

## **Rural Development Community Facilities Program**

**The Rural Development Community Facilities (CF) Program** supports the success of rural communities by providing loans and grants for the construction, acquisition or renovation of community facilities or for the purchase of equipment for community projects. Among other things, these facilities can improve access to high-quality and affordable local foods.

### ***Who is eligible to apply for CF loans and grants?***

Local governments, non-profit organizations and State and Federally-recognized Indian tribes are all eligible to apply for funds to finance “essential community facilities.” **Applications must be for projects in rural areas (defined as areas with no more than 20,000 residents).**

### ***What is a Community Facility? How does this program relate to agriculture?***

**The uses of CF funds are limited principally by the requirement that the project be for the benefit of the community as a whole rather than for a private, commercial purpose.** To help ensure that a facility under the control of a non-profit organization will carry out a public purpose and continue to serve rural communities, the USDA looks for strong ties between the organization and the rural area in which it is located. Such ties might be evidenced by a local board membership base or funding from the local government or community.

The CF program finances many types of facilities and equipment that facilitate distribution and marketing of local foods. Projects that support local and regional food systems that may qualify for CF funding include, but are not limited to the following:

- Farmers markets
- Community kitchens and food distribution centers
- Facilities and equipment used by not-for-profit food distribution networks
- School cafeteria renovations and equipment
- Community food banks

### ***What are Loan and Grant Amounts?***

Loan amounts vary widely depending on the project. Grants, which are available for projects in communities with smaller populations and lower median household incomes, are usually highly leveraged with other loan and grant awards.

### ***How do I apply?***

All applications for CF projects are filed and processed in the local USDA Rural Development Office for the project location. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and are subject to funds availability. **Contact your Local Office either by telephone or through its Web site** to obtain more information on how to proceed with your loan or grant request. The locations and contact information for Local Offices can be found at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd\\_map.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html). More detailed information about eligibility, loan rates and terms, and security requirements can be found at [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF\\_CF.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF_CF.html).