfish will purchase an ice machine and insulated storage containers to keep shellfish food safe over the winter until they can be sold on the market again.	$8,000
The Giving Garden	Pittsfield	The Giving Garden will construct a hoop house that will be used to extend the growing season and grow produce that is provided for free to the food pantry.	$10,902
Waltham Public Schools Food Service Department	Waltham	This grant will fund a refrigerated delivery truck to support the school's meal delivery program.	$63,178
Island Grown Initiative	Tisbury	Island Grown Initiative will purchase a tractor in order to increase growing yield. This will increase locally available food on the Vineyard. The program donates approximately half of their harvested food to their food equity partners for distribution.	$60,695

Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro South	Taunton	This grant will fund the purchase and installation of a hydroponic shipping container farm at the Boys & Girls Club to increase access to locally grown produce.	$128,960
Revival Farm	Plympton	Revival Farm will purchase a walk-in freezer so that the farm can increase production to meet the increased demand from local farm stands.	$22,023
Rainbow Harvest Farm	Greenfield	Rainbow Harvest Farm will purchase a mobile market truck and equipment to distribute food in several communities via a mobile farmer's market. The market would accept SNAP benefits.	$130,144
Sacred Heart Food Pantry	Middleborough	Request is to purchase refrigerators and a freezer to expand the capacity of the food pantry and increase the buffer capacity necessary to store additional perishable products.	$21,597
Hockomock Area YMCA	North Attleborough	Request is for a food delivery vehicle to deliver food to food insecure individuals in 15 area communities that are served by the Hockamock Area YMCA.	$108,750
The Neighborhood Farm, LLC	Sherborn	The Neighborhood Farm will purchase two refrigerated trailers to store, hold, and transport produce. These are necessary to store and distribute the increased production and prevent food from perishing due to lack of refrigerated storage.	$34,500

This grant program implements the recommendations of the Food Security Task Force, which was convened by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center in response to increased demands for food assistance. The task force is composed of a broad group of public and private members charged with ensuring food insecurity and food supply needs are addressed during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The Food Insecurity Infrastructure Grant Program was announced in May 2020 as part of a $56 million investment by the Baker-Polito Administration to combat urgent food insecurity for some Massachusetts families and individuals as a result of COVID-19. The Administration also announced a $5 million increase for the **Healthy Incentives Program** (/healthy-incentives-program-hip) to meet increased demand for local produce and to increase access points that process SNAP and HIP benefits, $12 million for the provision of 25,000 family food boxes per week through a regional food supply system, and $3 million in funding as an immediate relief valve to food banks.

Last week, the Baker-Polito Administration **launched** (/news/baker-polito-administration-launches-online-platform-to-enhance-food-system-connections) the **MassGrown Exchange** (/service-details/massgrown-exchange), an online platform designed to facilitate business-to-business connections

within the local food system for products and services. Developed by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), in collaboration with the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), this platform was established to both address COVID-19 disruptions to the local food supply and to serve as a helpful tool and resource for Massachusetts growers and producers in accessing markets beyond the duration of the COVID-19 emergency.

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Media Contact

Governor's Press Office

Phone

617-725-4025 (tel:6177254025)

Online

gov.press@state.ma.us (mailto:gov.press@state.ma.us)

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito
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