

THE RURAL REPORT | JULY 8TH 2025

Updates on Federal Action and Funding Opportunities Supporting Development in Rural Communities

Focus Shifts to Ag Policy and Funding Following Reconciliation Passage

After providing \$67 billion in assistance for farmers and expanding work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) last week through passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill, Congress turns its focus to negotiations for a potential “skinny” farm bill. House Ag Chair G.T. Thompson (R-PA) said he expects the “farm bill 2.0” to cost less than \$8 billion. Democrats have said that they won’t come to the table for farm bill talks after Republicans significantly cut climate and nutrition spending — which are traditionally Democratic priorities in the farm bill coalition. The reality is that most members with ag interests won’t be able to vote against a farm bill that reauthorizes essential farm and rural development programs in the run-up to an election year — especially those in competitive districts.

Ag-Rural Development-FDA Funding Moves in Both Chambers

This Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Committee is marking up its FY26 Agriculture-Rural Development-FDA funding bill. The Senate’s bill is expected to be significantly closer to FY25 spending levels than the [House Appropriations Committee’s bill](#), which was voted out of committee last month and would cut more than \$1 billion (4 percent) of current federal funding for USDA and FDA and codify Trump Administration priorities, like getting rid of diversity, equity and inclusion-related initiatives at USDA and reducing the department’s workforce and funding to pre-pandemic levels.

White House Threatens to Raise Tariffs on Growing Slate of Trade Partners

President Trump is threatening to significantly raise tariffs on Japan, South Korea, Myanmar, South Africa, Laos, Malaysia, and Kazakhstan anywhere from 25 to 40% as the White House continues to negotiate trade deals with the countries ahead of a new August 1 deadline. A second round of tariff increases for Thailand, Cambodia, Serbia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Tunisia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina was also announced later the same day. North Korea and Japan have already been involved in comprehensive trade negotiations with the U.S. for months, but talks have stalled over their refusal to boost defense spending and agricultural imports.

Funding Opportunities

[FY2025 Disaster Recovery Grant Program](#)

U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)

The U.S. DOI National Park Service will award physical preservation grants for repair and recovery of historic and cultural resources in areas that have received a major disaster declaration in calendar years 2023 and/or 2024. **Application deadline: 7/15/2025**

[Targeted Technical Assistance for Rural Hospitals Program](#)

A federally funded initiative that offers comprehensive technical assistance to rural hospitals to address financial and operational challenges and maintain essential health services for their communities. **Application Deadline: 9/30/2025**

[USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development supports zero-interest loans and grants for current and former eligible Rural Utilities Service borrowers who then use the funds to help local businesses finance projects that create/retain jobs or support community facility projects. **Application Deadline: Quarterly**

[Intermediary Relending Program](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development provides funds to local lenders or “intermediaries” that re-lend to businesses to improve economic conditions and create new opportunities in rural communities. **Application deadline: Quarterly**

[Community Facilities Programs](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development provides funding to develop or improve essential public services and facilities. Projects include fire and rescue stations, town halls, health care clinics, hospitals, childcare centers, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation centers, public buildings, schools, libraries, and many other community-based initiatives. **Application Deadline: Open**

[Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development provides grants to organizations to help them carry out local self-help housing construction projects. Recipients supervise groups of very-low- and low-income individuals and families as they construct their own homes in rural areas. **Application deadline: Open**

[On-Farm Labor Housing Loans](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development provides low-interest loans to borrowers to develop or rehabilitate rental housing for very-low- to moderate-income farm laborers. **Application deadline: Open until funds are depleted**

[Rural Housing Site Loans](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development offers specific loans to eligible entities to purchase and develop housing sites for low- and moderate-income families. **Application Deadline: Open**