

# Resources for Local Food Council Capacity Development (Draft)

Created by the North Carolina Local Food Council's Capacity Committee

- **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)**
- **American Planning Association-North Carolina Chapter**

## **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)**

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a unique federal-state partnership providing social and economic support for a 13-state region stretching along the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi.

**Resource Type:** Grants

In North Carolina ARC provides economic development assistance to the 29 counties in Appalachia. Each year ARC provides funding for projects that improve economic opportunities, create a ready (and healthy) workforce, improve access to critical infrastructure, strengthen natural and cultural assets and build leadership and community capacity. Local Councils of Government assist with applications and notification of grant cycles. An ARC Community Development Planner can also assist with project development. Please check your local Council of Government's website for deadlines.

**Contact:** Olivia Collier, ARC Program Manager, (919) 814-4656, [ocollier@nccommerce.com](mailto:ocollier@nccommerce.com)

**Important links:** [www.nccommerce.gov/rd/arc](http://www.nccommerce.gov/rd/arc)

## **American Planning Association-North Carolina Chapter**

PA-NC is the primary professional development organization for professional planners in North Carolina. The organization's members practice in several areas including land use, GIS, transportation, housing, sustainability, community and economic development among others. APA-NC sponsors Plan4Health NC, an initiative designed to build connections between public health officials and professional planners and raise awareness of common issues to both groups. Food and Food access is a focus area of this initiative.

**Resource Type:** Technical Assistance, Speakers

Through Plan4Health NC and the NC Planning Assistance Team, the association offers advice, speakers and targeted technical assistance program.

**Contact:** Katherine Hebert 704-348-2708

Link: [www.apa-nc.org](http://www.apa-nc.org)

## **Area Hospitals as Anchor Institutions**

Webinar: [Anchors in Resilient Communities - Hospitals Increasing Community Wealth](#) [Wallace Center]

Webinar description: “Health systems are increasingly embracing their roles as “anchor institutions”. Utilizing a powerful combination of procurement and investments, health care is exploring ways to build local, equitable food economies, and foster resilient communities. The panel presents the results of Health Care Without Harm’s 2-year national study that examined hospitals’ community benefit practices to improve access to healthy foods, promote healthier food environments, and prevent diet-related disease. The panel then presents Anchors in Resilient Communities (ARC), and ARC’s first collaborative project, MyCultiver, as examples of how anchors are working together with community, building robust regional food systems that can increase community health, wealth, and climate resilience in the Bay Area through market disruption and transformation.”

Other Links:

- [Hospitals As Anchor Institutions: Linking Community Health and Wealth](#)
- [Improving Community Health and Building Community Wealth in the Bay Area](#)
- [Hospitals as Anchor Institutions: Improving Community Food Environments](#) [Infographic; PDF]

### **Carolina Farm Stewardship Association**

The Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) is on a mission to bring local, organic food to your table from a farmer who shares your values. Our vision is a vibrant, sustainable food system that is good for consumers, good for farmers and farm workers, and good for the land. We serve an active network of passionate folks across North and South Carolina through our education and advocacy work.

**Resource Type:** Technical assistance and consultation

CFSA has free consulting services for its members on food business development, GAP certification, organic certification, Conservation Activity Plans and high tunnels. CFSA is also a member of the Community Food Strategies team and supports food councils in their development and engaging in policy and advocacy.

**Contact:** Marianna Spence, Members Services, (919)-542-2402, [marianna@carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:marianna@carolinafarmstewards.org)

**Important links:** [www.carolinafarmstewards.org](http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org)

### **Carolina Farm Credit**

We're part of the Farm Credit System, which has been serving the credit needs of rural America for over 100 years.

**Resource Type:** Loans and small grants

**Corporate Mission Fund:** Organizations may apply for up to \$5,000 per year. Grants will be considered for programs only in the 54 counties and geographic areas where Carolina Farm Credit conducts business. The Fund's mission is to build strong partnerships and alliances, leveraging the resources within the fund to preserve and promote the farmer, the family and our rural communities. The Fund's two main objectives are to invest in the future of agriculture and to enhance and impact the quality of life in rural North Carolina. **Important dates:** Grant applications will be accepted from January 1 to September 1.

