

Proudly serving 26
Northern Illinois counties

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CONTACT US!

At Rural Development, we are committed to serving rural communities!

Oregon Service Center
(815) 732-6127 ext. 4

Ottawa Service Center
(815) 433-0551 ext. 4

Bourbonnais Workstation
(815) 937-8940 ext. 5

Princeton Service Center
(815) 875-8732 ext. 4



Committed to the future of rural communities.



SPRING 2010

Rural Development Quarterly News



Herman Wisslead
Area I Director

Welcome to this special funding edition of the Area I Newsletter! The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, or ARRA, has made millions of dollars available through USDA Rural Development to help small Illinois communities address their needs. We have more than 40 programs that are available to local governments, non-profit and for-profit organizations, cooperatives, individuals, and businesses.

Rural Development received \$28 billion, more than half of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's allocation of ARRA funding. The funds are to be used through six of the agency's existing programs, specifically to improve water, housing, business, community and broadband opportunities in rural areas of our country. Ample funding is still available in those programs with the exception of guaranteed housing loans.

Rural Development has funds to build, repair or expand water and wastewater systems and focuses its efforts on water and sewer projects in rural areas and communities with populations of less than 10,000.

Besides water projects, the agency provides low-cost financing and grants to public entities for projects that support community and business development. Community Facilities funding can help to develop health care, public safety and public service facilities.

To create jobs, the agency helps public bodies develop business opportunities with grants or loans. Funds have been used to capitalize revolving loan programs for local businesses, as well as buy and develop land, construct business or industrial parks, and make infrastructure improvements that encourage businesses to locate or expand in rural communities. Businesses can use our guarantee to help them secure a loan for practically any business purpose.

This newsletter edition highlights the programs that have ample funding. If you have questions about the programs and initiatives and how they might benefit your community, call any one of our offices in northern Illinois. We look forward to working with you and your projects! ■

Recovery Act Funding Available for Public Libraries

USDA Rural Development is offering \$3 million in Community Facilities loans and grants to public libraries in Illinois. The funding is available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and is available through September 30, 2010.

Public libraries that are organized as a municipality, county, special-purpose district or a non-profit and are located in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 population with rural service areas are eligible to apply for funding.

Funds may be used for many purposes including new construction, renovations, shelving, furniture, computers, audio-visual equipment, distance learning equipment and bookmobiles.

For the **direct loan** program, interest rates are fixed and determined by the median household income (MHI) of the area being served and the type of project. Loan repayment terms may not exceed the applicant's authority, the useful life of the facility, or a maximum of 40 years.



Grants are awarded on a graduated scale and are based on population and MHI of the service area, economic feasibility and availability of funding. Grants traditionally range from 15 to 75 percent of eligible project costs.

Applications and more information can be obtained by contacting any Area I office. ■

Financing Opportunities that Support Local and Regional Agriculture



USDA Rural Development's community facilities program has ample funding available for low cost loans and some grant funding to assist communities and

rural business ventures that support local and regional food system projects. USDA's **'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food'** initiative promotes local and regional food systems by stimulating community economic development and ensuring equitable access to affordable fresh and local food. Today, there is too much distance between the average American and their farmers. To close this gap, USDA has provided loan and grant funding to help create the link between local production and local consumption.

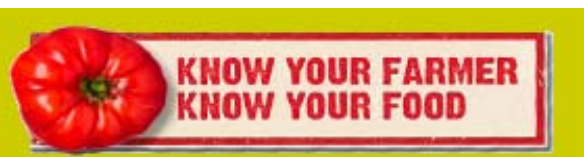
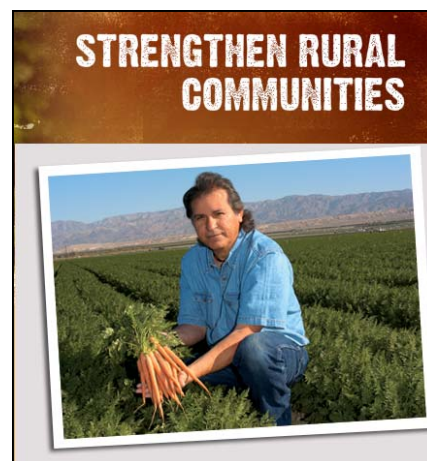
To be eligible for these funds, applicants must be a non-profit organization or a public body. Projects that may qualify for this funding include, but are not limited to: food banks, school cafeterias, farmers' markets, community gardens and community kitchens. Loan and grant funds can be used to purchase equipment, vehicles for food delivery, new construction, renovations, and much more.

