

THE RURAL REPORT | SEPT 30 2025

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

USDA Submits Last Minute Shutdown Contingency Plan

After months of deferred resignations and layoffs, withheld funding, and pending reorganization at USDA, ag and rural development stakeholders are likely to experience further disruption if government funding lapses this week.

The department has submitted its tentative shutdown contingency plan to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval. Although not yet public, the plan is reported to include a reduction-in-force provision, which would trigger additional layoffs and potential deferred resignations at USDA, which has already lost over 15% of its workforce this year.

In addition to additional workforce cuts at USDA, impacts of a shutdown could include disruptions to nutrition assistance programs like SNAP and WIC, delays in farm loans and rural development grants, and hampered access to agricultural research and data. Services deemed essential, such as meat and poultry inspections, would likely continue but with reduced staffing.

Senate Ag Republicans Request White House Meeting to Talk Farm Aid

Senate Agriculture Committee Republicans have requested a meeting with President Trump to discuss the specifics of potential emergency funding for farmers, who are facing increasingly high input costs and uncertainty on tariffs.

U.S. agricultural producers say we're entering market conditions comparable to the farm crisis of the 1980s, which resulted in mass bankruptcies and migration from rural areas.

Lawmakers are hoping the administration will make the first move on farm aid rather than having to appropriate more funding themselves. The meeting has yet to be scheduled, but the senators and USDA Secretary Rollins expect a decision on farm aid in the coming weeks.

Funding Opportunities

[Community Development Block Grant Program for Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages](#)

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD offers competitive grants to Indian tribes for the development of decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities to advance viable Indian and Alaska Native communities. **Application deadline: 11/24/2025**

[Farm to School Grant Program](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Improves access to local foods in eligible Child Nutrition Program (CNP) sites through comprehensive farm to CNP programming that includes local sourcing and agricultural education efforts. **Application deadline: December 5, 2025**

[Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA Rural Development provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage and solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. **Application deadline: Open**

[On-Farm Labor Housing Loans](#)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

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

[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**