**Contact:** Maggie Hamm, Chief Marketing Officer, [Marketing@carolinafarmcredit.com](mailto:Marketing@carolinafarmcredit.com), (800) 521-9952 x2854

**Important Links:** <https://www.carolinafarmcredit.com/about/community/corporate-mission-fund.aspx>

### **Carolina Small Business Development Fund**

Carolina Small Business Development Fund was founded in 1990 to create economic opportunity in communities across North Carolina.

**Resource Type:** Loans, technical assistance, policy research

CSBDF has a mission to foster economic development in underserved communities by providing capital, business services, and policy research to support small businesses. As a nonprofit and certified CDFI, we are passionate about supporting small businesses in underserved areas. Since 2010, CSBDF has invested more than \$42 million through 588 loans to small businesses across North Carolina helping to create or retain more than 1,955 jobs.

**Contact:** Roxanne Bailey-Reed at (919) 803-1437 x403, [rreed@carolinasmallbusiness.org](mailto:rreed@carolinasmallbusiness.org)

**Important Links:** [www.carolinasmallbusiness.org](http://www.carolinasmallbusiness.org)

### **Center for Environmental Farming Systems**

The Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS) ([www.cefs.ncsu.edu](http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu)) develops and promotes just and equitable food and farming systems that conserve natural resources, strengthen communities, improve health outcomes, and provide economic opportunities in North Carolina and beyond. CEFS is a partnership of NC State University, NC A&T State University, and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and was established in 1994.

**Resource Type:** Workshops, educational materials, academic research, consumer campaigns ([nc10percent.com](http://nc10percent.com)), local food council support ([communityfoodstrategies.org](http://communityfoodstrategies.org)), production systems and marketing support (eg: [ncchoices.org](http://ncchoices.org)), local food supply chain development, business development, youth engagement and leadership, and racial equity in the food system.

**Contact:** Abbey Piner, [abbey\\_piner@ncsu.edu](mailto:abbey_piner@ncsu.edu)

**Important links:** [Center for Environmental Farming Systems](#)

### **Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**

The UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP) is part of a national network of 26 Prevention Research Centers. HPDP addresses pressing health problems by collaborating with communities to conduct research, provide training, and translate research findings into policy and practice. The Center seeks to reduce health disparities through an emphasis on community-based participatory research to ensure that the community is involved in every stage of research. Our vision is to work in partnership to bring public health research findings to the daily lives of individuals and their communities with a special focus on North Carolina and populations vulnerable to disease.

**Resource type:** Health promotion (especially nutrition and physical activity) programs and materials, technical assistance re food insecurity/access, community gardening, cost-offset CSA models, mobile markets, healthy corner store initiatives.

**Contact:** [alice\\_ammerman@unc.edu](mailto:alice_ammerman@unc.edu)

**Important links:** <http://hdpd.unc.edu/about-us/>

### **Circle Forward Partners**

Whether your group is learning and practicing the skill sets for collaborative decision-making, developing a strategic plan or building a network for creating systems-level change, we support you while you cultivate more inclusive and adaptive structures and processes that advance your purpose.

**Resource Type:** Training and technical assistance

Circle Forward brings the latest research plus our own hard-won experience into your space and into the complexity your team is living right now. We offer your team options and experiential learning opportunities customized to your context.

**Contact:** Follow the link to learn more about the Circle Forward Team

<http://circleforward.partners/our-team/>

**Important Links:**

<http://circleforward.partners/>

### **Community Food Strategies**

Community Food Strategies works to empower local food councils and networks to create community-led collaboration and equitable policy change at the local, state, and national level. We envision an equitable food system that is community driven and improves the quality of life for all.

**Resource Type:** Statewide network; Technical assistance and consultation; tools, webinars, and trainings  
This multi-organizational initiative focuses on building alliances and providing tools, trainings, and statewide structure to a growing network of local food councils across North Carolina. Our team consists

of six food systems experts that provides leadership and technical support to communities interested in food council development across North Carolina. Led by the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS), this project's partners are Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA), Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) and Care Share Health Alliance.

