

# WELCOME

## RFSI Project Introduction and Q&A



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# Welcome From Secretary Karen Ross



# What is RFSI?

- Cooperative agreement with U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- The purpose of RFSI to create more & better processing options for local & regional producers.
- Projects support infrastructure or equipment purchases in the middle-of-the-supply-chain for California food & farm businesses & other eligible entities.
- Middle-of-the-supply-chain refers to activities in the processing, packaging, aggregation, & distribution stages of the supply chain: post Harvest & pre-sale.



## **Track 1: Infrastructure Grant**

- Projects that expand capacity & infrastructure for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, or distribution of targeted agricultural products
- Subject to matching funds requirements
- Award amount: \$100,000 - \$3,000,000



## **Track 2: Equipment-Only Grant**

- One equipment purchase only
- No matching requirements
- Award amount: \$10,000 - \$100,000



# Applications Received

- Infrastructure Grants:
  - 127 applications
  - \$143,752,416 in federal funds
  - \$106,013,579 in matching funds
  - \$249,765,995 total project costs
  - 58% qualified for reduced match requirements
- Equipment-Only Grants
  - 172 applications
  - \$14,040,122 in federal funds
- Total
  - 299 applications
  - Request of approximately \$158 million



# Projects Approved by USDA

CDFA's State Plan was approved by USDA in December 2024. 11 of the approved projects are still under environmental and cultural review – nine Infrastructure and two Equipment-Only.

- Infrastructure Grants:
  - 16 projects
  - \$21,383,886 in federal funds
- Equipment-Only Grants
  - 112 projects
  - \$8,562,927 in federal funds
- Total
  - 128 projects
  - \$29,946,813 in federal funds

# Projects Underway

The 117 projects not under environmental and cultural review were executed in January 2025. More than half have already begun grant activities/purchases.

A contractor has been selected to steward the projects which require review through the multi-step process.

CDFA is also spearheading a State-Led Supply Chain Mapping project in partnership with Roots of Change and UC Davis Institute of the Environment for an additional \$1 million in federal funding.



# Next Steps

CDFA has up to \$3 million in additional funding available due to projects that cancelled or withdrew following the grant application period. The Office of Grants Administration hopes to conduct a small solicitation focused on Equipment Only projects in summer 2025 with the following requirements:

- Projects cannot not cause ground disturbance or otherwise prompt environmental and cultural consultation
- Applicants must be able to execute an agreement within 90 days of an award notice
- Projects must be completed with the remaining duration of the grant, which ends May 2027
- Applicants cannot already be an RFSI recipient

[public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CADFA/subscriber/new](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CADFA/subscriber/new)





# Mapping Project Goals

- 1) Statewide outreach to hear from communities, associations, distributors, farmers, and makers to **map existing, planned and funded, proposed, and desired middle of the supply chain infrastructure.**
- 2) Establish and improve California food system stakeholder network connections by identifying synergies and opportunities for partnerships.
- 3) **Develop and publish a report featuring an infrastructure vision and maps** to guide public agencies, nonprofits, community-based initiatives, and private companies involved in supply chain resilience efforts.

# Infrastructure Mapping Team



Sarah Hanson  
CDFA



Stephen Tachiera  
CDFA



Michael Dimock  
Executive Director,  
ROC



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Doris Meier  
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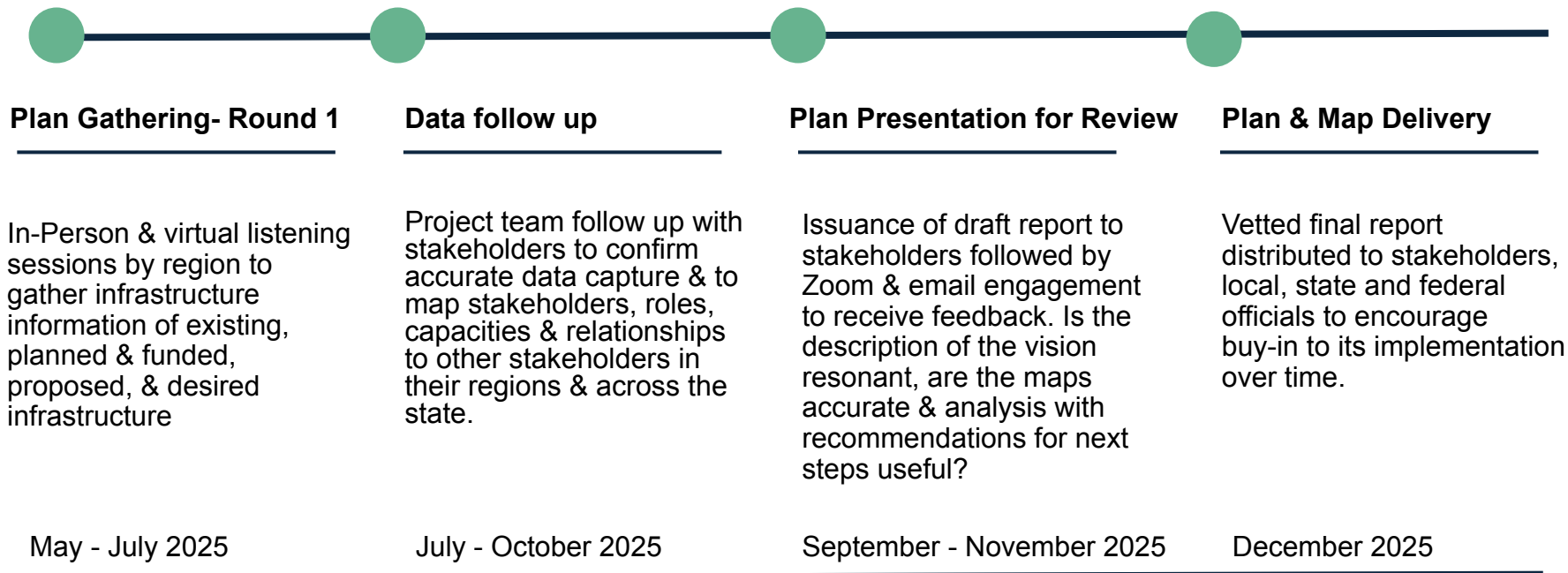