USDA's 'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food' initiative emphasizes the need for a fundamental and critical reconnection between producers and consumers. The effort builds on the 2008 Farm Bill, which provides for increased funds and flexibility for USDA programs in an effort to revitalize rural economies through the promotion local food systems. Aimed at strengthening the connection between farmers and consumers, the initiative also supports local and regional food systems, increases economic opportunities for local farmers, and expands access to healthy food for Americans.

Providing greater access to fresh, healthy food is a priority of the Obama Administration. First Lady Michelle Obama launched the *Let's Move!* campaign to end childhood obesity within a generation so that children born today will reach adulthood at a healthy weight. The campaign has four primary tenets: helping parents make healthy food choices, serving healthier food in schools; improving access to healthy, affordable food; and increasing physical activity.

The Administration has introduced its plans to improve school meals, introduced a financing initiative to reduce food deserts, implemented new research tools that detail local food environments and health outcomes, including grocery store access and disease and obesity prevalence, and announced a broad range of public/private commitments to solve America's childhood obesity epidemic. Learn more by visiting www.LetsMove.gov.

The 'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food' website, at www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer, features social media tools to help focus the public conversation about farming and food, while engaging American agriculture and linking producers to customers. ▀



Helpful Links

www.usda.gov/

knowyourfarmer

www.rurdev.usda.gov/

il/comdevel.htm

Think you can't afford to buy a home? We will change your mind!

With acceptable credit, you can buy or build a home with

- NO down payment
- NO monthly mortgage insurance
- 100% financing
- Mortgage payments adjusted to household income



For more information on Rural Development's programs, visit: www.rurdev.usda.gov

Call USDA Rural Development

In Ottawa: (815)433-0551 x 4
 In Bourbonnais: (815)937-8940 x 5
 In Oregon: (815)732-6127 x 4
 In Princeton: (815)875-8732 x 4

*Income limits apply

*Limited to homes in most communities smaller than 25,000

Program Spotlight

Water & Waste Disposal Loans and Grants

Purpose: Under this program, USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to develop safe, reliable water and wastewater systems in communities in order to ensure quality of life and economic stability. Grants may be available for lower income communities when needed to keep user rates affordable.

Applicant: Public bodies including municipalities, counties, townships, districts, authorities, etc. as well as non-profit organizations that have a broadly based membership of people from the local community.

Eligible Area: Under this program, towns of less than 10,000 population or less or unincorporated areas. Rural Development can make a loan to an ineligible city (population greater than 10,000) if the improvement to be made with our funding will benefit a rural area.

Financing Features:

- Fixed, below-market interest rates
- Extended repayment terms up to 40 years
- May be used in combination with other federal assistance
- Grants may be available for up to 75% of the project cost
- Applicant works with an area Rural Development office for the loan or grant



For more information on the Water & Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program, please contact any Area I office!



Multi-Family Housing Toolbox



!!! IMPORTANT !!!

The following is required on all correspondence, brochures, ads, etc. for Rural Development properties: "This institution (may substitute name of recipient) is an equal opportunity provider and employer." Also required is either 1) the house with the equal sign and "Equal Housing Opportunity" below it or 2) the words "Equal Housing Opportunity."



FUNDING UPDATE

- \$129.1 million for guarantee rural rental housing loans
- \$69.5 million for direct rural rental housing loans
- \$27.3 million for farm labor housing loans
- \$9.9 million for farm labor housing grants

USEFUL LINKS

To find apartment complexes for very low to moderate income tenants:

<http://rdmfhrentals.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

This link is for the entire U.S. and information on the complexes includes the number of units, the number of subsidized units, if the complex is designated for elderly, a picture of the property and a contact for an application.

To list and advertise your properties for free:

<http://ilhousingsearch.org/>

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Area 1 Highlights

Area Specialist Retires



Mr. Christopher Moore, Area Specialist in our Ottawa office, has retired effective January 31, 2010. Chris began his federal career with Rural Development as an Assistant County Supervisor in Morris. In October 1995, he was promoted to Community Development Manager in Morris and subsequently promoted to his current position of Area Specialist in December 2005. During September 2007, Chris's position was moved to Ottawa where he served the remainder of his career. We wish Chris a long and happy retirement! •



A special thanks to:
Sarah Borchelt, Penny Hexdall, Joan Messina and Herman Wisslead for contributing to this quarter's newsletter.

Consulting Engineer's Workshop

**Calling all Engineers!
EARN 5 PDUs!**

Learn more about Rural Development, IEPA and IFA financing, fire flow and insurance ratings, leak detection and MUCH MORE!

When: April 15, 2010 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Where: Holiday Inn
1001 Killarney Street
Urbana, IL 61801

Cost: \$40.00/per person

Be sure to RSVP by April 12, 2010 to save your seat!

To RSVP, contact:
Keith Pirok
Phone: (217) 403-6214
Email: keith.pirok@il.usda.gov