**Contact:** Abbey Piner, Project Director, [abbey\\_piner@ncsu.edu](mailto:abbey_piner@ncsu.edu)

**Important links:** <https://communityfoodstrategies.com/>

**Micro Grant Application Link:**

<https://communityfoodstrategies.com/2017/10/30/micro-grant-applications-open/>

## **NC Division of Public Health, Healthy Communities Program**

The Healthy Communities Program provides funding statewide to 82 of 84 health departments/districts to implement various Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention strategies. Healthy Departments are required to choose at least 2 strategies of a list of proposed strategies submitted by the CDI Section Branches and programs. . It is the the decision of the county health department as to which of these strategies they choose to implement, and they subsequently determine a budget for how they will spend the Healthy Communities funding. Some of the counties allocate their funding all to salary but some allow for operational costs. Suggestion: Healthy Communities action plans are developed and submitted annually in May and health departments begin to choose their strategies as early as January or February. Reach out to the Healthy Communities staff at the local health department to see if there is an opportunity to partner on any healthy food related projects. |

State Contact: Karen Stanley, Program Consultant, Healthy Communities Program, 919-707-5230 or [Karen.Klein.Stanley@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Karen.Klein.Stanley@dhhs.nc.gov). For additional questions or local contacts.

Example: Davidson County's funds are being used for increasing access to healthy foods, opioid poisoning, and mental health trainings, and their Action Plans for 2018-19 have already been submitted and accepted by the State.

## **Feeding the Carolinas**

Feeding the Carolinas was established in September 2016. Formerly known as the North Carolina Association of Feeding America Food Banks, Feeding the Carolinas is an alliance of the NC State Association and the SC State Association. The Association now represent all nine food banks in the Carolinas plus a food recovery organization. The North Carolina Association of Feeding America Food Banks was established in 2011 to serve the six Feeding America Food Banks and one food recovery organization of North Carolina.

**Resource Type:** Statewide Network, Technical Assistance, Outreach and Networking (both with the Association and the individual Food Bank members)

Feeding the Carolinas collect surplus food from manufacturers, producers, stores, distributors, and farmers. As such, they have ongoing relationships with the agriculture community. In FY 2016, members distributed almost 253 million pounds of nutritious food, the equivalent of over 210 million meals to Carolinians in need. Member food banks also receive widespread financial support from individuals, foundations, companies, and through bequests. Those donations allow the purchase additional food items such as fresh produce to supplement donated food. A dedicated member of staff is employed to source food, a great deal of which is through relationships with farmers.

Contact: Vacant, Executive Director

Cindy Stapleton, Director, Farm to Food Banks Program

Email: [cstapleton@feedingamerica.org](mailto:cstapleton@feedingamerica.org)

Phone: (419) 308-9196

Important links: <https://feedingthecarolinas.org/>

### **Food System Leadership Network**

Launched in early 2018 by the Wallace Center, this is a national Community of Practice aiming to support leaders and staff of non-profit, community based organizations working on food systems change. They offer regular webinars and professional development opportunities including mentorships, an online social network of practitioners, discussion groups, online courses, mini-grants for professional and organizational capacity development, and leadership retreats.

#### **Important links:**

<https://foodsystemsleadershipnetwork.goentrepid.com/pages/about>

### **Foundations and other Grant Funding**

North Carolina has many foundations that focus on the various priorities of Local Councils and can make grant funding available for operations or programs. They include statewide foundations, but also smaller foundations based in communities. In addition to the North Carolina Community Foundation described previously in this document, there are smaller community-based foundations which can also be found through the statewide community foundation:

<http://www.nccommunityfoundation.org/>. In addition to looking within your communities for foundation support, there are statewide foundations that can offer support as well. Each has its own priorities and deadlines, but are worth investigating for programming support. They include the Z Smith Reynolds Foundation (<https://www.zsr.org/>), The Duke Endowment (<http://dukeendowment.org/>), United Way (<http://www.unitedwaync.org/>), the Golden Leaf Foundation (<https://www.goldenleaf.org/>), the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission (<http://tobaccotrustfund.org/>), the North Carolina Agriculture Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund (<http://www.ncadfp.org/>), the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation (<https://www.mrbf.org/>), and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation (<http://www.bcbsncfoundation.org/>). Finally, there are national foundations that can also support the work of local councils. An article that describes various database available for finding such foundation funding is:

<http://www.thenonproffitimes.com/news-articles/finding-grants-through-online-databases/>.