Angela Blatt  
Project Researcher,  
ROC



Anna Kathawala  
Undergrad Student  
Researcher, UC Berkeley

# Project Process



# Infrastructure Eligibility

Middle of the supply chain from post-harvest to pre-retail, excluding dairy, protein, and other animal products (per USDA)

Infrastructure that supports small and mid-size **producers** as per the Small Business Administration (SBA)



Examples of Relevant Infrastructure

[www.rootsofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/RFSI-Infrastructure-Example-List.pdf](http://www.rootsofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/RFSI-Infrastructure-Example-List.pdf)



SBA metrics

[www.sba.gov/document/support-table-size-standards](http://www.sba.gov/document/support-table-size-standards)

# Data Gathering & Outcomes

Information will be gathered in person and online during listening sessions and will be pertinent to developing a statewide infrastructure map and financing plan/



## RFSI Food System Infrastructure Plan Submission

This Resilient Food System Infrastructure grant seeks to identify and **map existing, planned, and needed food infrastructure** that serves small and mid-size producers focusing on post-harvest to pre-retail middle of the supply-chain.

### The Capital Stack

BlueHub Capital	\$ 2,678,000
City of Boston	\$ 3,474,945
Coastal Enterprises, Inc./Wholesome Wave	\$ 500,000
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation	\$ 300,000
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation	\$ 650,000
LISC New Markets Support Company / PNC Bank	\$ 3,761,700

### Bornstein & Pearl Food Production Center - Dorchester, MA

Tax Credits | Loans | Grants

In 2010, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC) purchased the former hom meat processing company. The company had employed nearly 150 people when it shuttered the f the site vacant. DBEDC had the intention of demolishing the 36,000 square foot building and repla housing, but during the community engagement process, residents of the community identified jo economic life as their desire for the site. Through a partnership with Commonwealth Kitchen, a n kitchen incubator, DBEDC transformed the site into the Bornstein & Pearl Food Production Center food production facility. Commonwealth Kitchen was a key programmatic partner, providing finar long-term anchor tenant occupying 50% of the building, and by providing food industry expertise i development of the project.

There were also several key financial partners involved in making this project and its complex capi The City of Boston was one critical partner involved early in the project timeline, integrating the Bk Production Center concept into their winning proposal for the HUD CHOICE Neighborhood Grant. three more years to raise and secure nearly \$15 million in public and private financing, with renov

# Important Forms

For project updates:  
Roots of Change  
RFSI webpage



## Project Interest Form



### Interest Form for Regional Food System Infrastructure Planning Listening Sessions

If you're interested in being in contact with or participating in this project please fill out the survey. Filling out this form will provide information on future project meetings.

For the project description and upcoming events please visit the [Roots of Change RFSI page](#).

Any project questions or concerns can be directed to Coco Sanabria:  
[coco@rootsofchange.org](mailto:coco@rootsofchange.org)

## Stipend Application



### Stipend Application for Regional Food System Infrastructure Planning Listening Sessions

This is an application for a participation stipend for the RFSI planning sessions occurring with the CDFA and hosted by Roots of Change. Information about the project can be found on the [Roots of Change RFSI webpage](#).

Please ensure you've filled out the [project intake form](#) to receive updated information about events prior to submitting this application.

The criteria for stipend allocation is as follows:

**DUE APRIL 30th**

# Listening Session Dates (In Person)

Wednesday, May 7 – Sacramento  
CDFA Headquarters, 11-1 PM

Tuesday, May 20 – Ukiah

Thursday, May 29 – Riverside

Friday, May 30 – Los Angeles

Monday, June 2 – San Luis Obispo

Tuesday, June 10 – Fresno

Contact [doris@rootsofchange.org](mailto:doris@rootsofchange.org) for location  
recommendations



**Questions?**

CDFA's Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program website:  
**[www.cdfa.ca.gov/rfsi](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/rfsi)**

Contact: **[coco@rootsofchange.org](mailto:coco@rootsofchange.org)** for project related questions

Visit ROC's RFSI website for project updates:  
**[www.rootsofchange.org/projects/resilient-food-system-infrastructure-project/](http://www.rootsofchange.org/projects/resilient-food-system-infrastructure-project/)**

For questions following this live meeting please submit them here:



**[forms.gle/wxuFwuvLbyW9YqsV9](https://forms.gle/wxuFwuvLbyW9YqsV9)**