Federal grants are also another opportunity for funding. For example, USDA has funding support for farm to school, community food security and more. Eligibility may be limited or require local councils to partner with Universities or NGOs, so check carefully. To find USDA grants, an excellent database is: <https://nifa.usda.gov/page/search-grant>. A database that can find opportunities in

both foundations and government entities can be found here: <https://grantstation.com/>, though requires a membership (\$159.00).

### **Funding from the Business Community**

Many businesses (local and national) have mechanisms to support their communities, including community grant programs and sponsorships. Many of these are suited to Food Policy Council work, for example, Home Depot might support materials to build a community garden (<https://corporate.homedepot.com/grants/community-impact-grants>); and Lowes might support materials to build a school garden ([https://www.lowes.com/cd\\_charitable+and+educational+foundation\\_936258779\\_](https://www.lowes.com/cd_charitable+and+educational+foundation_936258779_)); walmart can support a range of types of projects (<http://giving.walmart.com/walmart-foundation/community-grant-program>); many national or state banks make grants available in communities they serve, for example First Citizen's bank addresses hunger in communities (<https://www.citizensbank.com/community/contributions.aspx>), and Bank of America (<https://about.bankofamerica.com/en-us/what-guides-us/find-grants-sponsorships.html#fbid=LGgMP53r70G>) funds sponsorships and other programmatic activities. Health care programs often have funds available to improve health outcomes and support for community engagement. For examples see the Rex Endowment that operates in Wake county (<http://www.rexendowment.org/apply-for-a-grant>). Many other large employers have corporate funding programs in their communities, and don't forget to look at your local civic groups, churches, insurance companies, grocery stores, tractor supply companies, real estate agencies, etc. Even small amounts of money can help local food councils thrive, and it is a great way to also educate and inform businesses and business leaders about the importance of investment in local food systems to a community.

### **Land Grant Universities and NC Cooperative Extension**

Land Grant Universities (LGUs) exist in every state and were established in either 1862, 1890 (HBCUs), or 1994 (Native American) to bring a core focus on agriculture (among other things), including agriculture teaching, research and extension, across the United States. In North Carolina the two land grant Universities are NC State and NC A&T State University. The LGUs have faculty and students that focus on a range of agriculture and food systems topics including everything from soil science to animal science to SNAP education, to food science, to horticultural science, to agriculture education and marketing. Embedded within the Land Grant University system is the Cooperative Extension Service whose core mission is to make applicable research and educational programs and materials accessible to the public to create positive changes. Every county in North Carolina has a Cooperative Extension office and includes staff focusing on agriculture and food, health and nutrition, and youth through its 4-H programs. NC Cooperative Extension (NCCE) has many programs that can be useful to and supportive of local food councils, and staff conduct a variety of training and support programs that could be of interest. See the section in this document that highlights the local food program of Cooperative Extension. In many cases, NCCE is represented on the local councils and is a great connection for the councils to have, even if they are focusing on food security or health. Contact information can be found



either through NC State Extension (<https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/>) or through the NC A&T State University Cooperative Extension Program (<https://www.ncat.edu/caes/cooperative-extension/>)

### **Natural Capital Investment Fund**

NCIF provides loans (\$10,000 to \$750,000) and business advisory services to businesses and farms in the local food value chain in NC. Our goal is to help farmers and agri-businesses invest in infrastructure, equipment, livestock, alternative energy, and land to: 1.) Diversify beyond commodity markets, 2.) Develop value-added products and other sources of income and 3.) Serve the growing demand for fresh, local food through wholesale and retail markets.

**Resource Type:** Loans and technical assistance

Two current local food related special initiatives: **1)** NCIF subsidizes the cost of working with accountants or tax preparers for limited resource and disadvantaged farmers. The program is funded by the NC Tobacco Trust Fund. **2)** Natural Capital Investment Fund and NC Growing Together (a project of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems) have teamed up to provide financing and support to small and mid-scale and limited resource farmers in North Carolina to acquire portable or stationary cold storage units. A low interest loan from NCIF is paired with a NC Growing Together grant that “buys down” the cost of purchasing cold storage units.

**Important links:**

[https://www.conservationfund.org/images/projects/files/NCIF\\_Cold\\_storage\\_overview\\_FV.pdf](https://www.conservationfund.org/images/projects/files/NCIF_Cold_storage_overview_FV.pdf)

<https://www.conservationfund.org/projects/accounting-assistance-for-disadvantaged-farmers>

### **NC Cooperative Extension Local Food Program**

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Local Food Program is a statewide initiative designed to facilitate the production, marketing, and consumption of locally grown, caught, and raised food.

**Resource Type:** Research-focused educational programming, technical assistance, capacity building  
The Local Food Program engages youth, consumers, farmers, businesses, and all residents of the state with research-focused information, educational programming, capacity building, and technical assistance in areas of agriculture, marketing, local food sourcing, agricultural literacy, nutrition and healthy eating and more related to seasonal and locally sourced food.

Are you an existing or aspiring local food system practitioner? Do you work with local food projects, but are unsure of the research about their impacts or the resources available to support you? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be interested in N.C. Cooperative Extension Local Food Program’s online, non-credit professional development certificate courses in the Overview of Local Food Systems online training program. To learn more and register visit: [www.localfoodcourses.org](http://www.localfoodcourses.org)

**Contact:** Joanna Massey Lelekacs, Extension Local Food Flagship Program Manager  
NC State University, 919-515-1195, [joanna\\_lelekacs@ncsu.edu](mailto:joanna_lelekacs@ncsu.edu)

**Important Links:** [www.localfoodnc.org](http://www.localfoodnc.org)

## **North Carolina Community Foundation**

The NC Community Foundation is the only statewide community foundation serving North Carolina. Grant opportunities are offered each year through our network of affiliates across the state.

**Resource type:** Grants

Grant applications are accepted by our affiliates based on a schedule produced at the beginning of the calendar year. The schedule runs from March to August. Applicants should refer to our website each year for an updated schedule on when the affiliate(s) in their region will be accepting applications. Application submission is an online process accessible from our website as well. The following link on our website provides our grantmaking guidelines including eligibility. Organizations eligible to apply are 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charities, local governments (including public schools) and faith-based organizations. Grants are made for a broad range of general charitable purposes.

**Contact:** Follow the provided affiliate link and find your local contact --

<http://www.nccommunityfoundation.org/affiliates>

**Important links:**

<http://www.nccommunityfoundation.org/grants-scholarships/grants/grantmaking-guidelines>

## **North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development (REDD) Division**

The Rural Economic Development Division, in the NC Department of Commerce, has a number of grant programs and planning services to assist rural counties and rural census tracts across the state:

**Rural Grants Program:** Provides building renovation and economic infrastructure grants for job creation. All grants are awarded by a 15-member appointed Rural Infrastructure Authority. A building demolition grant program is currently under development.

**The Community Development Block Grant for Economic Development (CDBG-ED):** Provides grants to local governments that partner with a pro-profit business to bring public infrastructure improvements and building renovation services. All grants are awarded by a 15-member appointed Rural Infrastructure Authority.

**The Industrial Development Fund / Utility Fund:** Provides grants to units of local government for public infrastructure in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties to assist in job creation.). All grants are awarded by a 15-member appointed Rural Infrastructure Authority.

**Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC):** Is a 13-state Federal Commission providing a federal-state partnership that serves 29 counties in Western North Carolina. The ARC provides grants for various categories of social and services for community and economic development.

**The NC Main Street Center:** Provides downtown development assistance through the NC Main Street and the Small Town Main Street programs. The Main Street Solutions Fund grant program is administered through the NC Main Street Center.

**Rural Planning:** Provides assistance across the state, with offices located in the West (Asheville), the Piedmont (Winston-Salem), and the East (Washington). Experienced staff help local governments add value to their economic and community development projects through planning, analysis and resource identification.

For more information please go to <https://www.nccommerce.com/rd> and <https://www.nccommerce.com>

### **North Carolina Department of Agriculture**

### **North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation**

North Carolina's largest general farming organization. Organized as a private, non-profit, NCFB advocates on agricultural and rural issues on behalf of its members.

**Resource Type:** Individual County Farm Bureau's use their discretion to support agricultural initiatives locally through sponsorships. Typical projects that are supported might include school gardens, local farmers markets, agricultural fairs, agricultural events etc. Each County Farm Bureau is approached separately by Farm Bureau members in the county via the NCFB Field Representative. The organization seeking support may be asked to present a proposal to the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors during a regular board meeting.

**Other programs & opportunities:** **1)** Agriculture in the Classroom works with teachers across the state to incorporate agriculture into educational programming. It offers Going Local Grants of \$500. Going Local Grants help educators provide Pre-K through collegiate level students with valuable, real-world education and experiences directly related to the agricultural industry and the Common Core State and Essential Standards. Teachers practicing in private and public North Carolina schools, colleges, and universities are encouraged to apply. DEADLINE typically in the fall. **2)** NCFB's Young Farmer & Rancher Program helps to develop future agriculture leaders. The Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Program is for young women and men between 18 and 35. NCFB's LEAD program is a leadership development program to develop, foster and enhance the skills of individuals and couples (between the ages of 36 and 52) actively engaged in production Agriculture. **3)** NCFB has active Farm Bureau's in all 100 counties, with county Presidents and Boards of Directors. Each County Farm Bureau operates as a freestanding entity that's affiliated with the State and Federal Farm Bureau organizations. Larger county Farm Bureaus operate committees and programs within the county pursuant to their identified agricultural priorities and organizational goals.

**Contact:** Debbie Hamrick Director, Specialty Crops, [Debbie.hamrick@ncfb.org](mailto:Debbie.hamrick@ncfb.org); (919) 334-2977 Cell (919) 302-9538

### **North Carolina Sea Grant**

Through research, outreach and education programs, North Carolina Sea Grant provides unbiased, science-based information to enhance the sustainable use and conservation of ocean and coastal resources to benefit communities, the economy and the environment.

Sea Grant facilitates funding of millions of state and federal dollars to conduct university-based research, outreach and education programs every year. Sea Grant research addresses urgent and emerging needs in ocean and resource management, and projects touch a broad range of topics: coastal hazards, fisheries and aquaculture, healthy coastal ecosystems, sustainable communities, marine education and workforce development.

**Resource Type:** Grants and graduate-student fellowships. For more information, go to <https://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/>

**Contact:** Barry Nash, seafood technology & marketing specialist, NC State University Center for Marine Sciences & Technology, 303 College Circle, Morehead City, NC. Phone: (252) 222-6337; Email: [barry\\_nash@ncsu.edu](mailto:barry_nash@ncsu.edu)

### **North Carolina State Grange**

Officially recognized in 1875, the NC State Grange, a membership organization, hit its stride after re-organizing in 1929. The war was over, the Depression had ended, and our state's isolated farm families needed a place to come together. Through local events, education, renewed community spirit, and the encouragement to be more tolerant of others with different political and religious beliefs, the Grange helped neighbors and communities come together. When schools needed help, the Grange stepped in there too. In some cases, even running them. Our members were instrumental in the development of 4-H and Future Farmers of America and worked to ensure North Carolina's farming communities would emerge stronger than ever.

As the times have evolved, so has the NC Grange. In addition, our many traditional farmers, many of our newer members live in more urban areas, some farm on roof tops in the city, others in greenhouses in the suburbs while others do not farm at all but still more just want to achieve a more sustainable way of living. What we all share is a common love and respect for what the earth and good old hard work can provide. Many are leading grassroots legislation to protect this way of life, getting involved in volunteer-ism and education. Together we all enjoy social and community events, the fellowship of others, educational scholarships and wholesome activities for our children and the knowledge that we are part of something enduring and important.

Our dedication to the future of agriculture in our state has never been stronger. We have put in place programs for rural community improvement, the improvement of medical facilities, power facilities, sanitation, communication, economic opportunity, and conservation of our natural resources. Most importantly, we focus on the education of the next generation. Our children and their children will be the stewards of this land we hold dear. We work to instill the skills and love of the land they will need

when it is their turn to lead.

Resource Type: Statewide network, consultation, youth leadership camp and workshops, rural community advocacy

Contact: Laurie Barnhart, Legislative Director, llbarnhart@ncgrange.com

Important Links: <https://www.ncgrange.com/>

### **Resourceful Communities**

Resourceful Communities supports a network of community groups, faith-based organizations, tribes, small towns and resource providers. The triple bottom line is the foundation of our work: environmental stewardship, social justice and sustainable economic development.

**Resource Type:** free workshops, technical assistance and coaching, networking opportunities, and grants We provide free of charge workshops and trainings, individual technical assistance and coaching, and networking opportunities for grassroots community organizations. Triple-bottom-line projects are eligible for our Creating New Economies Fund (CNEF) Grant. **Important dates:** October 2017: Grant cycle opens; Oct 6 to Nov 21, 2017: Resourceful Communities team members will be available to discuss proposed CNEF project and provide assistance to CNEF applicants, including discussion of draft application. December 15: CNEF applications due via email to [smallgrants@conservationfund.org](mailto:smallgrants@conservationfund.org); March 2018: Awards announced.

**Contact:** Kathleen Marks, [kmarks@conservationfund.org](mailto:kmarks@conservationfund.org)

**Important links:** [www.resourcefulcommunities.org](http://www.resourcefulcommunities.org)

### **Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI)**

The Rural Advancement Foundation International's mission is to cultivate markets, policies, and communities that sustain thriving, socially just, and environmentally sound family farms. We work nationally and internationally, focusing on North Carolina and the southeastern United States.

**Resource Type:** Grants, technical assistance

**Come to the Table Program Description:** 1.) Technical Assistance Center offers a variety of technical assistance to faith communities, farmers markets, and other community organizations engaged in food access work. Examples of technical assistance include helping direct marketing outlets become certified to accept SNAP/EBT and connecting community gardens with gardening experts; 2.) Publications-The Farmers' Market Faith Outreach Guide (published in November 2017) is designed for farmers market managers who want to build relationships with local faith communities to strengthen community connections to the farmers market 3.) Mini Cost-Share Grants - RAFI coordinates a mini-cost share grant program which assists entrepreneurial and innovative farmers and collaborative groups in developing new sources of agricultural income: Agricultural Reinvestment Fund 2018 Grant Program Application For Individual Farmers and Collaborative Projects: The grant program assists farmers and rural communities in developing new sources of agricultural income through the provision of cost-share grants. The

program awards grants of up to \$8,000 to individual farmers, or \$10,000 for collaborative projects in North Carolina. *Please read our eligibility requirements carefully.* Eligible Counties In 2018--RAFI-USA will administer the grant program for farmers and collaborative groups located in the following counties in NC: Alamance, Bertie, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Davidson, Davie, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rowan, Vance, and Wake. **Important Dates:** Early bird deadline is Friday, December 15th, 2017; Final application deadline is Friday, January 5th, 2018, 5:00pm; Award notification no later than Wednesday, February 28th, 2018. *Applicants are encouraged to apply early to receive feedback before the final deadline.*

**Contact:** Michelle Osborne, Come to the Table Program Manager, Faith-based and Community Partnerships - [michelle@rafiusa.org](mailto:michelle@rafiusa.org), 919-704-6920; Lisa Misch, Program Coordinator, Fresh Bucks Program - [lisa@rafiusa.org](mailto:lisa@rafiusa.org), 919-270-8100

**Important Links:** <http://www.rafiusa.org>

### **Rural Center**

Our mission is to develop, promote and implement sound economic strategies to improve the quality of life of rural North Carolinians. We serve the state's [80 rural counties](#), with a special focus on individuals with low to moderate incomes and communities with limited resources.

**Resource Type:** Training, technical assistance, loans

**Rural Economic Development Institute** REDI is designed for rural leaders who are active in decision-making roles in their communities. The center accepts individuals with a high level of commitment. We also strive to select a class that reflects the diversity of rural North Carolina in terms of geography, race, gender, institutional setting and leadership roles. Elected and appointed officials, businessmen and women, professional staff in community and economic development, civic and grassroots leaders, and minorities are encouraged to apply. *REDI 2018 will be held March 13-15, April 10-12, and May 8-10.* **Rural Food Business Assistance Project** The Rural Food Business Assistance Project supports current and aspiring entrepreneurs that are farmers, value-added processors, and food-service businesses in order to stimulate successful and thriving agribusinesses across rural North Carolina. The Rural Food Business Assistance Project focuses on three rural North Carolina regions -- Western Region: Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Swain counties; Sandhills Region: Hoke, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, Robeson and Scotland counties; Upper Coastal Plain Region: Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and Wilson counties. **Microenterprise Loan Program** The N.C. Microenterprise Loan Program works with individuals who have sound ideas for starting or expanding a small business but may not qualify for bank loans. The program has three components: 1) Standard loans, which are available in amounts up to \$25,000 2) Express loans, which are capped at \$5,000 and 3) Loan decisions can be made within five business days. All loans are offered in combination with business planning and technical assistance. We give special emphasis to serving rural, low-income, female and minority borrowers. To apply, complete and submit a pre-application. The same application is used for all microenterprise loans. We'll walk you through the process from there.

**Contact:** Misty Herget, Director of Leadership, 919-250-4314 (REDI Training)  
Jamilla Hawkins, Senior Program Manager of Food & Community Development, 919-250-4314 (Rural Food Business Assistance Program)

JaLisha Richmond, Program Associate, 919-250-4314 (Microenterprise Loan)

**Important Links:**

<http://www.ncruralcenter.org/programs/leadership/leadership-training#redioffer>

<http://www.ncruralcenter.org/ruralfood>

<http://www.ncruralcenter.org/programs/business-lending/microenterprise>

## **Self Help Credit Union**

We are a family of member-owned, mission-driven credit unions, a nonprofit loan fund, and a policy advocacy organization. We work every day to expand ownership and economic opportunities for all. Our food system lending addresses health, economic and social disparities across the country through targeted lending to food businesses and organizations that aim to improve our food system. Guided by principles of sustainability and social justice, we lend to help improve the health and well-being of our communities.

### **Resource Type:** Loans

Innovative agripreneurs need innovative finance solutions. We lend to businesses and nonprofits that work to improve the way food is produced, distributed and sold. Combining 35 years of lending experience and a national network of partners, we make loans to people who are transforming the food system.

We Lend To:

- Food aggregators and distributors planning to renovate and upfit their warehouses
- Grocery stores and food co-ops ready to purchase property or expand
- Entrepreneurs hoping to start food businesses
- Urban farmers who are expanding their distribution networks in low-income communities
- Food waste and recycling companies

**Contact:** Follow the provided link to learn more about a Self Help office in your region:

<https://www.self-help.org/locations>

**Important Links:** <https://www.self-help.org/business/loans/all-business-loans/foodsystemloans>

<https://www.self-help.org/what-we-do/we-build/sustainable-food-systems#news> (stay in the know with weekly news roundup)

## **Small Business Center Network**

The Small Business Center Network, comprised of 58 Small Business Centers throughout North Carolina, supports the development of new businesses and the growth of existing businesses by being a community-based provider of training, counseling, and resource information. At the core of its vision, the Small Business Center Network is positioned to focus on entrepreneurship, small business and economic development with an emphasis on assisting start-ups, early stage, and businesses seeking disaster assistance or seeking to stabilize.

Confidential counseling services and access to resource libraries are free of charge. Some seminars and workshops require a minimal registration fee. Services provided by the Small Business Center Network can be customized to suit specific business needs. Small Business centers are increasingly supporting food and farming businesses in both start up plans and diversification and expansion.

## **USDA Rural Development**



USDA Rural Development is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America.

**Resource Type:** Technical assistance, grants, loans, and loan guarantees.

Through our programs, we help rural Americans in many ways. We offer loans, grants and loan guarantees to help create jobs and support economic development and essential services such as housing, health care, first responder services and equipment, and water, electric and communications infrastructure. We promote economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks, credit unions and community-managed lending pools. We offer technical assistance and information to help agricultural producers and cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their operations. We provide technical assistance to help communities undertake community empowerment programs. We help rural residents buy or rent safe, affordable housing and make health and safety repairs to their homes.

**Contact:**

Follow the link to find the contact for your region: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices/nc>

**Important links:**

<https://www.rd.usda.gov>